

November 1982



# SECHABANA

official organ of the african  
national congress south africa

## ANC YOUTH CONFERENCE



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# SECHABA

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## CONTENTS



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- EDITORIAL:  
CIA-attempts to subvert T. U. struggle
- CHALLENGES:  
Facing the Black Workers
- ANC YOUTH:  
Impressions on their conference
- CHILD-CARE:  
Imperative for our future
- OUTSTANDING LEADERS:  
Part 1– A.J. Lutuli
- BOOK REVIEW



# EDITORIAL

# CIA-ATTEMPTS TO SUBVERT OUR TRADE UNION STRUGGLE

In September 1982, a high-ranking delegation of the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO) under the leadership of "Chick" Chaikan, the AFL-CIO, Vice President and the President of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union visited South Africa on "a fact finding tour".

This delegation included Irving Brown, AFL-CIO's director of international affairs; Frederick O'Neill an AFL-CIO vice president and president of the Actors' and Artists' Union and Patrick O'Farrell, the executive director of the African American Labour Centre (AALC), an arm of the AFL-CIO. Nobody had invited these gentlemen to come to South Africa - they had come on their own initiative.

Before we discuss the mission of this delegation, it is perhaps necessary to characterise some of the members of the delegation. Irving Brown is known as being a CIA agent involved in manipulating foreign trade unions. In his capacity as "director of international affairs" he has meddled with trade unions on behalf of the CIA in France, Italy, Portugal and Zimbabwe. According to his own confession he has "worked"

with "free" trade unions throughout the world to "prevent communists from taking over trade unions".

This controversial figure representing the AFL-CIO in Europe and former director of the AALC regards his activities as "an alternative to war". According to reports Brown joined the CIA early in his career - that is for the last 30 years or more. Patrick O'Farrell's name has also been linked to the CIA.

They came to South Africa and met the all-white Confederation of Labour, the Trade Union Council of South Africa, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), the Council of Unions of South Africa (Cusa) etc.

They want to step up aid to local emerging unions; there is even a suggestion for an AFL-CIO - sponsored union training programme or "in-country" programme in South Africa.

According to Chaikan:

"We are thinking specifically in terms of union education, worker education and training of union staff".

This American delegation was less successful with the South African Allied Workers' 1

Union (SAAWU). A meeting of the Union's national council in Estcourt decided to have no contact with the American trade union federation, the AFL-CIO. This was revealed by SAAWU's General Secretary, Sam Kikine.

The Port-Elizabeth based Motor Assembly and Components Workers' Union of South Africa (Macwusa) gave the reason for its refusal to meet the AFL-CIO as the Reagan Administration's "constructive engagement" policy which, Macwusa said, the AFL-CIO supported. The AFL-CIO was offering assistance to those working both inside and outside the system - an obvious reference to the American delegation meeting registered unions. Macwusa refuses to join any union federation which accepts registered unions.

Then a scandal happened. The AFL-CIO decided to give its George Meany Human Rights Award jointly to Gatsha Buthelezi and the late Dr. Neil Aggett, the unionist who had been murdered in detention. This was the end of morals. The trade unionists could not take it. The implication here was that the two are in

the same class. That is why Macwusa made the statement:

"The granting of the award to Chief Buthelezi is a total degradation of the workers' attitude towards the struggle, as it is an insult to the efforts and contribution and even the character of Dr. Aggett".

There was more to this. Last year the George Meany award went to "Solidarity" in Poland. And in an advertising campaign to mark Labour Day the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisation (AFL-CIO) stated that the struggle of black trade unionists in South Africa is similar to that of Solidarity in Poland.

These are the intrigues of American imperialism in South Africa, - the CIA, the American labour movement and the US Government are all-out to gain influence in and to coopt the South African trade union movement. At the same time they accuse the ANC of "international terrorism" and being "communist inspired".





# CHALLENGES FACING THE BLACK WORKERS



by Thozì Majola

When we talk of a black worker in South Africa, we talk about the landless, the voteless; the homeless. However, these are the people whose labour power is used to extract the maximum profits. In South Africa capitalism has been made more complicated by apartheid — which divides the people of this country according to the colour of their skin. It is needless to say that the laws are made such that they must keep black and white South African in two different worlds within one country. All these evils are hitting hard at the black workers, the backbone of our liberation struggle.

The exploitation of black workers in South Africa is beyond description. The capitalist exploitation and political strategy of the regime is designed in such a way that it contains the power of black

workers and their trade unions. It will continue to be centred around the apartheid policy which binds up with racist South Africa's total structure of divide and rule — a division not only between white and black but also aimed at setting up black against black.

## Contract Workers

The draconian laws of South Africa allowed the taking away of land from the black majority; through the Land Act of 1913, which left the black majority with 13% of the land. This law was still to be followed by many laws which directly confront the black workers. One of these laws is the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1925 section 10 (1) (d) which categorises some of our workers as the so-called migrants or



contract workers. These are the workers who work in urban areas for a specified time after which their passes are signed off to allow them to go back to the Bantustans. These workers have no right to live with their families. They stay in compounds. Worth noting is the fact that our people enter into these binding contracts without fully understanding their terms.

It is clear that in South Africa the black workers cannot afford to operate under such pale and dry slogans as "No politics in the Trade Union Movement!"

This slogan amounts to a denial of the majority of the people of South Africa the right to self-determination and attainment of a democratic South Africa. Moreover, this is blatantly undermining the authenticity and justness of our cause. Such a slogan further

sanctions all the atrocities and injustices perpetrated by the Pretoria regime.

### Bantustan Policy

South Africa is presently engaged in a futile exercise of creating a "whites-only" South Africa. This is done by promoting Bantustans, whose main function is to provide a constant pool of cheap labour. The conditions in the Bantustans are such that, in order to survive, people are forced to accept any form of employment that presents itself, often having to disregard the conditions of employment. The absurdity is however that these workers are made "foreigners" in the land of their birth, lose their rights as workers, and even as human beings for that matter.

Unemployment, therefore, the chronic disease of a capitalist society is not accidental in South Africa. The employed in Bantustans are used to suppress the demands of their militant working brothers, agitating for higher wages, better working and living conditions, etc., in other words, striking workers in South Africa are summarily dismissed, "repatriated" to these so-called Bantustans, and then replaced by those from the reserves. Not only does this practice, often carried out under force, frustrate workers' demands, but also serves to cause serious divisions amongst the blacks themselves.

Their white counterparts, however, suffer none of these hardships, for even if the white worker is not a South African national, full citizenship is granted after two years, after which he reaps the fruits of black labour.

The mining industry in South Africa is notorious for its compounds system. In these compounds workers are divided according to tribes, expressly to create tribal divisions and disrupt the unity toward which the liberation movement and other democratic forces are striving. These workers are forbidden to reside







*Grim conditions for African  
mine workers*

with their families, and this in turn leads to the systematic breaking up of traditions and familyhood.

**Job Reservations**

As early as 1924 the Industrial Conciliation Act excluded African male workers in its definition of an employee. This simply means that, among other things, he had no access to the rights forwarded to workers of other races. In accordance with this therefore all skilled and highly technical jobs are reserved for whites.

The issue of job reservation is closely linked with the issue of wages. The question of meagre wages paid to black workers is not merely associated with the Wage Act of 1918, which ostensibly protects the black worker, but which in practice is exactly the opposite, but the whole state apparatus is geared towards the denial of the blacks of all economic, social and political rights.

Firstly, a black child has no access to free education, and the poverty to which he is subjected forces him to leave school without having acquired any specialised knowledge or skill. And meanwhile apprenticeship boards engage in an all-out campaign to raise almost all white workers to the level of skilled workers. One may then



ask why most black workers remain unskilled labourers? The answer is easy to find in the Apprenticeship Act 26 of 1922. Although this Act does not openly ostracise the African worker, its entrance qualifications are such that it effectively debar African workers from acquiring even the most basic technical training.

Despite the noise that the regime makes about narrowing the gap between black and white earnings, statistics show the difference were as follows:

Workers employed by Government June 81

White workers	310,000
African, Indian & Coloured	510,000
	.....
	820,000

Total earnings

White workers	R780m
African, Indian and Coloured	R487m

It can be seen therefore that in essence the gap is increasing.





### **Attempts to control unions**

The apartheid regime is attempting to prolong its existence by "revising" its legislative control of the unions. One example is the Labour Relations Amendment Act.

The Labour Relations Amendment Act takes the place of the Industrial Conciliation Act. In addition the Act repeals the Black Labour Relations Act of 1953, the Settlement of Disputes Act, etc. This new Act has been portrayed as eliminating racist and discriminating laws against black workers, giving Africans the right to form trade unions to represent them and to negotiate on their behalf. The regime claims that it introduces reforms and gives examples such as the fact that non-racial and African trade unions can

register and participate in the Industrial Council system. While the Act removes all references to race, it does not alter the position of black workers, and Africans in particular, within the apartheid system. Without any democratic rights these workers are merely regarded as "labour units". While the Act enables blacks to participate in the statutory bargaining system, it does not afford genuine trade union rights to any workers.

### **Struggle for union recognition**

The struggle of black workers for the recognition of their trade unions is not about registration. It is the assertion by black workers of their right to be represented by 7



the trade union of their choice. Registration was rejected because of the controls that resulted from it. The new Act extends these controls to all unions. The regime is now attempting to get all unions to submit to the totally undemocratic bargaining system of the Industrial Councils, which are biased in favour of the employers and which impose even greater restrictions on trade union organisation. Progressive trade unions in South Africa will not capitulate and resistance will continue to increase.

### **Registration**

Under the Act, "employee" is defined solely in terms of the employment relationship — as "any person who is employed by or working for any employer and receiving or entitled to receive any remuneration". By adopting this definition African unions and non-racial unions can register. It should be noted that once workers participate in an "illegal" strike they are no longer regarded as employees. In the case of migrant workers and bantustan residents, this usually ends their permits to be in the areas of employment. Thus despite the changes in words, the pass laws will continue to be used as a means of strike breaking.

### **Industrial Councils**

The Industrial Councils remain at the core of the official bargaining system. The Labour Relations Amendment Act permits African and non-racial trade unions to participate in these bodies.

But, Industrial Councils, are bodies through which the regime seeks to gain control of workers' rights to negotiate over issues affecting them. These Councils constitute the basic organisational foundation of anti-worker, class collaborationist strategy introduced by the Industrial Conciliation Act.

The Industrial Councils remove the whole process of negotiation and bargaining from the workers themselves. The agreements

do not cover the recognition of the right of particular unions to an organised presence in the work-place. Most important, this system undermines the process whereby workers can back their demands with an organised response.

### **The Struggle Continues**

It is the right of all workers to establish trade unions to negotiate wages and working conditions on their behalf and for trade unions to be recognised simply on the basis that they represent workers.

Through the Labour Relations Amendment Act the regime aims at crushing the rejection by black workers of such puppet bodies like the bantustan authorities, the South African Indian Council, the community councils and the host of other apartheid institutions. It is the regime's attempt to avoid the open display of support by the workers for the national liberation movement. Yet it is another manoeuvre to suppress the anger of the workers at the continuous harassment, detentions, bannings, arrests and murder of their leaders. But what workers cannot achieve through open organisation, they will continue underground.

It is the unity and common purpose of SACTU and the ANC and its allies which brought down the anger of the white state onto our heads but it is this same unity and common purpose which has given the liberation movement the stature in the world and at home, the clarity of purpose and the strength to continue the fight.

The recent upsurges of the working class is in large part a protest against national oppression, race discrimination and class exploitation, but more specifically at the present time, against the forms that this exploitation takes under the system of apartheid.



## Impressions of the ANC Youth Conference

It was comrade President Tambo who — as a former youth leader — expressed his confidence in the youth in the following words: “A people, a country, a movement that does not value its youth does not deserve its future.”

It was in keeping with this that the National Executive Committee of the ANC declared 1981 as the Year of the Youth. 1981 was the 5th anniversary of

the Soweto uprisings and the 20th anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe. The courage and determination of our youth to confront the enemy by all means at their disposal had become a permanent feature of their conduct in the overall struggle of our people. But there was more to it — some weaknesses political and otherwise of the youth manifested themselves.

Weaknesses apart, this courage and 9





determination found more pronounced expression in the development of armed struggle and mass political and economic struggles. Our people, through the ANC their movement have every reason to express their appreciation of the valuable contribution our youth are making in our struggle. We have in mind not only the field of education but also the labour front and that of armed struggle.

1981 was the year in which an all-round offensive of our people dealt decisive blows against the enemy. It was also in that year that the National Executive Committee of the ANC instructed the youth to hold a conference with the aim of finding ways of strengthening the Youth Section of our movement. This was in line with one of the objectives of celebrating the 70th anniversary of the ANC - in 1982. The aim was to ensure the consolidation of the unity of the ANC and its capacity to intensify the offensive against the enemy on all fronts.

This conference was the first of its kind. It involved all our youth and in that sense it was historical. All our youth were there - those serving in Umkhonto we Sizwe, the People's Army, the working

youth and students. The central task was to map out a common programme geared towards the mobilisation of the youth in South Africa. The theme was "The Role of the Youth in the Liberation Struggle" and by implication and meaning the conference examined the role of the youth in the struggle led by the ANC. The conference examined the role each category of youth should play in the process leading to the seizure of power.

This was not the first meeting of our youth. The ANC students had met before in the GDR in 1971; in Moscow in 1977 and in Hungary in 1980. But they were meeting for the first time in Africa - and those who met were not only students.

#### Participants

The participants included members of the National Executive Committee of the ANC, youth representatives from all over the world, guests, technical staff, members of the directorate of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (which hosted the conference), ANC representatives in Italy, Senegal and Sweden, representatives of the Women's Section, the International Department of the

ANC, the South African Communist Party and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. Delegates came from Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, West Germany (FRG), German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Holland, Mozambique, Romania, Soviet Union, Sweden, USA, United Kingdom, Tanzania and Zambia.

This was a representative conference. There were comrades who had participated in the activities of the Youth League in the 1940's and 1950's; those who took part in students' organisations in the early sixties; those who were involved in the Black Consciousness Movement in the late 60's and early 70's; active participants in the June 16 uprisings and struggles waged by students after 1976 including 1982. It was the whole experience of our movement in youth politics. And it therefore concretised a cadre policy of the ANC.

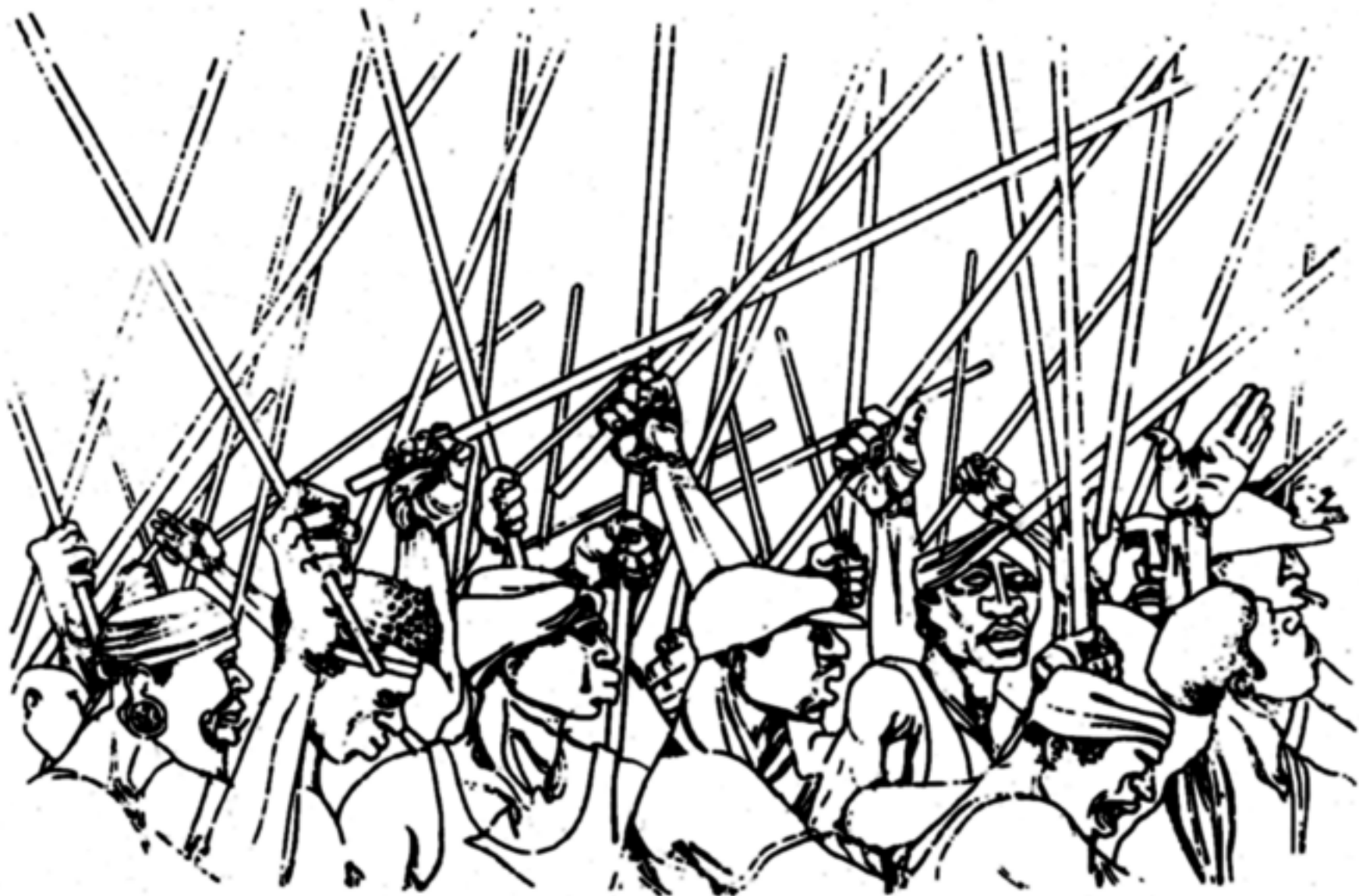
#### Opening Session

The conference opened on August 17, 1982. Joe Nhlanhla, the Administrative Secretary of the ANC, chaired this session. The National Executive Committee of the ANC was represented by its Secretary-General, Alfred Nzo; the Treasurer-General T.T. Nkobi and the National Commissar Andrew Masondo. Moses Mabhida, the General Secretary of the South African Communist Party represented his party. Also present were members of the diplomatic corps, representative of non-governmental agencies and a representative of UNIP (Zambia). Messages were read and heard from the following:

the representative of Chama Cha Mapinduzi, Ndugu S. Mungela who welcomed the conference participants on behalf of his party and government of Tanzania. The principal of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, Comrade Maseko, then welcomed everybody to our school. He was followed by Comrade Moses







Mabhida on behalf of the SACP, then Comrade Eric Mtshali (SACTU) and Comrade Mavis Nhlapo (Women's Secretariat). The keynote address was made by comrade Alfred Nzo on behalf of the National Executive Committee of the ANC. The pioneers of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College also addressed the session which was concluded by a cultural performance of the College's pioneers.

### **Conference Proper**

In all, there were four commissions and four plenary sessions. The first plenary sat to adopt the programme, rules of procedure and the steering committee of the conference. The report of the credentials committee as well as messages from fraternal organisations were heard. On the second day the conference heard and discussed reports from the Youth Secretariat and the various regional youth committees. Then followed the third session which discussed various papers related to the theme of the conference. The papers examined the different and varied problems

affecting the youth and their participation in our struggle. They dealt with the youth in our army, Umkhonto we Sizwe; the students, young women, pioneers, working youth and students in SOMAFSCO – the ANC school. Andrew Masondo, the National Commissar spoke on the role of the youth and students in the struggle and Moses Mabhida dealt with the character, place and role of the South African Communist Party in the South African revolution and in the international working class movement. Mavis Nhlapo and Eric Mtshali made contributions on women and the working class in South Africa respectively. These papers laid the basis for the discussions in the commissions on the role of the youth, their rights and obligations.

Other aspects which were tackled were the politico-military strategy of the ANC; the mobilisation of the religious community; the women and the workers.

Two commissions, one on Education and Culture, and the other on Organisation and Structure sat concurrently. After an examination of the educational programmes

of the ANC, the commission on Education and Culture made several fundamental recommendations relating to this aspect. A report on the seminar on Culture and Resistance held in Gaborone in July helped to stimulate a discussion which was followed by a recognition of the need to develop art-forms which can be employed to advance the cause of our struggle and to improve the skills of our artists.

The Commission on Organisation and Structure discussed the new structure of the youth as conceived and proposed by the National Executive Committee of the ANC. The structure outlines the tasks of the Youth Section; coordination of youth activities and a clearly defined system of accountability.

The commission that examined a Programme of Action — a favourite term in the ANC — examined the internal situation and did not overlook the international situation.

Talking about the international situation a resolution was passed, condemning Israeli aggression in Lebanon and expressing solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese patriotic and democratic forces. Another resolution expressed solidarity with the people of Namibia and SWAPO and underlined the heroism of the people of the Southern African region. There was a clear identification with the struggling youth and people of the world — what one can describe as a call for unity in action of all the anti imperialist forces. The Soviet Union, that is the Government, the people and the CPSU was not forgotten. Not only because of the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the USSR and its contribution to our struggle but primarily because of the role it plays in the struggle for peace, social progress and national liberation. We are all confronted with the same enemy: international imperialism. The U.S. inspired tactics of destabilisation in Southern Africa, aggression and invasion in Angola and the attempts to link the question of withdrawal of South African racist troops in Namibia

with the presence of the internationalist Cuban friendly forces in Angola are not just aims to sabotage Resolution 435 of the U.N.. There are sinister implications especially when one considers that the West regards South Africa as part of their foreign "defence policy" against "Soviet imperialism" in the Indian Ocean and Southern Africa.

The Conference took place at a time when in South Africa the balance of forces is significantly shifting in favour of the liberation forces; when the danger of war — regional or continental war — is imminent and hence the growing need to make the link between our liberation struggle and world peace. The confrontation between the forces of exploitation, oppression and war (including the military-industrial complex) and those of peace, national liberation and democracy has been made more severe and sharper by the international forces of reaction with the Reagan Administration as their spokesman. That is why we regard our struggle as an integral part of the world-wide anti-imperialist struggle. And almost by definition support and solidarity with our struggle is more than just humanitarian aid or assistance to some starving and deprived Blacks in the jungles of Africa. In our region of Southern Africa we are fighting American, British, West German, Dutch, French — in short international imperialism and the success of our struggle will mean weakening of international imperialism, a direct assistance to the progressive forces in the world especially in Western Europe and America. This was the language of our youth at their conference.

The most important political point of the whole conference — judging by the atmosphere prevailing throughout the conference, the dynamic combination of seriousness and a festive mood, the chanting of the slogans and singing of revolutionary songs as various speakers took the floor, the level and depth of the political content





of the messages – is that for the first time since the ANC was banned in 1960 our movement was considering setting up what amounts to a national youth body. Such a body must have as one of its main tasks the mobilisation of the youth at home into the main stream of the struggle.

The youth body has been given enough teeth both in the manpower that has been drawn into the structure (something uncharacteristic of the ANC) and in the manner in which the structure has been conceived. Political guidance and education of the ANC youth has been provided. Talking about education, our people value it very much. Not only are the parents spending their last monies to educate their children, these children are prepared to sit in dilapidated garages and churches (called schools in South Africa) with their hungry stomachs and insufficient warm clothes to pursue their education. Recently in 1976 in Soweto they showed that they are prepared to die fighting for a better education.

By the way the term “youth” does not simply mean young people: it means

students (and students are not just those who are studying but includes those who work to pay for their school fees); it includes the unemployed and unemployable (partly because of apartheid, educational qualification, poverty of the parents etc.); the disabled young girls and women; those young kids who sell newspapers and work because their parents cannot pay the fees.

What about the teachers and the parents of these young people? Is it not the tasks of the Youth Section to mobilise them?

This brings us to one of the crucial discussions held at the ANC youth conference namely that it is not enough for the Youth Section to be a source of information and knowledge, that is just knowing about the academic credentials. The political aspects are very important more so that the Youth Section is expected to provide the next generation of leaders and workers in the movement.

There can be no doubt that one of the questions that all delegates wanted to be resolved at the conference was the question of the youth body and its ability to implement the decisions of the ANC

youth conference. This is a political question. It means the ANC youth have to fully come to terms with the fact that we are at war inside South Africa and we are not just here outside the country. Dynamic contacts with the people inside the country means among other things initiating campaigns at home and abroad on issues that affect the youth.

It also means that membership of Umkhonto we Sizwe is not for only those who are "less educated" — intellectuals are needed in the field of battle. We are now not talking about the "battle of ideas" but the actual armed confrontation. We need engineers, scientists, technicians etc — in the past we tended to concentrate on social

sciences but now there is a shift in our ranks towards natural sciences.

Finally it is important to mention the fact that the venue: the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFSCO) contributed to the mood and spirit that characterised the deliberations. Solly's blood nourishes the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu planted that tree inside South Africa and in our liberation movement and that tree inspires everybody. The school needs to be supported by our friends. The ANC Youth Section which took decisions at this important school needs your support.





# CHILD - CARE

## Imperative for our future

**ANC SEMINAR ON EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION,  
held at SOMAFCO in Morogoro, Tanzania, September 23- October 2, 1982.**

The present situation of the black South African child in relation to health, care, family and education in South Africa is that of being deprived and disadvantaged. In South Africa today there are no Central Government financed programmes catering for the health care and education of young children. In addition there are no programmes funded by the South African regime which aim to train early childhood care and education specialists to take charge of the growing up needs of young black South Africans.

The exile situation into which our children, especially since the 1976 Soweto uprisings, have been thrown has multiplied our problems in meeting the needs of early child care and education. Thousands of young children have been uprooted from South Africa and suddenly thrown into exile where they have to survive outside the security of the family. There is now the added problem of young children born in exile by very young mothers.

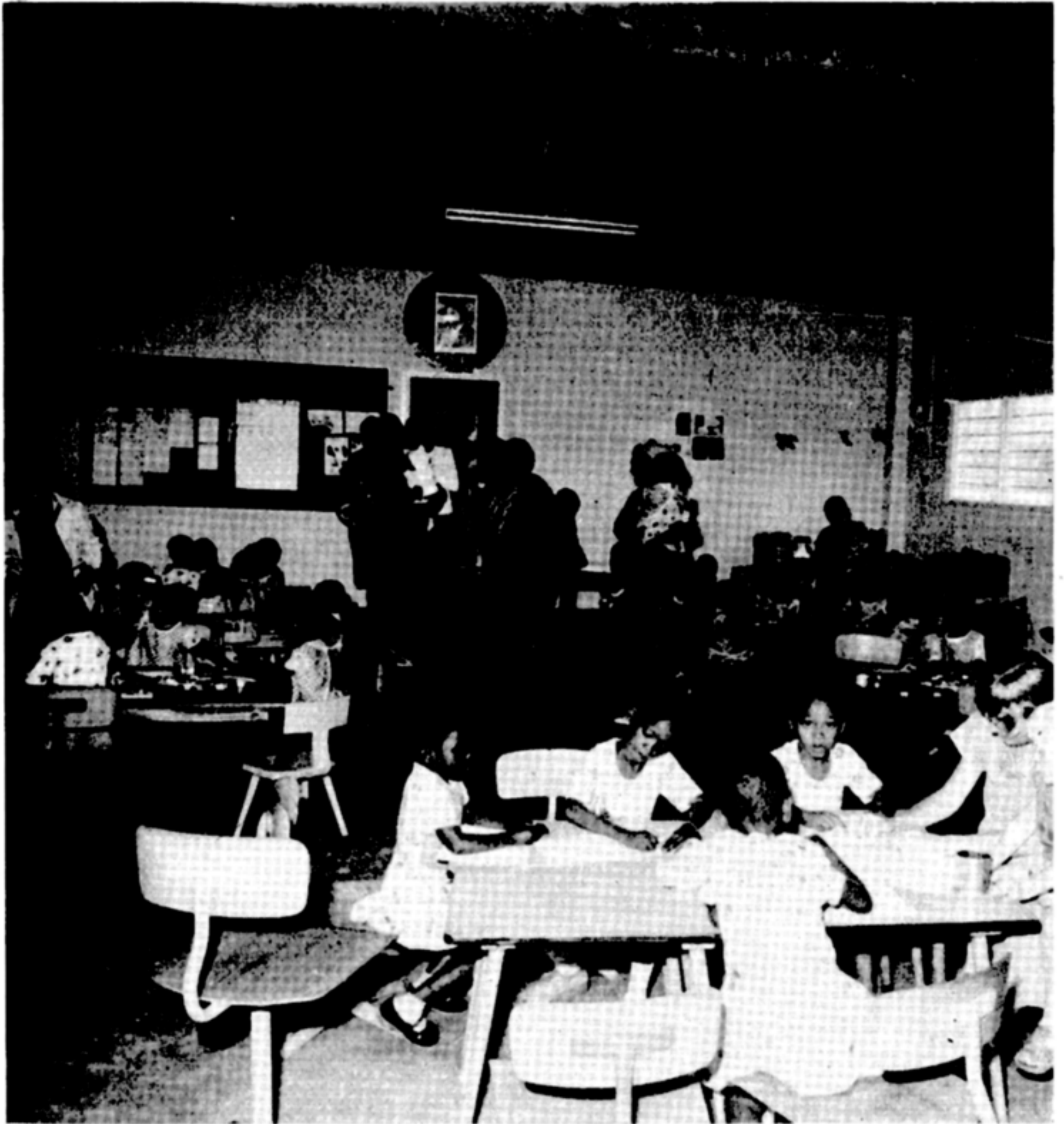
All these points underline the need for an efficient and well organised early childhood care and educational facilities. We should not forget that it is from these children of today that we have to and we

are going to produce the leaders of tomorrow.

### **Charlotte Maxeke Child Care Centre**

It is impossible to discuss the deliberations, conclusions and recommendations of this seminar without taking into account the concrete reality namely the conditions at the Charlotte Maxeke Child Care Centre. This is all the more so because those who support us must do so not only because of what we are — important as that is — they need to know where we come from and where we are going to.

The Charlotte Maxeke Child Care Centre in Morogoro was established on June 13, 1979 — the International Year of the Child. This project falls under the Women's Section of the ANC. Its aim is to provide a substitute home for the newly born babies and children in exile. The Child Care Centre is housed in three residences in Morogoro town. Mothers live with their babies and are expected to remain at the centre until such time that the babies have adjusted and can be left in the hands of substitute mothers — in other words the Centre provides an environment that is as close to home as possible.



*Children at work in the nursery*

There is a dispensary, though small, in each of the three Child Care Centre residences in Morogoro and all children are under the supervision of a medical officer. There is also a clinic at Mazimbu where our young children receive treatment, when necessary. A doctor visits the clinic once a week and serious cases of illness are referred to the Morogoro Hospital — thanks to the

good relations between the ANC and Tanzanian people.

As the Child Care Centre grew new demands emerged. In 1980 a nursery school was opened — it has 4 full time staff. At present there are 53 pre-nursery children in our care and 60 nursery children at the centre.

The demands on our resources are 17



great and new problems are emerging. Accommodation became grossly inadequate; there was a need for educational toys, books written in our languages and information in the form of children's stories, rhymes, songs and so on in our languages. The need for trained teachers in elementary pre-school education became acute. What about the management control and orientation of the Child Care Centre? And the supervision of the nursery school under trained personnel?

All these problems including health care, nutrition and elementary child psychology and many more problems needed to be discussed and known – after all knowledge of anything is a precondition to solution and change if necessary.

### **The Seminar**

These were some of the reasons which prompted the ANC Women's Section to think of hosting a seminar on Early Childhood Care and Education. This seminar was held under the sponsorship of UNESCO from 24th September to 2nd October, 1982 at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO). Attending the seminar were three UNESCO specialists and twenty official delegates from among the nursing mothers at the Charlotte Maxeke Child Care Centre. Other delegates came from Lusaka, Maputo and London. Also present as observers were the Charlotte Maxeke Child Care assistants, ANC Youth Section representatives, teachers and pre-university students of SOMAFCO.

As early as February 1982 discussions were held between the ANC Women's Section and UNESCO and a need was felt for a seminar of this nature partly because of the growing number of young nursing mothers, most of them still students and others engaged in political activities of our movement who find themselves mothers at a very early age in life before they know anything about early childhood care and education.

The objectives of the seminar were to

look into the problems of all South African children in exile under the care of the ANC; to provide an opportunity for ANC to discuss and exchange views on common problems facing them in the area of early childhood care and education; to acquaint them with, and appreciate the role of education in early childhood care. By the way we are talking of children who do not have a "proper home".

The participants were given the opportunity to learn from each other; to share experiences; to be better equipped to tackle the problems of early childhood care and education, and therefore, to collectively identify problems in this field. That is to gain the basic understanding in early childhood care and education; to be able to utilize knowledge they gained in caring for their children; to be able to identify any emotional, social, physical and intellectual problems in children and to be able to recognise the dependence of children on their parents or parent substitute for their emotional needs.

The seminar was officially opened on September 24, 1982 by the Chairperson, the Matron of the Charlotte Maxeke Child Care Centre, R.V. Nzo. Then the Director of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College and Dakawa, M. Tickle took the floor; next came the ANC Chief Representative in East Africa, S. Mabizela who was followed by the Representative of the Tanzanian Government, Ndugu Mponzi and the UNESCO representative Madam G. Fountaine-Eboue. Also Ida Subaran, a UNESCO project specialist on early childhood care and education and then G. Shope, head of the ANC Women's Section. This was the opening session.

The other plenary sessions were addressed by M. Phambo, F. Mussagy, M. Choabi, P. Khuzwayo, F. Maleka, M. Njobe etc.

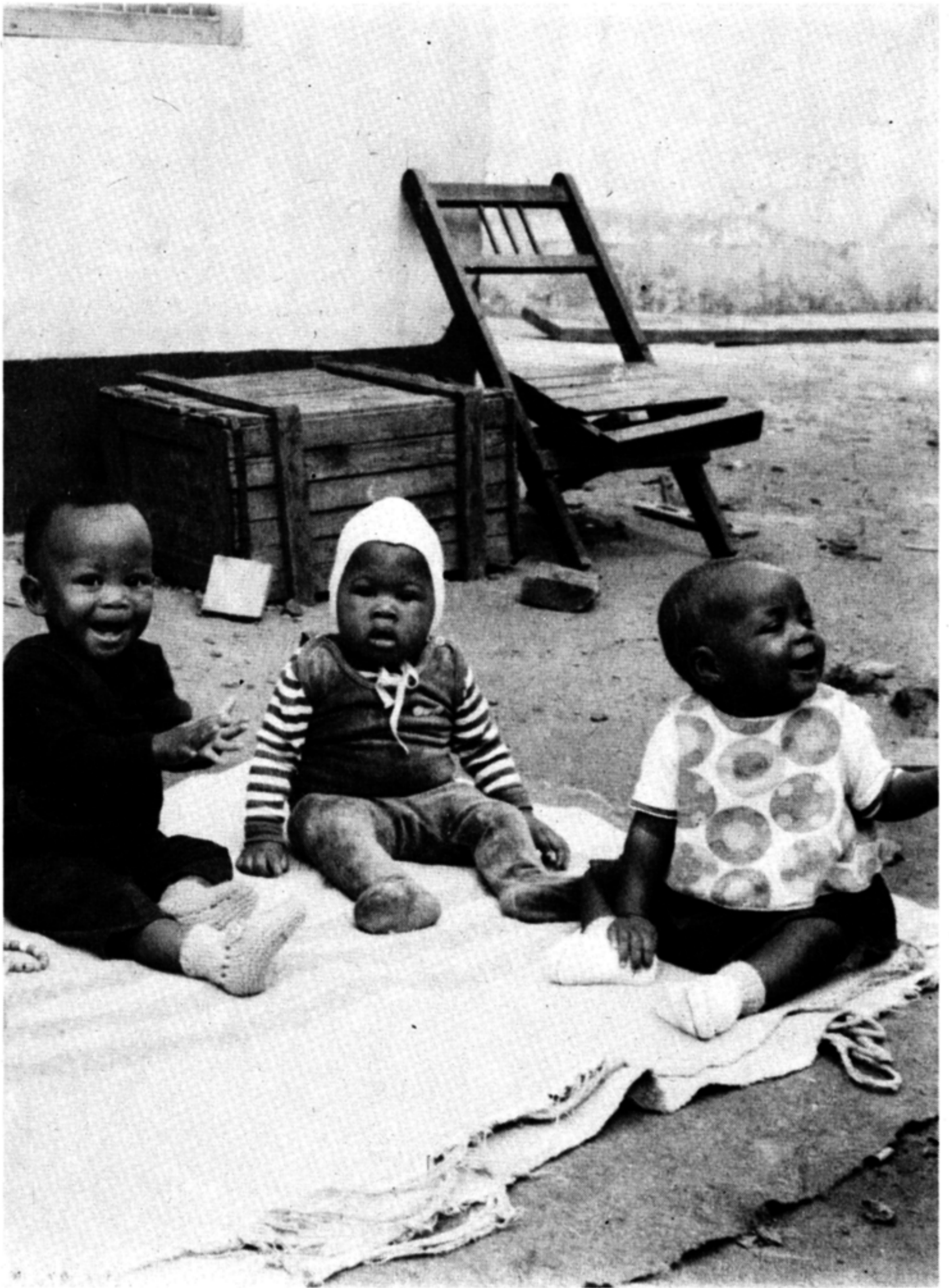
It is impossible to summarise their speeches in a few pages.

They emphasised that there should be



*Outside the Maxeke Creche*





no contradiction between education the child receives at home and that which it receives from the community; they explained the role of both parents in the family and the community and stressed that care must be taken that early childhood care and education is not based on foreign models. Indeed there was emphasis on teaching the young kids to develop a South African cultural identity; they should be taught the norms and customs of our country and introduction of foreign models of behaviour should as much as possible be avoided — although under conditions of exile we cannot altogether avoid the influence of cultures under which we bring up our children.

### Conclusion

It can be said that the Seminar at SOMAFCO was a success. The participants identified the specific problems which face our movement in this regard. They stated that the important and crucial problem facing us at this stage is the provision of properly organised Child Care Centres, professionally administered by trained personnel — which we do not have — so as to ensure the healthy and well balanced development of our young children into intellectually and emotionally balanced adults.

As members of the liberation movement we must always emphasise the interconnection between culture (song, dance, music, drama, poetry, prose, art, science etc) and political consciousness that is identity and commitment to our struggle. Our children will thus become conscious of the struggle for liberation and the desire to create a just social order in South Africa and a better world. The creation of a Southern African cultural environment in which our children are brought up is therefore vital.

Child care is therefore a communal responsibility. There is more to it. The provision of emotional security and affection is a political duty not just for

those charged with the care of the child but of all ANC members.

We have said so much about the children. What about the parents?

A father is a significant figure for the development of the child. They provide emotional and social security for their families. The paternal deprivation can be as serious as maternal deprivation “and we therefore would encourage the conception and birth of children by married couples as the most desirable practice” said M. Tickle. The deep emotional significance of the parent-child tie was recognised and therefore the need for the mother to be with her child up to nursery age but there will be exceptions when a cadre has to undergo a course of study or training and this will be possible only if the parents know that their child will be competently looked after in a good environment. Mothers, whether married or single, should not be handicapped by having a child. They must be given the opportunity for furthering their studies or acquiring skills through Adult Education classes or correspondence courses. They should be able to make their contribution to the struggle.

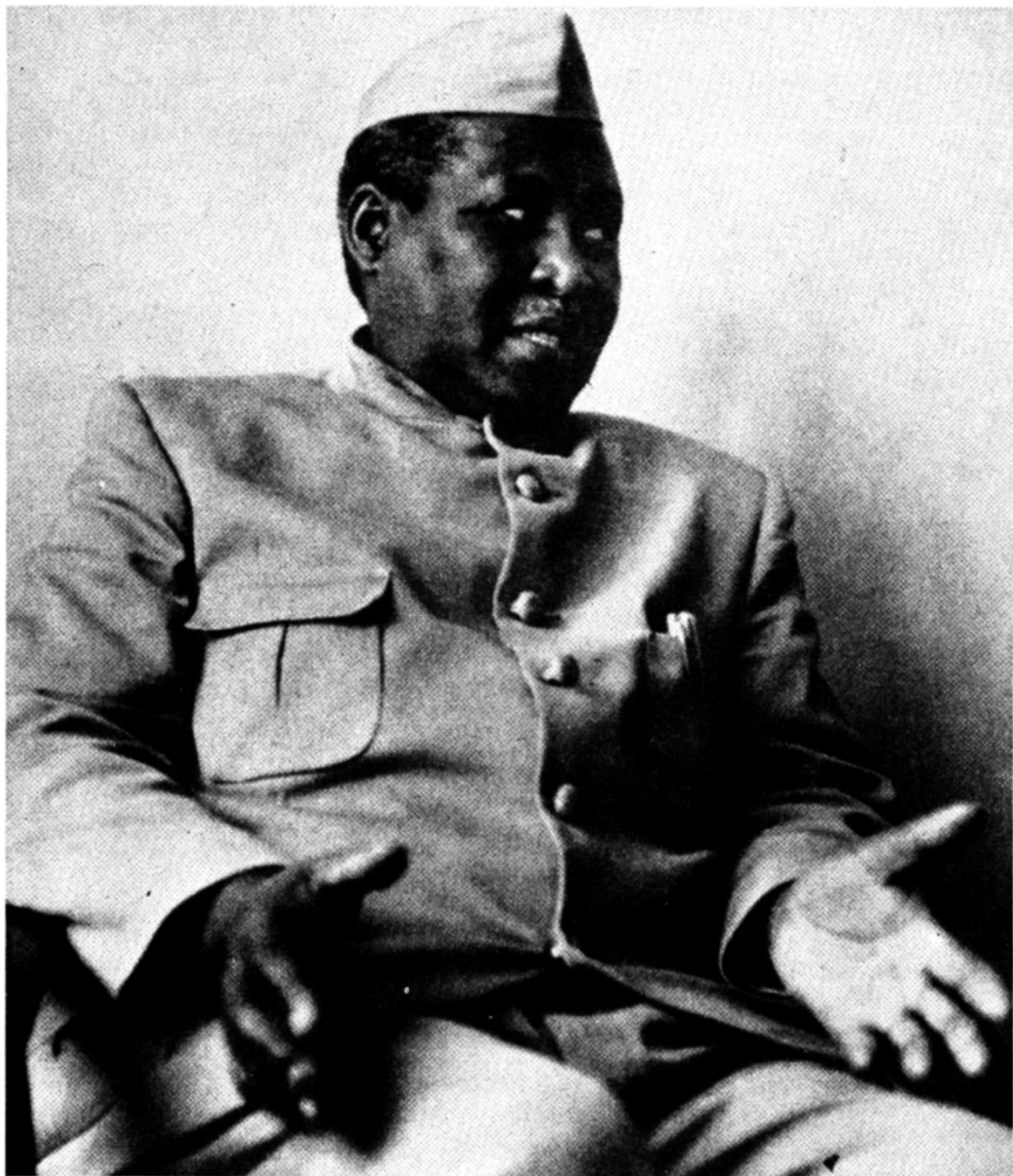
This child care and education programme is visualised by our movement as an embryo of a future child care and education programme in a free and independent South Africa:

“While meeting the needs of our exile communities is a priority, our programmes of child care and education have a long term objective, that is, to meet the challenge of setting up and organising child care in a liberated South Africa. The concrete conditions in a free South Africa will influence the precise structure and organisation of our future child care services, but the principles and practice that we are establishing now will form a major influence in a free South Africa”.



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# OUTSTANDING PEOPLE'S LEADERS:



## Part One: A.J.Lutuli

*Dr. V. Gorodnov is a Soviet scientist specialising on current socio-political problems in South Africa. This is the first part of his article. The second part on Nelson Mandela will appear in our next issue of SECHABA.*

South Africa of the 1950s – 1960s was a scene of violent social and racial confrontations. The racist concept of apartheid adopted by the White government of South Africa shaped all aspects of life in the country. The White minority was trying to preserve its supremacy while the Black majority was looking for ways to cast it off. These were the main factors determining the relationship between the two opposing camps. Two figures stand out among the people who were at the helm of the national liberation struggle and considerably influenced the development of public thinking at that time. They are Albert Lutuli and Nelson Mandela.

### **A Profound Thinker**

The last 15 years of his life from 1952 to the very day of his tragic death, Albert John Lutuli (1898–1967) served as the President–General of the African National Congress, ANC, – the leading organisation of the South African liberation movement. He enjoyed enormous popularity and respect among the broadest masses of South African people and was called “one of the greatest political figures of our times”, “a profound thinker, a man of powerful logic with a keen sense of justice; a man of lofty principles, a bold and courageous fighter and a statesman. He was a true African nationalist and an unflinching patriot”. (1). His influence on the minds of the destitute South Africans remains just as strong today. ‘The name of Chief Albert John Lutuli is revered in every African’s home and among the other layers of oppressed non-Whites in South Africa, his name is respected by all democratically-minded Whites” (2).

He was the only African to have been awarded a Nobel Peace Prize (1961). In

1974, in connection with the 10th anniversary of its foundation, the Organisation of African Unity posthumously awarded him with a Freedom Medal.

Albert Lutuli came from the family of a traditional chief living in the Umvoti area in the province of Natal. In contrast to the hereditary Paramount Chief, chiefs of the Amakholwa were elected by elders from among the worthiest tribesmen. Before Albert, his grandfather and uncle had also served as the tribe’s elected chiefs. His father adopted Christianity and served as an interpreter with the local mission, which means that he also belonged to the “elite” of the local African community. Albert was first brought up at the mission school and then studied at Adam’s college in Natal where he later taught from 1921 to 1935.

During the years of his childhood and youth when his character and outlook were moulded, A. Lutuli lived in two different worlds at the same time: in the world of the traditions of the Zulu people and their tribal lifestyle, and in the world of Western civilisation and Christian religion. As a result of this he emerged as an educated person, a convinced Christian who, at the same time, preserved traditional links with his people and took pride in their glorious historical past. It was only logical when he was elected the tribe’s chief in 1935.

Albert Lutuli displayed outstanding abilities of an organiser and leader and employed quite modern methods in his work. In particular, to defend the interests of his tribesmen, he set up the Association of Bantu Sugar-Cane producers. His efforts aimed at raising the living standards of his tribesmen yielded appreciable results and this earned him still greater respect among them. It is fairly logical that when the South African government dismissed him from his post of the tribal chief (3) in 1952 for his public and political activities within the ANC, the tribe’s elders decided not to elect a new chief, thereby displaying their loyalty to Chief Lutuli.



### **Active Political Work**

The election of Albert Lutuli to the Native Representative Council (4) in 1946 can be regarded as the beginning of his active socio-political work. The election to the NRC opened the way of conformism and reconciliation with the racist regime, all the more so since everything concerning the NRC was presented by the authorities as a manifestation of concern about the interests of the African population. However, Lutuli at once adopted the stand of a staunch opponent to the racist authorities which tried to use the NRC to deceive the Africans.

The logic of socio-political life and his own firmness in defending the interests of his people led Lutuli into the ANC which he joined in 1945. In 1951 he was elected Provincial President of the ANC in Natal, and in 1952 he became President-General of the African National Congress.

The '50s and the early '60s were the years of a dramatic upsurge of the struggle of the oppressed Black population against the apartheid regime. During that time, the ANC became a mass organisation which rose to direct the efforts of the popular masses, and much credit for this belongs to Albert Lutuli.

His socio-political outlooks and his stand on the most crucial issues of South African reality have been reflected in his speeches, articles and ANC documents (5). Among the latter, one should note the Freedom Charter (6) – the policy document of the united front of South African organisations, including the ANC, fighting against racism and apartheid, adopted by the Congress of the People in 1955. Very important too, for understanding Lutuli's outlook and ideological positions, is his speech during the presentation to him of a Nobel Peace Prize in 1961. At that time he was already banned from speaking before audiences or in the press, so that this speech may be taken as a kind of Albert Lutuli's political testament.

Lutuli has written only one book (7)

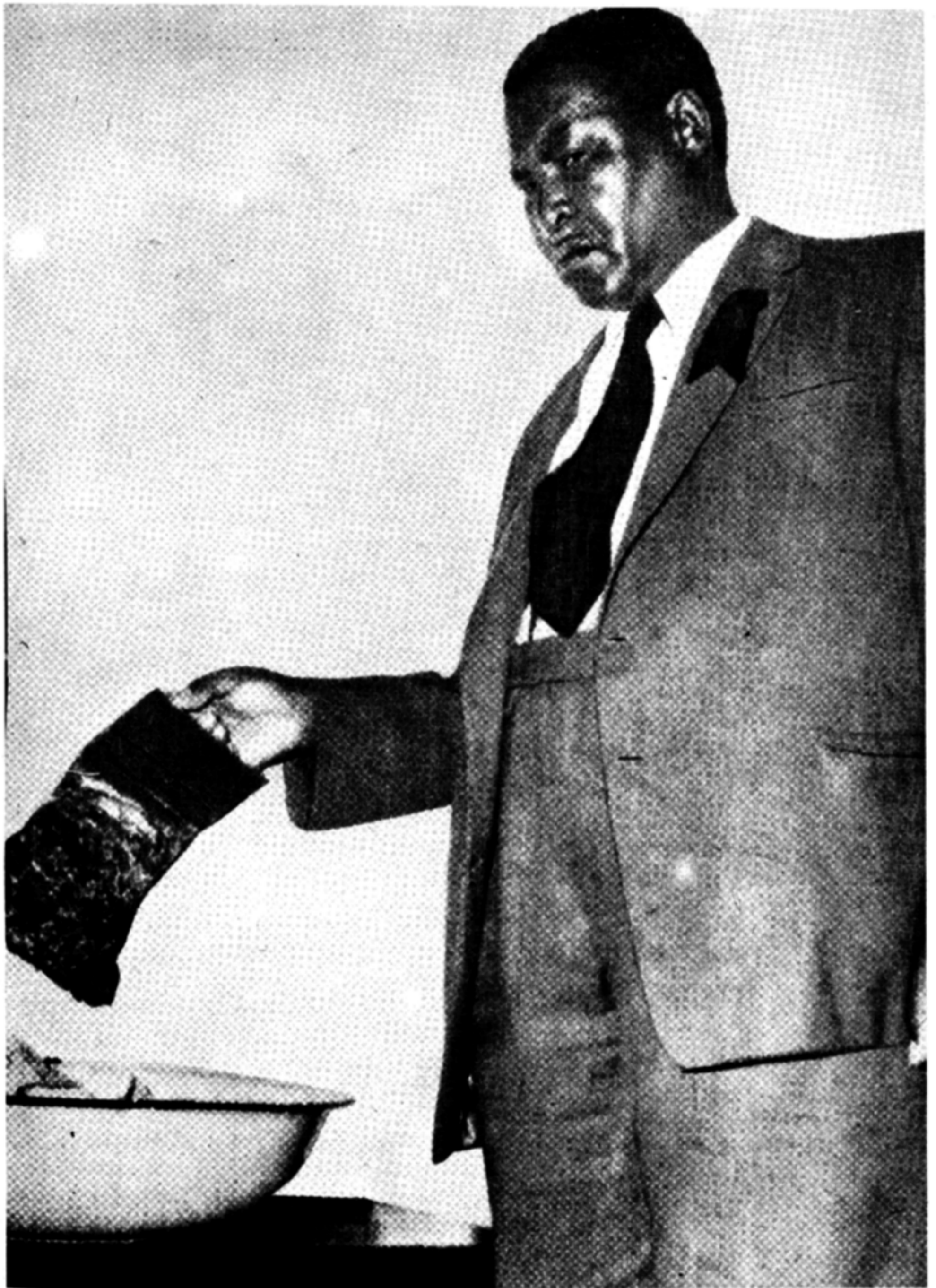
which was published in 1962. In the book, he described in detail his own life, which helps one to get first-hand knowledge about various aspects about life in South Africa.

Persecution by police deprived Albert Lutuli of the opportunity to appear more frequently at public meetings and in the press. While acting as the President-General of the ANC, he twice served prison sentences and was three times deprived of the freedom of movement and of the right to engage in socio-political activities for an aggregate term of 9 years. Only during short spells between all these bans and restrictions did he manage to speak at public meetings and rallies and to publish his articles.

The most poignant issue in South Africa is that of the White minority's domination over the Black majority. In the situation where the highly strained relations between the dominant and oppressed races seemed to be overshadowing everything else, A. Lutuli managed to grasp their essence and to expose the actual roots of racism.

"I do not find myself among those people who tend to reduce all human affairs to questions of economics and economic pressures. None the less, the basic point at issue in South Africa is the question of ownership. Because the races inhabiting the country disagree fundamentally on the answer to this question, the whole controversy is hopelessly tangled with racial factors, and on both sides these racial distinctions have become an unavoidable part of the struggle. One cannot separate the issue of race from the argument about ownership at present, because one race insists on exclusive ownership." (8)

Lutuli wanted to stress that in contrast to the White minority who believe that the country belongs to them, the overwhelming majority of the African population are convinced that the country belongs to all people living there, regardless of the colour of their skin. The pivotal point in Albert



*Chief Lutuli burns his pass; March 1960*



Lutuli's socio-political activities was his yearning to liberate the oppressed African masses of South Africa from the tyranny of White minority rule.

His role in the national liberation struggle in the '50s and '60s was quite significant due both to his personal assets and to the position of the leading mass national movement held by the Congress.

The ideological platform of the ANC as a whole and of Lutuli himself was African nationalism which, according to him, "the ANC made the philosophical basis of our struggle for freedom." (9) It would be wrong, however, to accentuate his nationalism in defining Lutuli's outlook. Way back in 1948 during his tour of the United States, A. Lutuli, delivering a series of lectures on the situation in South Africa, strongly denounced the extreme forms of nationalism. He clearly defined the African nationalism which guided the liberation movement in South Africa. "The African National Congress, having accepted the fact of the multiracial nature of the country, envisaged an all-inclusive African Nationalism which, resting on the principle of 'freedom for all' in a country, 'unity for all' in a country, embraced all people under African Nationalism regardless of their racial and geographical origin who resided in Africa and paid their undivided loyalty and allegiance." (10)

The realisation of the fact that the population of South Africa is an involved multiracial conglomerate and that genuine liberation of any of its sections from oppression by another section is impossible if the liberated part of the population begins to dictate its will to and dominate over the former masters led Lutuli to the positions of nationalism defending the interests of all population groups. He repeatedly announced his allegiance to the truly democratic settlement of the question of South Africa's future, which he mainly perceived in the formation of a society free of racial oppression. "Our vision has

always been that of a non-racial democratic South Africa which upholds the rights of all who live in our country, to remain there as full citizens with equal rights and responsibilities with all others." (11) That was the firm stand of both Lutuli the thinker and the ANC President.

### Unity the Goal

Albert Lutuli stood for the unification of all opponents of apartheid for common struggle against racial oppression. This mainly required the unity of the Africans themselves. It was exactly to attain this goal that the African National Congress was set up in 1912. The subsequent growth of the liberation struggle brought up the issue of the formation of a united multi-racial front of struggle against racism and apartheid. Such a front came to materialise in the shape of the Congress Alliance founded in the '50s.

It was exactly the vision of a non-racial democratic future of the country that "prompted the African National Congress to invite members of other racial groups who believe with us in the brotherhood of man and in the freedom of all people to join with us in establishing a non-racial democratic South Africa" (12). The drive for unity and the policy of unification of all opponents of apartheid were the only sound strategy for the liberation forces fighting against racism in South Africa. Parallel with this, multiracial unity of the liberation forces and the prospects of the establishment of a non-racial democratic South Africa in the future were a magnetic ideological alternative to apartheid and racism.

While working on the subject of unity, Lutuli did not confine himself to the socio-political tasks alone, but also paid attention to the problem of cultures' interaction and fusion. "We are quite concerned over the problem of contact between cultures, the African and European ones, and over the disorganisation of both – and the African



*Chief Lutuli – The People's Leader with the People*

particularly so – as a result of this contact” (13).

Speaking of the task of building a new society which would be a home to all people living in South Africa: Black and White, Lutuli emphasised that this would be accompanied by the “fusion of the elements of the rich cultural past that we inherit” (14). Sometimes, especially in his early statements, Lutuli equated Western culture or “Western civilisation”, as he called it, with Christianity. The special and, one might add, exaggerated role assigned by him to Christianity in South Africa naturally stemmed from his deep piety instilled in him at the mission school. According to Lutuli, “the conversion (to Christianity - V.G.) signified a totally new lifestyle, new outlooks and new convictions – i.e. the

moulding of all but a new type of people” (15). But he was also an outspoken opponent of “White paternal Christianity” in South Africa, which actually meant the same apartheid and race discrimination, but this time in the Church itself. Despite Lutuli’s religiousness, he clearly realised and openly declared that Christianity was incompatible with racial intolerance and apartheid, and that the Churches supporting the apartheid policy were unacceptable for Africans. He rejected the “meek fatalism” of religious people expecting that God would bring them freedom and wrote: “I often heard people saying sally: ‘Oh, Chief, Lord will give us freedom when he finds it possible’. This view was expressed both by heathens and Christians., with the latter doing it even more frequently. This



is how they justify the shedding of personal responsibility with references to this or another God" (16). Lutuli saw the way to freedom in active efforts of each and everyone, firmly believing that no one could justify passiveness at present with faith in liberation at God's will at an indefinite time in the future.

### Methods of Struggle

There are clear trends in the studies by certain Western scholars (17) to portray Lutuli as a man who kept away from active struggle and who was inclined to reconcile himself with the ruling regime. Lutuli indeed strove to secure changes for the better in the Africans' position by non-violent methods, and this was fully in line with the ANC policy right up to the '60s.

Claiming that Lutuli stood for reconciliation with the racist regime, however, would be a distortion of truth. Lutuli accepted and supported the tactics and methods of active struggle against the racist regime and apartheid, and this can be explained by the logic of the development of his political outlook. He understood that the road to freedom in South Africa passed only through active struggle, including armed actions.

Lutuli explained the causes of the evolution of his attitude towards the methods of struggle as far back as 1952. "Who will deny" he wrote, "that thirty years of my life have been spent knocking in vain, patiently, moderately and modestly at a closed and barred door? What have been the fruits of my many years of moderation? Has there been any reciprocal tolerance or moderation from the Government? No! On the contrary, the past thirty years have seen the greatest number of laws restricting our rights and progress until today we have reached a stage where we have almost no rights at all" (18). Then, nearly ten years later in Oslo, where he was presented with a Nobel Peace Prize, Lutuli said: "Ours is a continent in revolution against oppression. There can be no peace

until the forces of oppression are overthrown" (19).

Because of his banishment, Lutuli could not take a direct part in the establishment of the ANC's military organisation Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) in the early '60s. However, as the ANC President -General, he shared the responsibility for its actions, regarding them as inevitable and justified (20). This was fully in line with the views of the last years of his life on the forms and methods of struggle against the racist regime in South Africa. It is indicative that following the tragic death of A. Lutuli, when the ANC combatants started their armed struggle together with Zimbabwean patriots on the territory of the then Rhodesia in 1968, their first combat unit was called the Lutuli Battalion (21).

With his philosophic and political outlooks, Albert Lutuli was far from Marxism, but he never was an anti-Communist either. "I am not a Communist", Lutuli wrote. "There are Communists in South African resistance and I cooperate with them"(22). He held in high esteem and closely cooperated with such prominent members of the South African Communist Party as Moses Kotane. This is noted by B. Bunting (23) and admitted by E. Callan, too (24).

The death of A. Lutuli as a result of an accident came as a great loss for the national liberation movement of South Africa. His principled and resolute stand on the issues of struggle for the national and social liberation of the people of South Africa, which had already had a great impact on the country's public, could have eventually acquired still greater importance. However, even what Albert Lutuli has done for the cause of liberating his people has gone down in South Africa's history for ever.

(1) The Road to South African Freedom. The Programme of the SACP, p.3.

(2) Sechaba. 1969, p.8.

(3) The President of South Africa is regarded as the "Supreme Chief" of all African tribes and this enables the authorities to dismiss tribal chiefs at will.

(4) Founded in 1936 as a consultative body under the Ministry for tribal affairs. The establishment of the NRC was presented as "compensation" for the deprivation of Africans of electoral rights which they still enjoyed at that time in the Cape province. The NRC was dismantled in 1951 under the law on "Bantu authorities".

(5) The Road to Freedom is via the Cross. South African Studies - 3.

(6) Published in Russian in the supplement to the book "Africa South of the Sahara". 1958.

(7) J.A. Lutuli. Let My People Go. 1962

(8) Ibid, p.86

(9) The Road to Freedom is via the Cross, p. 31.

(10) Ibid., p.31.

(11) Ibid., p.61

(12) Ibid., p.66.

(13) A. Lutuli. Op. cit., p.37.

(14) Ibid., p.231.

(15) Ibid., p.20.

(16) Ibid., p.190.

(17) See, for example: E. Callan. Albert John Lutuli and the South African Race Conflict. Rabana zoo, 1962; E.S. Munger. Afrikaner and African Nationalism. South African Parallels and Parameters. Oxford, 1967.

(18) The Road to Freedom is via the Cross, p.7-8.

(19) Ibid., p.57.

(20) B. Bunting. Moses Kotane. South African Revolutionary. A Political Biography. London, 1975, p.269.

(21) Sechaba. 1969, N9, p.8.

(22) A. Lutuli. Op. cit., p.153-154.

(23) B. Bunting: Op. cit., p.268-269.

(24) E. Callan. Op. cit., p.29.

## BOOK REVIEW

*Nkosi, L.*

*Tasks and Masks – Themes and Styles of African Literature, London 1981.*

This book by Lewis Nkosi deals, as the subtitle suggests, with themes and styles of African literature – novel, poetry and drama. African literature here means literature emanating from Africa south of the Sahara, mainly former English, French and Portuguese colonies. As for the title "Tasks and Masks", Nkosi gives us the following explanation:

"Since the early 1960s I have been obsessed with the idea that African authors were easily divisible into two main groups: first, those who looked at African society in an essentialist way as unchanging in its important elements, rather like a "mask" one turns perpetually in one's hands, each time revealing nothing more than what it is,

the work of some skilful carver who originally imparted to it its outstanding features; the second group consists of those writers who for the most obvious political reasons are to be found mostly in East and Southern Africa; they have conceived of the act of writing as the carrying out of social tasks, almost desperate ones, without which understanding the development of African societies would be handicapped. In actual fact, this schema is only useful as a broad classificatory category but quickly breaks down when applied too rigorously to all African authors ... In some of the writers the two functions, that of simple representation and that of active criticism of African society overlap".

In this book Nkosi starts off by discussing what he calls the "language crisis". By this he means the simple fact that modern African writing has its origins in the politics 29



of anti-colonial struggle and still bears the marks of that struggle and that in asserting their right to self-determination Africans had to employ the language of their colonial masters; that implied that the rhetoric of political demand they adopted was better understood in Europe among both rulers and the common people, than among the African masses for whom the demands were being made. This results in the uncomfortable feeling that this literature, however deeply conscious of its responsibilities, somehow lacks relevance for 80 per cent of the African people who enjoy no literacy. In a somewhat different context Irene Assimba d'Almeida from Benin stressed this point when he wrote in *Presence Africaine* (No.120 4th Quarterly, 1981) that in French speaking Africa less than 10 per cent of the population understands French, less than 1 per cent speak it and only 1 per cent think in it. This presents the African writer with something of a dilemma, says Lewis Nkosi: "their task must obviously remain incomplete" (p.2)

This reminds me of a discussion I had recently with a Cameronian professor. He was full of praises for what he called a "unique democracy" in his country which reflects itself in the "bilingualism" in Cameroon (by which he meant English and French have the same and equal status). He can lecture in English and after him his colleague would lecture in French. "Even Canada does not have that," he said. My next logical question was: How many African languages are there in Cameroon? With a sense of disapproval, perhaps even of shame, he replied: "They are too many for my liking."

It is perhaps this attitude which has forced Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the Kenyan writer, to call for a literature that would be expressed in African languages because, he contends, to write in European languages is to be party to the neocolonial process, to identify with the linguistic instrument of a foreign culture and to repress African

languages and cultures. This may sound as tough talk but it is definitely food for thought.

Lewis Nkosi though, writing in English and evaluating literature produced by African writers in European languages, draws attention to the functions of language which is culture-bound and moulds the human mind and the human thought-patterns when he says:

"The relationship between language and national cultures cannot be too strongly emphasised. Like other peoples, black Africans possess a rich and living heritage in philosophy, ethics, religion and artistic creation, the deepest roots of which are embedded in the rich soil of African languages. To repossess that tradition means not only unlocking the caskets of syntax, disentangling metaphysics from poetry and proverb; it also means extracting social philosophy and habits of moral thought from the rhythm, imagery, repetitiousness, sometimes from the very circumlocution of native African speech". (p.3)

This brings us to the actual contents of the book which gives "a glimpse of the vast panorama of themes and styles, of the influences and examples, the strengths and weaknesses, in much of the significant body of work in nearly three hundred years of literary effort." (p.169)

The time-span covered alone is too vast for the purposes of this review. We shall assess those parts which deal with South Africa. Even here there are problems because Nkosi deals with many South African writers: La Guma, Abrahams, Kunene, Mphahlele, Cariem, Kgositsile, Brutus, Serote, Dhlomo, Vilakazi, Jolobe, Zwelonke, Head, Mtshali, Lessing, Dikobe, Gordimer and many others.

Nkosi has interesting things to say about these authors: their themes, styles, use of language, plot, heroes, in short, their

achievements and weaknesses. His analysis of Mphahlele's works is eye-opening. Nkosi starts off with Mphahlele's admission: "A hard fact to live with: that once an exile, always one" to show that Mphahlele did not only remain an "exile" – wherever he was – but developed to be a "wanderer" and was so "rootless" that he returned to the same unchanged racist South Africa which he left in the late 1950s. This explains the title of his book : "The Wanderers". There was more to it:

"Mphahlele seems to have given up the cool objectivity of his short stories for a prolonged bout of self-justification and self-worship which do nothing to enhance the quality of this turgidly voluminous prose-work. Indeed, his constant demands upon us to see the hero as a man of superior qualities produces exactly the opposite effect. Finally, in the author's hands this novel turns into the deadest tomb of self-love". (p.94)

On the situation in South Africa and its demands on the writers Nkosi makes the point:

"The question of a usable tradition still lies at the heart of the problem of South African literature. The problem is not, by any means, unique to the country, but in South Africa what has often been the plight of all literatures created out of "unformed societies" begins to assume grave proportions. The question is not whether Xhosa, Zulu or Sotho cultures exist, from which a writer might derive sustenance in the same way that a Soyinka might draw inspiration from Yoruba lore or Achebe from the Ibo one; it is simply that the black South African writer is engaged in a contest the nature of which gravely limits his ability to make use of the indigenous tradition". (p.79)

He spells out the situation which conditions this milieu of a South African writer:

"In other parts of Africa the conditions of independence have enabled the writer to turn back to the past in a more leisurely exploration of his precolonial heritage. In South Africa the pressure of the future is so enormous that looking backwards seems a luxury. The present exerts its own pressures which seem vast, immanent, all-consuming. All the elements which have fertilised the African novel elsewhere, the proverb, myth, legend and all the other linguistic procedures which give their own peculiar stamp to social relationships in a traditional African setting appear as a kind of distraction in the urban environment of South Africa". (p.79)

The case of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who had to write some of his books in gaol does not seem to corroborate the thesis that "in other parts of Africa the conditions of independence have enabled the writer to turn back to the past in a more leisurely exploration of his precolonial heritage". Not that the thesis is wrong. Here we want to guard against a simplification of complicated issues.

The role of the writer is also investigated:

"Not only is the racial struggle an intense and bitter one but upon its outcome depends the final shape of the South African society. That is to say, until a solution is found to the political problem, we are not really entitled to speak of a South African "culture" just as we may, but are not entitled to speak of a South African "nation" ". (p.80)

From this correct premise he stumbles and swaggers towards a clumsily formulated idea:

"On the contrary, what we find in South Africa is a group of contending



nationalities but no proper "nation" able to confer authority to its artists."

And then draws a false conclusion:

"The writer is like someone with a telescopic lens trained on a target which is constantly moving on. The result is either moral shapelessness or hysteria which turns the novel, not into an instrument of order but a vehicle of resourceless terror and panic".

The problem with the formulation "a group of contending nationalities" is that we are not told which one is "contending" for a just cause and therefore asserting itself and in that process a writer ceases to be "someone with a telescopic lens trained on a target which is constantly moving on" but becomes a participant, a fighter and an instrument for change. This was the essence of the contribution of Willie Kgositsile to a symposium on culture and revolution in Gaborone, Botswana in May this year. This contribution appeared in the September issue of Sechaba.

.....

Because of the vastness of the material handled it was perhaps impossible for Lewis Nkosi to do justice to all the phases of the evolution of African writing — some authors (though important in their communities) are mentioned at times by way of passing reference and others are not mentioned at all.

Lewis Nkosi seems to be struggling (at times not successfully) with the temptation to compare African writers (so as to prove their worth and achievements) with the "finest in the English language". He says about Dei-Anang, the Ghanaian poet:

"Of course, one need not exaggerate the achievements of poets like Dei-Anang; indeed, there has often been greater temptation to belittle everything these poets wrote; but occasionally, it seems to me,



one comes across some lines which can stand with the finest in the English language". (p.120)

In the book there is mention of the Ghanaian Kofi Awoonor, the Ugandan Okot p'Bitek and the Zulu poet, Mazisi Kunene (p.148). The problem here is that Kofi Awonoor is Ghanaian; Okot p'Bitek is Ugandan and Mazisi Kunene is Zulu — I would prefer to call him South African. Lewis Nkosi would be the first to agree that this was more of a slip of the pen than a Freudian slip.

Finally, I am sure, the readers of SECHABA would have liked to hear more about which African writers advocate a consistently anti-imperialist line as opposed to those who glorify neo-colonialist solutions. This question has not been touched upon directly in the book — more by implication. Some people might object that this is not the task of "literary writing".

In discussing Chinua Achebe, Nkosi seems to be addressing himself to this question when he says, "part of a writer's duty in Africa is helping his people, former colonial subjects, to regain their lost dignity". (p33)

With this book Nkosi has done just that. The book is one of those weapons Africa needs so urgently in fighting one of our many enemies — this time ignorance.

F.M.

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**AMANDLA NGAWETHU MATLA KE A RONA**





*Jerry Mosololi*



*Simon Mogoerane*



*Marcus Motauung*

# **MOI TO APPARTHEID EXECUTIONS SAVVE MOROKA 3**