

UMSEBENZI

VOICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

ORGANISE, DEFY AND ADVANCE!

The people certainly 'made it happen'. But not in the way Botha wanted. For him, October 26 ended in a miserable failure. No amount of figure-juggling can change that fact. The so-called building bricks of this latest attempt to impose yet another 'ja-baas' constitutional fraud have crumbled. Deep in their hearts, even the racists know this. It must make them tremble for their future.

The people's victory is even more impressive when we take into account what the regime threw into its election campaign. A renewed and more vicious state of emergency. A virtual ban on the whole mass democratic movement. More and more leaders in detention. A ban on calls for boycott. Millions of rand on election propaganda. A gagged press. The government squirrel puppets nibbling away at people's minds on TV. A list of registered voters which did not depend on individual applications, compiled from housing records and other government sources. Massive armed intimidation at every stage of the voting process. **And just in case all this did not 'make it happen', they added the 'prior votes' law to help boost their statistics.**

Despite all this the response was a humiliating one for the regime.

- On 'election day' itself a **national total of 84 979 blacks actually went to the polls.** This was less than 2% of those (4.5m) eligible by age to vote and 3.5% of those (2.4m) put on the voting register by the regime.
- Even if we believe the government claim for the number of 'prior votes' (282 499) the **total of those eligible by age to vote is still under 9%.** Those who did cast 'prior votes' were rounded up in trucks and buses and taken over a period of ten days, under SADF and police 'protection', to the polling stations. They were either intimidated or too ashamed to show their faces on October 26.
- In 43% of the black wards there was no voting at all because there were no candidates or only one.

**FIGHT
FOR PEOPLES
POWER!
FREE
MANDELA!**



- The regime completely failed, through its so-called 'upgrading' exercise, to neutralise those major urban centres regarded as revolutionary flashpoints. Indeed, the statistics show that these communities were once again the vanguard. For example:
 - ★ A combined total of 5 417 people voted in the Vaal Triangle townships of **Sebokeng, Sharpeville, Boipatong, Evaton, Bophelong and Zamdela.**
 - ★ In **Soweto**, of a population estimated to be at least 2.5m, only 28 993 votes (80% 'prior') were recorded. The main collaboration group — the Sofasonke Party — could hold election meetings only under SADF protection.
 - ★ In **Gugulethu, Langa and Nyanga** there could be no election because there were only eight candidates for 20 vacancies.
 - ★ In **Alexandra** township there could be no election.
 - ★ **Tembisa** had a total turnout of 3.62% of those registered.
- And so on.

THE LESSONS

Botha hoped to win two major prizes on October 26; a step towards the apartheid *indaba* and a means of restoring control over the urban townships. His gamble clearly did not come off. **The people once again refused their consent to the continuation of white supremacy by other means.** This massive refusal goes to the very root of the crisis facing the regime both at home and abroad. It will undoubtedly reinforce the people's confidence and their will to resist.

We should on no account underestimate the scale of the regime's October 26 failure. If we did so we should help frustrate the potential for victorious struggle in the coming period. Earlier in the year a misreading of the mood of the oppressed created a doubt in the minds of a few militants about the wisdom of the June strike call. The response, as we know, turned out to be the most magnificent in our history. Again, in the run-up to October, a few voices expressed doubts about the prospects of the boycott tactic. The outcome speaks for itself.

In both these instances the feelings of uncertainty were influenced by the damage inflicted on both national and grassroots structures of the mass democratic movement by the escalation of the regime's emergency terror. This fact undoubtedly **places in the forefront the organisational tasks** of strengthening the underground, infusing new vitality into the weakened sectors of the MDM and finding fresh ways of ensuring continuity by combining legal and semi-legal methods.

But it is important to stress that these vital organisational tasks cannot be fulfilled in a vacuum; they can only be advanced in the context of political action. For example, those street committees which today continue to show signs of life are sustained by action such as the rent boycott in Soweto.

Despite organisational gaps (which of course must be filled) the people remain ready to resist the racist offensive and to advance to people's power. The enemy's political crisis is more severe than at any time in our history.

A feeling of imminent change fills the air everywhere in our land. **All our plans, whether national or local, must be combined with a programme of action.** The mass responses this year have again shown that, while our perspectives of struggle cannot ignore the actual level of organisation, they should not be mechanically determined by it.

FROM UNGOVERNABILITY TO PEOPLE'S POWER



REMAINS A REALISABLE GOAL!



2 DOWN WITH PUPPET COUNCILLORS!

CUITO CUANAVALE: TURNING POINT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

'From now on the history of Africa will have to be written before and after Cuito Cuanavale' — Fidel Castro

Has the South African Defence Force met its Waterloo in Southern Angola? The SADF has certainly been humiliated.

The myth of the SADF's invincibility has been exposed and glaring weaknesses made visible. Fidel Castro is not a man to play with words, and his statement in May 1988 is pregnant with significance. Certainly the balance of forces on the Angolan-Namibian border has drastically changed. This has given rise to the SADF's ignominious retreat from Southern Angola and the collapse of Botha and Malan's dreams in that area.

The defeat of Pretoria's military strategy in that region has brought tremendous international pressure to bear for the implementation of UN Resolution 435, paving the way for Namibian independence. Whatever may be predicted about the outcome of the talks between Angola, Cuba, Pretoria and the USA, the negotiations that began in earnest in London last May were directly the result of the SADF's trouncing in southern Angola.

What Happened

Let us look back to the middle of 1987, when the drama began to unfold.

In July 1987 over 3 000 racist troops invaded the Cuando Cubango province in remote south-east Angola. Pretoria was attempting to save its puppet Savimbi and the surrogate Unita bandits from destruction by Angolan government forces (FAPLA) that were advancing from the area of Cuito Cuanavale.

FAPLA had been steadily improving as a fighting force and Unita were no match for them. The involvement of the huge SADF force swung the balance and soon FAPLA had retreated to Cuito Cuanavale. Using their newly-modified Mirage aircraft, G5 artillery weapons and tanks the racists laid siege to the small town.

Pretoria was seeking to inflict a decisive defeat on the Angolan government forces. By November Savimbi and much of the South African press were gloating about his 'impending victory.'

In the circumstances President Dos Santos of Angola turned to his staunch ally, Fidel Castro,

and sought emergency assistance. Within a week over 10 000 crack Cuban troops were arriving in Angola to reinforce the Cuban units already there.

During the months of January to March, major SADF assaults on Cuito Cuanavale were heroically repulsed. By the beginning of April the SADF's hopes lay smouldering in the rubble of the destroyed Olifant tanks, Eland armoured cars and combat planes surrounding the besieged fortress town.

April was the month that saw Angola regaining its sovereignty over its south-western Cunene Province. The joint Angolan-Cuban-Swapo forces began an historic drive south from Namib-Lobito-Menange to liberate this province. Pretoria was shaken to its core.

As the advance guard of the progressive forces neared the strategic Ruacana dam at Calueque, close to the Namibian border, an SADF unit sped out to attack them. A brief battle erupted with the boers retreating in panic. A MiG fighter flew on to the dam and, with precision bombing, put it and twelve South African troops out of action. The dramatic raid highlighted the fact that the tide had completely turned in Southern Angola.

Whilst Magnus Malan vainly attempted to allay racist fears and claim that 'the SADF had never suffered from a bloody nose', there was plenty of evidence to the contrary. Many white parents who had lost their young sons in Angola had good cause to disagree with him. Even Treurnicht complained about the 'humiliating defeat' and other commentators conceded the chilling reality that 'the SADF had lost the vital air supremacy.'

The SADF had met its match in the fighting skill and determination of the Angolan and Cuban soldiers, and Pretoria's combat planes, tanks and anti-aircraft artillery had been outgunned. The big war machine of the boers had failed to take a dusty little village in Angola.

Whatever the outcome of the Namibian talks, the very fact of Pretoria's defeat will inspire our people and the Namibian people to greater efforts. History is bound, yet again, to bear out the prophetic vision of Fidel Castro.

HAIL FAPLA AND CUBAN FORCES!

AGOSTINHO NETO ON 'WHO IS THE ENEMY'



Agostinho Neto — outstanding Marxist thinker, founder-President of the MPLA and the People's Republic of Angola

Who is the enemy, and what is his nature?

The enemy of Africa is often confused with the white man. Skin colour is still a factor used by many to determine the enemy.

It is absolutely understandable that a worker in the South African mines who is segregated and coerced, and whose last drop of sweat is wrung from him, should feel that the white man he sees before him, for whom he produces wealth, is the principal enemy.

Consciousness is formed chiefly from one's experience of life. The experience of South Africa could lead to this immediate conclusion, which is to a certain extent logical and emotionally valid ...

I do not think that the national liberation struggle is directed towards inverting systems of oppression in such a way that the master of today will be the slave of tomorrow. To think in this way is to go against the current of history. Attitudes of social revenge can never be what we want, which is the freedom of men ...

To answer our question, we would say that the enemy is colonialism, the colonial system, and also imperialism. These enemies use on their own behalf all the contradictions they can find in the dominated society: racial, tribal, classes and other factors. On them they build their foundation for exploitation and maintain it, changing its appearance when it can no longer be maintained.

The Angolan experience has already shown that pure anti-racism cannot permit the full development of the liberation struggle. For centuries our society has had within it white people who came as occupiers, as conquerors, but who had time to establish roots, to multiply, and to live for generations and generations on our territory. This white population dominates the urban centres, giving rise to the fact of a people who are racially mixed, making our society interlinked in its racial components.

If the liberation struggle overlooks the realities of the country, and if formulations are taken up which are pleasing to nationalists who are sincere but not over-concerned about the aspect of the people's socio-historical development, it

weakens itself and cannot attain its political and human objectives.

Everyone in a country who wants to participate in whatever way in the liberation struggle should be able to do so.

According to my understanding, the first reactions against a system of oppression stem from the way one lives, from the way one feels this oppression. I cited the case of South Africa.

I do not wish to ignore at this moment the pressure that is exerted on the liberation movement to maintain so-called **black purity**.

Allow me to reject any idea on the transformation of the national liberation struggle in Angola into a racial struggle. I would say that in Angola the struggle **also** assumes a racial aspect since discrimination is a fact. The black man is exploited there. But it is fundamentally a struggle against the colonial system and its chief ally, imperialism.

I also reject the idea of black liberation, since the unity of Africa is one of the principles universally accepted by the OAU, and knowing that in Africa there are Arab peoples, that there are some areas which are not black. The problem cannot be purely racial. So long as there is imperialism, it will be possible to continue colonialism. And as I have said, for us they are the enemy.

What we want is to establish a new society where black and white can live together. Naturally, and so as not to be misinterpreted, I must add that the democratic process must be exercised in such a way that the most exploited masses (who are black) have control of political power, since they can go furthest in establishing proper rights for all.

A people's struggle for political power, for economic independence, for the restoration of cultural life, to end alienation, for relations with all peoples on a basis of equality and fraternity — these are the objectives of our struggle.

These objectives are set by defining who is the enemy, who are the people and what is the character of our struggle, which is a revolutionary struggle affecting not only the foundations of the colonial system but also the foundations of our own society, as a nation and as a people.

BLACK UNITY AND THE INDIAN PEOPLE

The unity in action of the oppressed blacks and democratic whites is a precondition for completing the national liberation struggle. There can be no compromise with a policy which divides people on racial and ethnic lines. Thus the people of Indian origin must play their full part in the struggle to destroy apartheid.

Since the 1940s the Indian community, under the leadership of Drs Dadoo and Naicker, have made a significant contribution to our struggle. Both the ANC and the SACP regard the Indian Congresses as an organic part of the national liberation movement and believe that the Indian community has a crucial role to play in the struggle for a non-racial, democratic South Africa. This role can be best performed if the Indian working class acts as the leading force in the Indian congresses, and plays an active role within the mass democratic and trade union movements. Following in the footsteps of heroes like Ahmed Kathrada, Isu Chiba, Reggie Vandeyar and scores of others, the most militant and revolutionary activists should join the ANC underground and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Furthermore, the most politically advanced, disciplined and conscious elements should reinforce the ranks of the SACP's underground.

The role of the Indian people at the present time was debated and discussed at an historic meeting held between the NIC, TIC and broad representatives of the community, and the ANC in Lusaka, in October 1988. In addition to executive members of the NIC and TIC, the participants from the Indian community comprised religious leaders, businessmen, cultural workers, professionals, trade unionists, women, youth, sports administrators and other sectors. The ANC had a representative delegation, including many members of its National Executive Committee.

The meeting made a deep impression on the Indian participants. As the joint communique states, they 'were convinced that the ANC is indispensable to the process of seeking a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis which faces our country. They therefore called for the unbanning of the ANC and other organisations, the release from detention of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners, and the lifting of the state of

emergency.'

A notable feature of the meeting was the presence of young activists who are totally dedicated to the struggle. Without exception the representatives of the Indian community were even more convinced after the meeting that the ANC and its allies are the real and genuine alternatives to Botha's regime.

All those present agreed that the Indian people can never be genuinely represented by those who seek to collaborate in their own and other people's oppression, or by those who seek to pursue a policy of exclusivism. Those who serve on dummy local and parliamentary institutions have no mandate from the people. It is the responsibility of all anti-apartheid forces to ensure that Pretoria's policy of co-option continues to be a failure.

No section of the South African population can ever be free as long as the African people are denied fundamental human rights. The place of the people of Indian origin in a new, free, non-racial, democratic South Africa is going to be decided by the role they continue to play in the struggle for national liberation. The meeting between the representatives of the Indian community and the ANC highlighted the vital role that the former should and must play at the present time in the building of a new South Africa.

From left to right: Drs Naicker, Xuma and Dadoo signing the famous 1947 'Doctors Pact'.



UNITY IN ACTION!

COLONIALISM DID NOT END IN 1910

Every black man knows that colonial domination in our country did not end in 1910. The political unity of the Boer republics and the former British colonies did not give birth to a new independent nation. It created a state structure which did not remove the colonial status of the majority. Instead, this colonial status was, in many key areas, even extended in the post 1910 period.

Ruling under the banner of white supremacy, imperialism and local capital (the union of maize and gold — and later industry) combined to entrench the colonial relationship as never before. Land dispossession was intensified. The migrant labour system was institutionalised. Methods of coercion of black labour were streamlined. The majority were excluded from government and placed outside the political process. Even the limited franchise for some blacks was taken away. The colonial technique of ethnic separation was intensified. 'Citizenship' was restricted to the bantustans which, more and more, served as pools of poverty and national degradation.

As is common to all colonial practice, the ruling class used its political power to increase the super-exploitation of the black labour supply and cheapen the cost of production. The means used to achieve this are connected with the subordinate colonial relationship of the black majority and the formal and informal institutions of race rule.

Capitalism in other parts of the world does not necessarily rely on racism to maximise its profits. But in South Africa racism is a major cost calculation made possible by the subordinate status of the colonised majority. National domination has always been an almost inseparable part of capitalist domination and exploitation. Every class within the black majority (including the small black capitalist class) continues to suffer from disadvantages which are normally associated with colonial subjugation. But it is the working class which suffers most of all from the colonial status of the black population.

The racial division of labour clearly expresses the subordinate social, economic and legal status of the black working class. Nearly all the professional, administrative, technical and managerial jobs are held by whites. These are the commanding posts in the economy.

Despite some reforms there is no appreciable change in the colonial relationship. Engineers, scientists, technicians, doctors etc, are overwhelmingly from the dominant white minority. They occupy half the skilled and semi-skilled jobs and take the lion's share of the wages. In the gold mining industry, in 1985 white employees made up 9.7% of the workforce but received 36% of the wages. In the food industry 26 000 whites earned R5-million while four times as many Africans received R4.9-million. The pattern is repeated throughout the manufacturing industry, as well as in the service industries.

Nowhere are the structures of apartheid more complex than in education. Colonial regimes generally appropriate most of the educational resources for persons from the ruling group. This ensures that the administrative positions in government and the decision-making jobs in industry are under their control. The apartheid state is no different. Despite some increases in the provision of education, most Africans do not go beyond the fifth year of primary school and (in 1985) only 0.6% of the working population had two years of education beyond matric. Less than 1% gained entrance to the universities.

There can be no doubt that every aspect of the life of the black majority points to the continuation of colonial subjugation. It is therefore difficult to understand those who claim to be of the left and who continue to spread the myth that colonialism died in the period after 1910.



NAMIBIA MUST BE FREE!

DO WE NEED SACTU?



SACTU foundation conference, Trades Hall, Johannesburg 5-6 March, 1955

After more than 30 years of struggle, SACTU's principles remain a guiding spirit for South African trade unions. Precisely because of its open identification of the workers' cause with the national liberation movement, SACTU commands the respect and confidence of South African workers.

Over the years SACTU has played a key role in the building of a united working class. The emergence of COSATU was a major milestone in this process. The new situation has now opened up great possibilities for further advances.

But the new situation has also led some comrades to ask whether the formation of COSATU does not require a complete re-assessment of the role of SACTU. They question the need for the continued co-existence of both COSATU and SACTU. In many respects SACTU and COSATU have the same concerns. SACTU is deeply committed to help build a united, revolutionary trade union movement based on industrial trade unions. It is also concerned to persuade unions to eliminate the divisions wrought by NACTU; to strengthen COSATU's efforts to mobilise the unorganised and the unemployed; and to secure class unity of all workers including Indian, coloured and white.

These are basic concerns common to both SACTU and COSATU. But we must never ignore the repressive situation in which trade unions operate in our country. In this situation there are special tasks that SACTU is better equipped to meet. As long as the apartheid regime exists, the trade union movement is threatened. SACTU needs to build its underground machinery to ensure working class demands continue to be voiced, regardless of repression.

As an active member, together with the ANC and SACP, of the revolutionary alliance, SACTU is also better placed than COSATU to deepen working class understanding of the link between shop-floor struggles and the wider struggle for national liberation and economic emancipation. It is also able to present the links between mass democratic work and the wider politico-military strategies of our alliance. All these tasks need to be carried out with care. Internal SACTU contacts and structures must respect the democratic processes of COSATU and individual unions.

But is SACTU the best organisation to be playing a guiding role within the trade unions? Some comrades suggest a Labour Front of the ANC instead. There are two basic answers:

- Why remake history? SACTU did not stop the struggle when its membership of the Congress Alliance made it impossible to function openly in the country. It restructured and contributed greatly to rebuilding trade unions. We must strengthen, not abolish, an organisation that enjoys the confidence of workers.

- We must be careful not to erect mechanical alternatives. Of course, trade unionists must be encouraged to seek out the ANC and the SACP to consult on all matters. But SACTU is an essential partner in this process, and it is more specialised in dealing with specifically trade union matters than its allies.

Finally, SACTU also has a very important **international** role. It presents to the world the case for sanctions, boycotts, disinvestment — especially as legal constraints may make it difficult for COSATU to project these demands. SACTU's main international task is to guide the solidarity work of trade unions, educating workers outside our country on our struggle, and guiding South African workers on the dangers of imperialist labour agencies.

SACTU also has many other international tasks — encouraging international co-ordination, seeking support of sister unions against multinationals, and canvassing support for COSATU in the socialist countries. In short, on the international front SACTU must do all in its power to marshal international labour solidarity in defence of South African trade unions.

We clearly do need SACTU!

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!

PEN PICTURES OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS

JOHNSON NGWEVELA

In Nyanga, Elsie's River and Windermere, in the distant areas of Paarl, Stellenbosch and Worcester, and in many other areas of the Western Cape, every shack was open house to Johnson Ngwevela, a modest, caring and popular man.

Ngwevela in his early years worked as a peddler and labourer, but later became the secretary and interpreter for Sam Kahn's legal practice. He also became the political agent for several candidates standing for office to parliament and provincial and town councils.

He became chairman of the ANC in the Western Cape and served for many years on the District Committee of the Communist Party in Cape Town. In the run-up to the Anti-Communist Bill of 1950, Ngwevela was given the unenviable task of officially dissolving most of the CP branches in the various African areas.

In May 1952, already on the 'list' of 'named' communists, he was amongst the first to receive banning orders. He was among the first to defy the unjust laws in 1952, when he was smuggled into the packed Salt River Institute to declare the start of the great Defiance Campaign.



Ngwevela was a deeply religious man who argued that he could see no incompatibility between religion and Marxism, since it was the great many similarities between the two, and not the differences, which mattered in the fight against apartheid. He was interned for the duration of the 1960 Sharpeville emergency.

During the last years of his life, Ngwevela was restricted to his home in Langa by a combination of banning orders, ill health and almost complete blindness.

He died in Cape Town in 1987.

SHADRICK MAPHUMULO

Shadrick Maphumulo, known as Matthew in exile, was born in the heart of Zululand. Like the thousands of young Africans who were deprived of elementary education in our country, he was forced to come to the city of Durban to seek work. As he roamed the city he heard the voice of SACTU, which was then organising the unemployed. Shadrick quickly realised the need to join SACTU, the ANC and our Party. He soon learned that these organisations did not only fight for the right to work but they also provided a new kind of education.

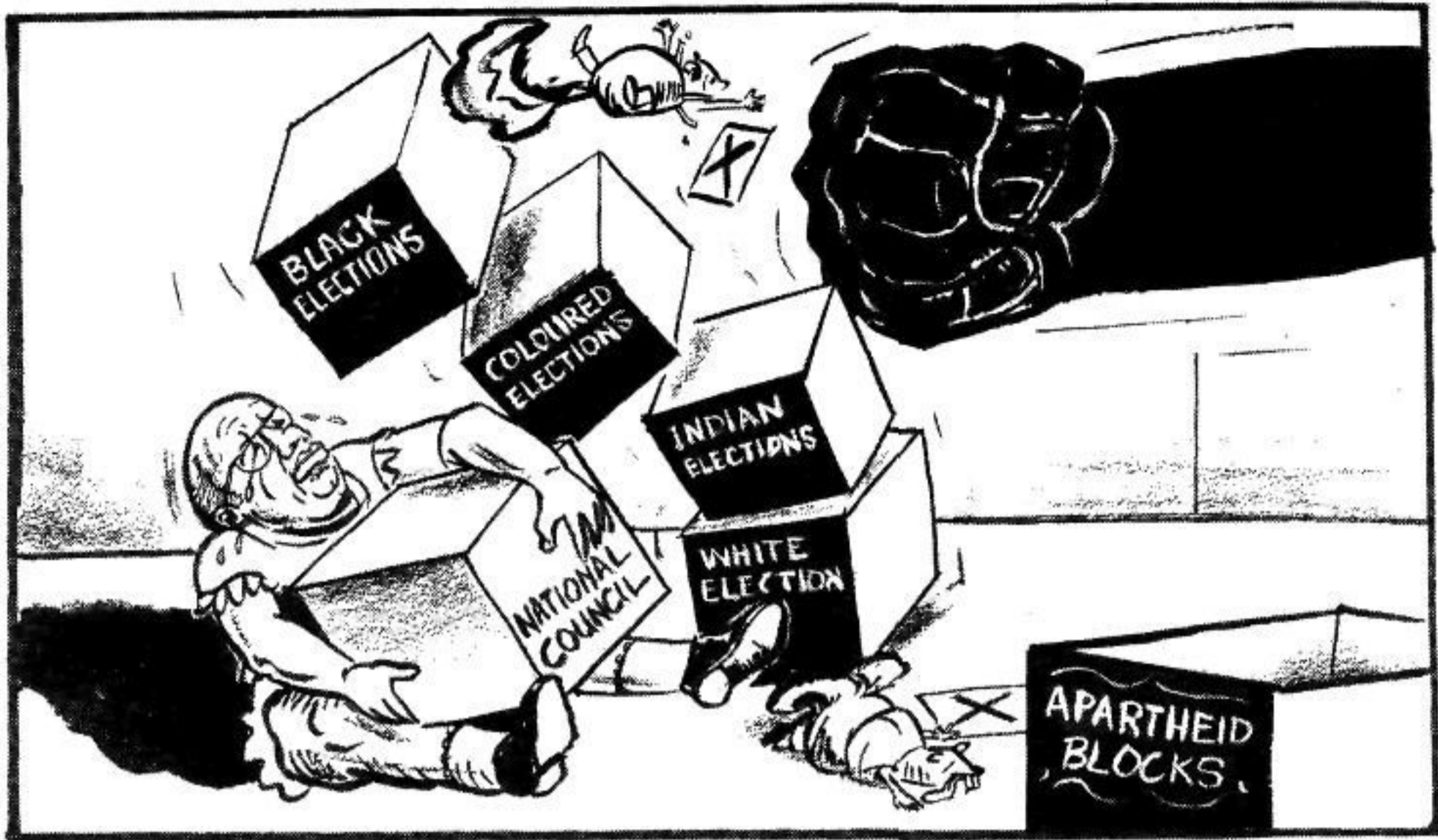
His commitment and dedication to the struggle soon led him to join MK. One of the acts of sabotage for which he was responsible was on the offices of *Die Nataller*, the Nationalist Party newspaper of Natal.

When the mass arrests took place in 1963, the Natal Region Command was badly hit and comrade Shadrick was arrested under the 90-day law. In 1964, together with 17 other comrades including Billy Nair and Curnick Ndlovu, he was brought to trial and heavy sentences were handed down.

He continued to fight, even inside prison. Released in 1974, he was banished to Zululand. His commitment remained firm: 'We must not give the boers any chance. We must fight them tooth and nail.' Once again he worked tirelessly to organise the underground.

Again arrested, he was severely tortured but, due to insufficient evidence, was released. He left the country soon after. Shadrick fought against all forms of disunity, particularly against narrow nationalism and regionalism. This giant warrior was finally tracked down by apartheid's criminal mercenaries, who tried to kidnap him from Swaziland. He died in battle in December 1985.

8 FREE MANDELA & ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Comrade,

The series, 'Problems of the Transition Period', are very important and provide much to chew on and digest. I would like to add to No.6 (2nd quarter, 1988) dealing with the role of the trade unions. Following liberation from the racist colonial system of apartheid, the democratic state must recognise as the official voice of labour a single, united, non-racial and industrialised trade union co-ordinating organisation.

In nationally-owned enterprises, state institutions, co-operative concerns etc the trade unions must be given an equal co-determining role in all matters concerning the immediate and long-term welfare interests of the working people and the strengthening of the state economy. Co-determination means full participation at all levels in decision making and policy shaping, and not just simply consultation.

In the transition period, enforcing co-determination on the large capitalist concerns by administrative means — that is, through legislation — would be incorrect as well as not feasible. Through daily struggle in representing the interests and well-being of the working people, the trade unions will, step by step, have to win their way in the co-determining process. However, already at the beginning of the transition period possibilities are open for the first step in co-determination. That is in hiring and firing policy, the firms' social amenities such as canteens, recreational and sports

facilities, holiday homes, cultural activity and so on.

Dear Comrade Editor,

Please permit me to express some thoughts on the article 'The State and the Transition Period' (3rd quarter, 1988). **The democratic state must guarantee the rule of law.** The state itself, the state authorities and organs (including the military, the police and the security) must not be above the law and must be accountable to the people's elected legislative assemblies.

All must know what is permitted and what is not permitted. No one must be arbitrarily punished on mere suspicion at any level in political, social and private life.

Outlawed arbitrary punishment must include:

- dismissal or suspension from employment.
- withdrawal or suspension of social security grants.
- removal from social-cultural and recreational life such as social ostracisation and expulsion from cultural and sports clubs.

Anyone at any level of social activity when under suspicion — real or imagined — must have the right to be informed of any impending action and to defence against the accusation. No punished person, whatever the matter, serious or minor, must be placed in a position of having to complain: 'What have I done? Tell me.'

Those wielding rubber stamps and officials at all levels must be seen as honest working servants of society devoted to the well-being of the people. Dealing with officialdom must not be unnecessarily time-consuming nor occasions to be dreaded.

NO TO CONSTITUTIONAL FRAUDS!

REFLECTIONS ON

Throughout the country in the past three years (1985-1988) street committees (SC) and defence committees (DC) have helped to heighten conflict and confrontation with the state, Inkatha, security forces and vigilante groups. In Cradock in 1985 they were formed to co-ordinate the protest against the emergency and army occupation, and to defend leaders against attacks by vigilantes and the SADF. In Soweto, in late 1986 and 1987, they were formed to co-ordinate rent protests, to make effective the decisions of the SACC/NECC and to defend the community against vigilantes and the SADF; and in Pietermaritzburg they were formed out of the bitter conflict with Inkatha. They also appeared to be formed exclusively under conditions where further encroachment on people's lives is threatened by the administrative and/or repressive organs of the state.

This is true for all the above cases. In Cradock, Alexandra, Soweto there was opposition to the local community councils' attempts to entrench their administrative control, even by the use of force; and in Pietermaritzburg Inkatha was attempting to extend its administrative and political control over areas which previously did not fall under KwaZulu administration, like Eden-dale, where the violence started.

It seems that these rudimentary organs of people's power are formed mainly during periods of major upheaval in the social fabric and in direct opposition to state structures. This is to be expected from their fundamental revolutionary nature as compared to administrative organs of the present state and the forces of 'law and order'. It also represents a major leap forward in the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. Thus I would argue that where there is no mass public opposition to an occupying army or vigilante force we are unlikely to see SCs and DCs developing.

To continue this line of argument: it is important to understand that SCs and DCs are not just 'oppression' or 'resistance' formations. They are formations which attack the very framework of apartheid and capitalism.

In fact, their ideological value as living examples and bases of people's power outweighs their fundamental value at this present stage. Thus despite the setbacks suffered by these forms of organisation, e.g Cradock, Alexandra,



the lessons drawn from their short-lived existence will be built on over and over again as other communities live through periods of violent uprising — Pietermaritzburg is an example of this.

Again SCs and DCs are not a new or different kind of mass organisation. They are not a substitute or replacement for mass organisations. Rather they are new organisational formations which will perform functions that mass organisations were never intended to perform — administration, defence and to co-ordinate actively on the ground. **They incorporate elements of mass revolutionary bases.**

Thus our approach to the formation of the SCs and DCs cannot be a mechanical one. We cannot form these committees by recruiting from civic, youth, women and trade union structures and giving these recruits/activists the task of building SCs in a step by step process. I believe this method will not get the results. At most we will put together one hundred activists, whereas the very nature of these formations is that they are a **mass** response to the threat posed by in-

OPLE'S COMMITTEES



creasing state control at the level of local government and at the level of armed repression. Thus we are likely to see the development of these structures, as communities live through periods of mass struggle against state authority and state power.

The revolutionary nature of these formations does not always mean that they are models of revolutionary conduct and discipline. It has, for instance, been said: 'Often the uprisings were spontaneous, led by people with no experience of political organisation. UDF and COSATU must see to it as critically important that proper structures and discipline be developed.'

Similarly, a revolutionary form does not imply a revolutionary content. Thus there must also be emphasis on building accountability and deepening political consciousness. This problem was also experienced in Soweto in 1985-86.

Position in the Western Cape

Why have no SCs and DCs developed in the Western Cape thus far? The political conditions at this juncture are unfavourable for their

development. We cannot wish them into existence and we must not fall into the trap of thinking that because there are such formations elsewhere we must hurry up and build them — this is ahistorical. I am not saying that we must sit back and do nothing. We can and must prepare for the day they do arise. We must strengthen our political work at mass level, activist level and underground level. We must build core units which will be able to give co-ordination and direction to these structures. We must gain a more intimate knowledge of their development and experiences elsewhere. Such an approach will help to give us an idea of the conditions under which these formations could develop in the Western Cape, so that we take advantage of the favourable conditions when they present themselves.

Of great relevance to all this is the attitude of the Coloured community to the administrative organs of the state. There have been no major confrontations between this community and the Management Committee structures. These structures have been ignored rather than consciously boycotted. In any case, the Management Committees never exercised any significant administrative control.

In the African townships there is a near total lack of credibility in the regime's administrative organs. In the Coloured townships these organs still retain their credibility to a large extent. For example, even though people are very unhappy about high rents etc, they do not see the answer as a replacement of the state's local housing authority. Their future perspectives will also be affected by the fact that the Labour Party is promising to take steps to provide jobs and low cost housing, specifically for the Coloured population in the Western Cape, both middle and working class. A new development scheme is planned which aims to provide 200 000 housing units, while there are 60 000 families on the waiting list.

Finally, many articles and discussions point to the fact that comrades in the national democratic movement and at all levels must start working on these crucial questions and draw together a clear political strategy for the next few years if we are to roll back the state's onslaught. The above is just a first step to throw about ideas that may help us come to grips with the problems.



HOW TO MASTER SECRET WORK

15. BLIND MEETING

The leader of an underground unit, comrade A, receives instructions from the leadership to meet comrade D. Comrade D is a new recruit, whom the leadership are assigning to A's unit. A and D are strangers to one another. Conditions are therefore drawn up for a **Blind Meeting** — that is a meeting between two underground workers who are unknown to one another.

Recognition signs and passwords

There are similar conditions as for **regular** and other forms of meeting, such as date, time, place, action of subordinate and legend. In addition, there is the necessity for **recognition signs** and **passwords**, which are to aid in identification.

The **recognition signs** enable the commander or senior, in this case A, to identify the subordinate from a safe distance and at close quarters. Two recognition signs are therefore needed.

The **passwords**, including the reply, are specially prepared words and phrases which are exchanged and give the go-ahead for the contact to begin. These signs and phrases must look normal and not attract attention to outsiders.

At this point the reader should prepare an example for a **blind meeting** and compare it with the example we have given.

Do remember that all the examples given in our series are also read by the enemy, so do not blindly copy them. They are suggestions to assist activists with their own ideas.

Example of Blind Meeting

Place: Toyshop on Smith Street.

Date and Time: December 20th, 6pm.

Action: Comrade D to walk down street in easterly direction, to stop at Toyshop and gaze at toy display for five minutes.

Legend: D is simply walking about town carrying out window shopping. When A makes contact they are to behave as though they are strangers who have just struck up a friendship.
Recognition signs: D carries an OK Bazaars shopping bag. The words 'OK' have been underlined with a black pen (for close-up recognition).

Passwords

A: Pardon me, but do you know whether this shop sells childrens' books?

B: I don't know. There are only toys in the window.

A: I prefer to give books for presents.

Note: The opening phrase will be used by A after he has observed D's movements and satisfied himself that the recognition signs are correct and that D has not been followed. A completes the passwords with a closing phrase which satisfies D that A is the correct contact. The two can now walk off together or A might suggest a further meeting somewhere else.

Brush Meeting

This is a brief meeting where material is quickly and silently passed from one comrade to another. Conditions for such a meeting, such as place, time and action, are carefully planned beforehand. No conversation takes place. Money, reports or instructions are swiftly transferred. Split-second timing is necessary and contact must take place in a **dead zone** i.e. in areas where passing the material cannot be seen.

For example, as D walks down the steps of a department store A passes D and drops a small package into D's shopping bag.

'Accidental' Meeting

This is, in fact, a deliberate contact made by the commander which comes as a surprise to the subordinate. In other words, it takes place without the subordinate's foreknowledge.

An 'accidental' meeting takes place where:
a) there has been a breakdown in communication.

b) the subordinate is not fully trusted and the commander wants to have an 'unexpected' talk with him or her.

The commander must have good knowledge of the subordinate's movements and plan his or her actions before, during and after the meeting.

Next Issue: Non-Personal Communications

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND



4. WORKING IN MASS ORGANISATIONS

We salute all our comrades once again. Our new party unit is functioning quite well. Besides common tasks, the three of us are each also taking on individual tasks. We have asked Comrade Masodi to speak on his individual party work. I have written down this from what he said:

'I am working at ABC factory (of course, that's not its real name). In our party unit we have discussed some areas of daily party work for myself. This includes general work in the trade union.

On this front my first task is to give reports on the trade union for the district committee to develop a clear political strategy for our region. My party task in the trade union is also to work from the bottom to help strengthen the organisation. At first I was not sure how a communist works inside a mass democratic organisation like a trade union.

In looking into this question I have been very much affected by the words of the late comrade Moses Kotane. He says a communist gives leadership in a mass democratic organisation not with orders from the top, like a boss, but through hard work, personal example and political clarity. You must be prepared to argue a point — yes. But you must also stick with the decisions made by the mass democratic collective. The party and its cadres respect the inner democracy of the trade union.

I am not saying that this can be easy in every case. For a person it can be frustrating to see what you think is a wrong decision being taken. But once there is a collective decision you must work harder than anyone to try to implement it, even if you disagreed. This is not just a moral principle. It is correct organisational politics. The broad mass of the workers must learn from their own experiences.

No underground cadre must take short-cuts, hi-jacking a mass organisation and forcing a personal view by using the authority of our underground movement. You might have a quick success, but you are making a long-term problem. Revolutions are not made by small

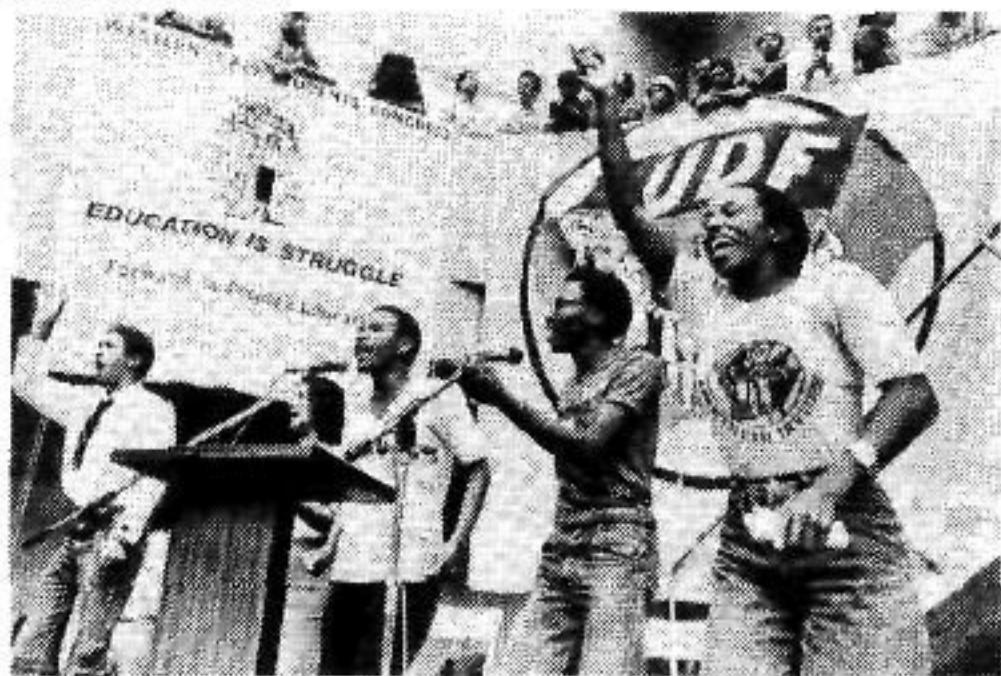
groups of advanced revolutionaries. They are made by millions and millions of working people — guided by a vanguard party, yes — but who actively and willingly engaged themselves.

There is another particular problem in my work in the trade union at present. It is a problem that is happening in many mass democratic organisations. One of the workers in our branch is giving us trouble. It is a guy who speaks in very revolutionary words. He is always challenging everybody. He likes to label people as "reformist", as "opportunist" and such things.

Now, either this guy is just very undisciplined, or he is an agent provocateur — I mean somebody working for the police who poses as a militant. He tries to provoke comrades into reckless actions, or into revealing sensitive information.

At our last branch meeting this guy's talk was especially irritating. He turned on me to say I was a reactionary. He even called me an "anti-communist"! My tongue was burning to show who is the real revolutionary. I wanted to show the meeting it was me that knows about communism, about Marxism-Leninism and about our Party. I nearly allowed my pride to uncover me. It was a close thing, *maqabane*. Ja, this work sometimes calls for revolutionary patience ...'

This is part of comrade Masodi's report. Next time we will give some notes on his work towards building an underground core in his industrial area.



INCREASE BLOWS AGAINST THE ENEMY! 13



PARTY LIFE

5. ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTROL

Democratic centralism is the living tissue which binds our Party together. It is a living tool which ensures our organisational and ideological unity. Lenin said that a Party must be united in word and deed. Democratic centralism, by itself, cannot ensure this objective. **Accountability** at each and every level of the Party is another cornerstone of our work.

Accountability means that the individual member is accountable to his unit as a collective for the fulfilment of her/his practical tasks and conduct in and outside the Party. Accountability is not simply a tool to discipline comrades who have misbehaved, but it is a weapon to ensure that we are a Party of action and not of words. Accountability must seek to ensure that tasks are actually accomplished by individuals and collectives. If they are not, we must always look for reasons for the non-fulfilment or failure. When we determine the cause of the failure we can begin to look for alternative solutions.

Accountability seeks also to strengthen and build individual comrades — not to destroy and demoralise them through negative and unwarranted criticism. Thus accountability takes into account individual strengths and weaknesses. But the standards of the Party must be high if it is to fulfil its historic mission and accountability must also ensure that, where necessary, disciplinary action is taken for dereliction of duty or misconduct.

Since the majority of Party members are also active revolutionary fighters in fraternal organisations, great care must be taken to ensure that accountability is not in breach of the security and independence of such fraternal organisations. Thus an individual need not account for the detail of his/her work to his Party unit where such work is of a sensitive nature, but rather account for his/her performance and conduct in broad outline. We must never act in a way which interferences with the internal democratic prac-

tices of our fraternal organisations.

Accountability means that the Party unit is accountable to the Regional Committee (RC) for the performance of its collective tasks. Instances of units not meeting or not carrying out assigned tasks have to be treated with the utmost seriousness by the RC.

Accountability does not undermine but is an essential prerequisite for **command and control**. Accountability ensures that the RC is kept fully informed by the units under it. The RC acts therefore to **summarise practical experience** of the membership on the ground and translate this policy by providing leadership to the struggle in that locality. The RC serves to **fuse the Party's strength** in any locality and co-ordinate and direct its work.

Accountability is not a one way street. The RC (even though its composition is a secret) is accountable to the membership. It must act on proposals and plans submitted to it and must provide leadership and guidance. Failure to do this can be drawn to the attention of higher Party structures. Furthermore, individual members of the RC are accountable to the RC as a collective. Leadership in the Party is not a privilege or guarantee of special advantages, but the right and honour to serve the Party at greater levels of responsibility.

From this account it becomes obvious that the highest organs of our Party, too, are accountable to the membership. (We shall deal with this in a later issue). Conditions of illegality and fascist repression mean that accountability is often not affected as frequently or thoroughly as we would like. Nevertheless, even in these circumstances, we must all strive to maximise accountability as a guarantee of our effectiveness and ability to continuously improve our individual and collective contributions to the struggle.

Organisation is the key!
Build the Party!

PROBLEMS OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD

7. EDUCATION

The oppressed people have tirelessly demonstrated their rejection of apartheid education. But it is also important to begin working out a viable alternative education system that will meet the needs of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. Such a policy will have to germinate in the womb of the present struggle. It will be tested by the practice of street committees and various structures attempting to provide **people's education for people's power** in the various localities.

But we are not the only ones thinking about the question. Multinational corporations have shown a great interest in the education of South African youth. They have also started talking about an alternative education system. Scores of black students are given facilities to study abroad. Some are given specially earmarked scholarships within South Africa in order to develop the 'future leadership' of a post-apartheid South Africa. The selection is done through existing SA organisations such as the Educational Opportunities Council, which have been criticised in the past for avoiding the selection of politically involved students.

Big business works to defuse the education crisis and to prepare cadres that would stand for the opposite of people's power. Their effort includes the opening of doors in some white private schools and white universities, where they hope that an élite group of middle class blacks will emerge. Local capital and a host of liberal politicians have come to the fore and pointed to this exercise as the example of preparing the youth for a free South Africa.

Alternative education in a post-apartheid South Africa means the negation of apartheid; such education must reflect the values of non-racialism, democracy and equality. These are the values embodied in the Freedom Charter, which says that 'the aims of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace.' To implement this objective the future state in South Africa must make education free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children. All the cultural treasures of mankind must be open to all, and ideas and contact with other countries must be encouraged.

The future state of people's democracy shall

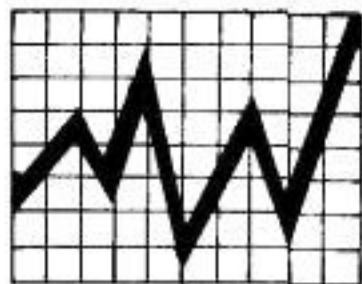
proceed, understandably, to construct the new society with the material inherited from the apartheid past. No doubt there will still be traces of racial prejudice and a degree of chauvinism. One of the prime tasks of the new educational system will be to progressively eliminate the inherited distortions.

On the basis of the Freedom Charter, people's education will aim at developing a new type of South African free from racial prejudices and having skills and knowledge for full participation in the continuing struggle for the creation of a democratic society.

A new South Africa will need thousands of revolutionaries with a sound knowledge of political economy and the sciences that will facilitate the development of our productive forces. These revolutionaries will have the task of multiplying themselves by re-educating all South Africans. The task of eradicating deep-rooted racial animosity, remnants of ethnic chauvinism (which used to be called tribalism) and numerous other unhealthy attitudes, will need patient education. And in the first place it requires mass-rooted political leadership.

Without this political drive as the basic means of resolving the problem of the youth — both those who are studying and those who are working — the gap between the ideal and the practical will be unrealisable. Again, people's education will give knowledge of natural and technical sciences to all in order to meet the needs of industry, agriculture and commerce.

In the immediate post-apartheid period it may well be necessary for young people to go to the rural areas to provide education to the millions who were left languishing in conditions of ignorance. The new state will have to initiate a nationwide literacy campaign which will also cover the whole adult population. Special facilities for the education of mentally retarded children — presently estimated at around 85 000 among Africans — must also be a priority. The Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College needs to be seen in the context of pioneering work in this whole process. Initiatives already going on inside South Africa as well as in Somafo need to be integrated into a single revolutionary experience that will help elaborate the principal guidelines of education policy for a free South Africa.



UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY ECONOMICS

10. STATE SPENDING

In the last issue we looked at the **taxes** that provide the state with most of the money it needs. The rest is raised from loans. But what does the state need the money for? What does it spend the money on?

South Africa spends money both on directly repressive activities and on broader social and economic programs. All states have those two types of spending but in South Africa they have a special character: both are aimed at maintaining and strengthening apartheid and are swollen by that.

The state's spending on institutions of repression include the costs of the army, all branches of the police, the courts, and the ministries directly concerned with these organisations. Its spending on social programs includes schools, colleges, clinics and hospitals. And the money for economic programmes include finance for capital projects such as road building, as well as subsidies paid to farmers and other capitalist enterprises. This spending is not only carried out by the ministries of the central government. It includes the sums spent by local authorities (such as the new Regional Service Councils) and by state-owned industries.

State spending is frequently separated into three types which ignore the distinction between money spent on repressive agencies and the finance of social and economic programmes.

One is **current spending**. This consists mainly of wages paid to people employed directly by the state or state agencies. The wages of soldiers, police, teachers, nurses in the public sector as well as the salaries of judges, government ministers and the vast number of civil servants all add up to a huge sum of money being required every day to pay the current costs of the state. The other items under current spending are the costs of materials for running the state apparatus. That includes paper, fuel, uniforms, ammunition, food and so on.

Capital spending is money invested in buildings and equipment. This includes huge projects of the economic infrastructure type — new dams, roads and harbours. It also includes buildings of all types, from schools to government offices. The South African state has had a major role in building up the capital of a wide range of basic industries. State-owned enterprises pump funds into building electricity power stations, building the SASOL oil and chemical industry, building iron and steel plants and strengthening the capital equipment of the railways. The National Party was determined to

build up industry in South Africa and it has carried out capital spending on a large scale.

Transfer payments are money the state spends without directly buying things, employing people or building things with it. They are a large item in the government budgets of Britain and West European countries because they include unemployment pay (the weekly sum paid to unemployed workers) and social security payments the poor have a right to. Other large items are the pensions paid by the state to the old and subsidies paid to farmers and others. And an increasingly important type of transfer payment is the interest the state has to pay to banks, financiers and some small savers for the money it has borrowed in the past.

Adding together all these types, state spending has grown steadily in South Africa and has become very high in relation to the size of the whole economy. This creates a problem for the ruling class. On one hand they benefit from state spending. For example their industrial wealth has been founded on the state's capital spending and on current spending whether it was on the administration of the pass system which controlled cheap labour or on educating workers. Similarly many of them benefit from direct subsidies from the state. On the other hand high state spending generally leads to high taxation to pay for it and capitalists fear taxation will cut into their profits.

When there is an economic crisis the ruling class's dislike of taxation becomes most important and there is pressure to cut state spending. In South Africa this has become an intense problem for the regime in recent years. The pressure to cut the regime's spending has become stronger as the economy as a whole has stagnated and as the state's spending on military and police fighting internal and external wars increased the drain on profits.

But attempts to cut state spending opens up splits in the ruling class. The attempt to cut subsidies to white maize farmers has encouraged their shift away from the National Party. The policy of freezing civil servants' wages announced early in 1988 was dropped a few months later because of its unpopularity with many white voters. These difficulties are a symptom of the economic crisis which is splitting and weakening the ruling class in South Africa.



MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

10. Ends, Means and Marxist Morality

Reasoned and rigorous debate is the life-blood of philosophical practice. Without it there can be no creative enrichment of communist culture or development of Marxist theory. To the extent that it tries to foster such debate, the intervention of a comrade in *Umsebenzi* Volume 4, Issue No. 2, taking issue with an article in this series on Marxism and Morality, is a welcome one. Unfortunately, the author of the *Four Theses on Marxism and Morality* has paid far too little attention to what has and what has not been said in the article he or she wishes to criticise. It will be worth while interrupting the planned sequence of this series so as to clear up misunderstandings which may have arisen and to explore the issue further.

In the first of the *Four Theses* a useful distinction is drawn between saying 'The end justifies the means' and saying 'The end justifies any means'. But this way of putting matters simply supports my contention that Marxist ethics does not focus exclusively on desirable ends, but is also concerned with the justice or injustice of the means used to achieve those ends. When it is said that means and ends form part of 'a continuous process' that seems to bolster my claim that 'the aims of a revolutionary process can be perverted if unjust means are made part of the process'.

However, this is not the conclusion drawn in the *Four Theses*. Instead, their author baldly asserts, in the second thesis, that the idea that there is nothing objective about good or evil 'is absolutely sound in terms of historical materialism', and, in the fourth, that the justification of violence in pursuit of human freedom reduces to the claim: 'The end justifies *these means* because *these means* are the only route by which we can arrive at *this end*.'

The disturbing thing about these assertions is that no shred of relevant evidence is adduced to support them. The distinction in the second thesis between repressive and revolutionary violence is of no help because it was never in dispute. The illustrative comparison between the Petrograd and Moscow insurrections (compared respectively to a scalpel and a butcher's

knife) does not assist either, because we are not told why we must regard both events alike from a moral point of view purely because they had the same consequences. In other words, we are never told why we may never make moral judgments about morally significant actions, only about their consequences. It would be strange if we always behaved like this. After all, in making a moral judgement, say, about someone's life, we do not focus only on what he intended to make of it, but also and very largely on what it was in the past and what it is now.

In the third thesis, something is made of the difficulty of applying the notion of 'innocence' to White civilians who may be subjected to revolutionary violence. But that the concept is difficult to apply in certain cases does nothing to show that it is inapplicable or that there are no clear-cut cases to which it uncontentionally applies. Children, for instance, are clearly innocents and, therefore, always undeserving victims of violence. The distinction between combatants and non-combatants is no less difficult to draw in a war involving civilian populations on both sides, as our struggle does, than is the distinction between guilt and innocence in particular cases. But it obviously can be drawn nonetheless. That such discriminations are in fact possible would be among the reasons for thinking, as was argued in the article on *Marxism and Morality*, that killing innocent people could not be justified on grounds of the necessities of the struggle alone.

It is noteworthy that the author of the *Theses* finds it necessary to attribute to me views that are nowhere to be found in the article under attack. Nowhere, for instance, do I speak of 'eternally valid' ethical categories. It is not at all clear what such an expression could mean. Nor is there any mention (far less defence of) the political record of the Christian churches.

Read the **AFRICAN COMMUNIST**
The theoretical quarterly journal of the
South African Communist Party
Available from Inkululeko Publications
PO Box 902 London N19 3YY

REVIEW ARTICLE

THE S A WORKING CLASS AND THE N D R

By Joe Slovo. An *Umsebenzi* discussion pamphlet published by the SACP.



As the past five years in South Africa have vividly demonstrated, there is nothing like heightened practical struggle to throw up intense theoretical debate. The issue which Joe Slovo tackles in this punchy and vigorous pamphlet is the question of the national democratic revolution and its relationship to socialism and class struggle.

No issue, Slovo argues, is more immediate and relevant in the South African struggle than the experience of national oppression. This does not mean, however, that national struggle diverts attention from class struggle; on the contrary, it is only through national struggle that apartheid becomes visible as a ruthless form of capitalist exploitation.

Although it is clearly black workers who suffer the most, apartheid also oppresses the black middle and upper classes. Hence there is an objective basis for an inter-class alliance in the national democratic revolution, for it is only the black bureaucratic bourgeoisie which benefits from collaborating with apartheid.

However, the national democratic revolution is not an end in itself. It is a *stage* within an ongoing revolutionary process and, as Slovo puts it crisply, the very concept of a *stage* implies 'at one and the same time and point of arrival and point of departure'. Both the left and the right critics of the SACP forget the fact that in South Africa,

democracy is only possible if we set our strategic sights on socialism.

For while members of the black middle and upper classes oppose apartheid, they will naturally seek to minimise the measures for social emancipation stressed in the Freedom Charter, even though these measures are (strictly speaking) democratic rather than socialist in character. Even some of the Soviet commentators appear to have overlooked the fact that national oppression cannot be meaningfully tackled in South Africa unless all the clauses of the Freedom Charter become a reality. This is why working class leadership is vital if a national democratic revolution is to be sustained.

Slovo not only stresses the need for working class leadership; he also analyses its organisational implications. For working class leadership seeks to restructure society as a whole, and therefore must champion the interests of *all* oppressed people (an oppressed bourgeoisie included). Though rooted in, it must move beyond trade unionism, and address itself explicitly to the question of state power. This fact alone explains why the organisational structures of the UDF, ANC and the SACP necessarily differ from those appropriate to trade unions.

But what of the national framework the democratic revolution requires? Here Slovo insists that multi-

nationalism and 'group rights' are merely devices for entrenching white privilege; on the other hand, he is surely right to argue that a single South African nation cannot arise until the divisive racism of apartheid has been destroyed.

Underpinning Slovo's whole analysis (and deserving perhaps an even greater emphasis than the pamphlet provides) is the question of colonialism of a special type. For the relationship between capitalism and colonialism in South Africa not only demonstrates the centrality of the national question but takes us to the heart of the paradox which Slovo himself raises. The fact that a racist bourgeoisie finds itself compelled to rule through institutions which deny 'bourgeois democratic rights' to the majority of the population. No wonder its hegemony is so fragile and vulnerable! No wonder, as Slovo stresses, the national democratic revolution is no ordinary 'bourgeois revolution', but a national struggle with a radical 'class content'!

Each of Slovo's arguments deserves close and careful study. Taken as a coherent whole, the message of this powerful pamphlet is clear and provocative.

In the South African context, a national democratic revolution without working class leadership would not really be a national democratic revolution at all.

CAN WE WIN OVER WHITE WORKERS?

We speak about our commitment to non-racial, working class unity. But can we honestly make any progress among white workers? Consider recent developments:

In the Durban docks strike SARHWU members won 14% to 20% wage increases. Meanwhile, white workers had already tamely settled for 12%. This is a pattern repeated widely in South Africa. In militant struggles black workers make gains despite the difficult times, while collaborating white unions lose ground.

True, white workers still earn far more than blacks. But the wage gap is narrowing. It is no longer just black workers but whites too who increasingly feel the effects of the economic crisis — inflation, unemployment, declining social services. No wonder Cosatu unions are approached by a growing trickle of whites to join, seek advice, or explore the possibilities of joint action.

White workers are a fairly small, and decreasing section of the working class. But they have a strategic importance because of their economic position and place within the white bloc. In earlier periods some white workers developed traditions of non-racial, class struggle. Today they have generally been corrupted and confused by racial privileges over many decades.

But the situation is beginning to change again. For white workers the future has become uncertain. In crisis, the regime is abandoning them more and more. Its attempt earlier this year to impose a public sector wage freeze with inflation in double figures is one indication. The regime's plans to privatise much of the public sector (where over half a million whites are employed) and which will cause increased white unemployment, is another indication of this growing abandonment. White workers now realise the regime is more concerned to please big capital than them.

This sense of betrayal is used by the ultra-right to make gains at the expense of the NP. But is this recruitment of white workers by the ultra-right inevitable?

The contact of growing numbers of white workers with Cosatu unions shows it is not. In fact, we ourselves can begin to win over sections of white workers to more progressive positions. But this requires a clear strategy.

Any significant headway will be made in the

first place by appealing to white workers' growing sense of economic hardship. Moral appeals to non-racial justice or equality will almost certainly fail at this point. The ultra-right wraps up white workers' economic grievances in racism — the government and bosses are blamed for 'doing too much for blacks'! We must address the very same sense of economic grievance and betrayal, but detach it from racism. We must link it to a more accurate class understanding. But this needs patience. It also needs organisation.

Existing progressive organisation in the white sector are not well equipped to address white workers. These organisations are doing good work but they are rooted fundamentally among white intellectuals. Their activists and style of work reflect this social base. The progressive trade union movement is better equipped for beginning to approach white workers.

This in turn means addressing the understandable doubts of black workers who daily confront white workers as supervisors, racist bullies and strike breakers. Given the growing collective strength of unionised black workers, the incorporation of reasonable and willing white workers should now be undertaken with greater confidence.

Above all, we must remember the strategic possibilities in winning over white workers. One example: imagine the confusion of Afrikaans speaking riot police, themselves from working class backgrounds, finding not just blacks, but their own brothers and sisters on a picket line, or in a factory sit-in!



1922 Miners' Strike: Erecting Barricades

WORKERS UNITE FOR VICTORY!

EL SALVADOR — TACTICS OF A CHANGING SITUATION



El Salvador is a laboratory for US counter-insurgency strategy of low-intensity warfare. Since 1983 the war has been planned and controlled by US 'advisers'. This involves military, political and economic aspects, eg the 'civic action programme' to win hearts and minds, run and financed by the US Agency for International Development. Since 1980 the USA has given El Salvador more than \$3-billion in economic and military aid, making it the largest recipient of US aid in the world after Israel and Egypt. In 1987 it was estimated that \$3 out of every \$4 was used for the war effort. More than 19 000 officers and men have been trained by the USA.

El Salvador is controlled by a small oligarchy, commonly referred to as the 'fourteen families'. From 1932 its instrument of control was the military dictatorship. Since 1961, while political control is still through the military, some form of sham democracy has been introduced. The political space created led to the formation of the Front for Revolutionary Action (1961). The leading force was the Communist Party, but it also included non-party members.

At this time there was sharp debate on the question of the path to power. The Party opposed the armed struggle and argued for 'an insurrectional solution rather than a protracted struggle.' The Party's tactics were first to train selected people for mass insurrection, secondly to have a general strike, and thirdly to carry out insurrection.

The Party's VII Congress in 1979 decided to embark on armed struggle. To meet the new situation a new CC was elected and organisational changes made.

These changes helped to simplify the Party structures, bring the leadership closer to the grassroots, create an integrated political military approach and facilitate acceptance and conduct of the armed struggle.

As the struggle intensified it was necessary to form a united front of all opposition. In January 1981 the FDR-FMLN was established. The five groups making up the alliance co-operated but maintained separate identities. In the same year the FMLN launched a major offensive but this did not materialise into the expected general insur-

rection. The guerrillas withdrew to the northern area which is mountainous and borders on Honduras, and embarked on a strategy of protracted struggle. Emphasis is now on hit-and-run attacks against the army and on increased sabotage against the economic infra-structure.

But in 1984 US advisers introduced new counter-insurgency tactics. The army was equipped with modern helicopters and AC-47 flying gunships. Through increased aerial bombardment and the mobility of the army, at least 90% of the civilian population was forced out of the guerrilla zones. This weakened the guerrillas' territorial control, and it became increasingly difficult to have large concentrations of fighters. It was thus decided to revert to classical guerrilla warfare. Units were divided into small groups of ten and dispersed throughout the country. Hit-and-run attacks increased and there was greater and more effective use of landmines against army foot patrols. This was complemented by sabotage against power supplies and other economic targets.

In 1985 the five separate groups within the FMLN were united into a single politico-military organisation. This further enhanced the fighting capacity of the FMLN. By 1986 the FMLN had successfully countered the army's counter-insurgency tactics. While they dispersed into smaller units, their command structure remained intact, and they are able to mount large-scale attacks when necessary. In the last month there have been 1 062 armed forces casualties, three damaged helicopters and 13 partially destroyed military vehicles, plus the capture of large quantities of weapons.

The FMLN successes are due to its ability to make organisational and tactical adjustments to changing conditions. Once armed struggle was embarked on, every effort was made to ensure an integrated politico-military approach. Taking into consideration the enemy's firepower and modern counter-insurgency techniques, the FMLN avoided concentration of forces and skilfully coupled political mobilisation with hit-and-run tactics against the army and economic infrastructure.

These are important lessons.