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CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

FIDEL CASTRO ON

ANGOLA

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

Published quarterly in the interests of African solidarity, and as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought throughout our Continent, by the South African Communist Party

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EDITORIAL NOTES



ANGOLA'S LESSON FOR SOUTH AFRICA

The events in Angola since the achievement of independence last November have opened up a new chapter in the history of our continent. At the time that these words were written, the forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism as represented by South Africa,

UNITA, FNLA and a motley rag-bag of international mercenaries, whose murderous inhumanity accurately reflected the morality of their paymasters, had been routed. All the main centres of Angola were in the hands of the MPLA and their allies, and the People's Republic of Angola had won official recognition as a full member of the Organisation of African Unity. The way had been cleared for the people of Angola to move towards the era of peace and independence for which they had struggled and suffered so long.

It is, of course, too early to say that all is over bar the shouting. Too much is at stake, not only in Angola, but in all southern and central Africa, for international and local reaction to accept defeat meekly and resign themselves to the inevitable. The struggle to promote the independence of Angola and of all African countries in the face of imperialist, racist and neo-colonialist aggression and subversion will continue until the seed-beds of exploitation and profiteering throughout the world are finally destroyed.

Nevertheless, a truly qualitative change has taken place in Africa as a result of the events in Angola. The shattering victories of the forces of the MPLA, aided by their allies from Cuba, the Soviet Union and other socialist and African countries have not only taught a number of lessons about the nature of social and political struggle, but have also opened up gigantic new perspectives the possibilities of which are breathtaking.

From the point of view of logistics alone the achievements of the MPLA and its allies have been staggeringly impressive. Given that up to the point of independence it was impossible for a single cargo of weaponry or soldiery to be landed by ship or plane anywhere in Angola, it was nevertheless possible to marshal in the space of a few short weeks and months an assault force which halted in its tracks the twin drive of the imperialists from north and south, reversed the flow and quickly drove back the enemy to the frontiers. From the point of view of military strategy alone, this has given the whole world something to think about. In the sphere of anti-colonial struggle, no operation of this magnitude and efficiency has ever been witnessed before.

But the victories of the People's Republic of Angola were not founded on fire-power alone, but fundamentally on the correctness of

the political line of the MPLA. Had the MPLA not had the policies and programmes, and the cadres and organisational nucleus to carry them out, none of these victories on the field of battle would have been possible. It was because the MPLA represented the best interests of the people of Angola that it was able to mobilise the mass popular support in the absence of which the military victories would have been either impossible or valueless. The success of the MPLA has, in turn, exposed the lack of both policy and mass base on the part of FNLA and UNITA, who proved themselves to be the mere tools of the imperialists and racists.'

Ever since it went into action the MPLA received, and was proud to acknowledge, the support and solidarity of the socialist and progressive forces throughout the world. Through thick and thin, all parties to this relationship have openly discharged their fraternal responsibility to one another, not shirking any of its implications, nor overstepping its legitimate boundaries. It is not, as the western press and politicians have been screaming, the relationship of an imperialist state towards its satellite, but a free alliance between anti-imperialist forces against their common enemy. We in South Africa can perhaps best understand the nature of this alliance because in the course of our own struggle we have not only built up an alliance between the Communist Party and the national liberation movement against our common enemy, white supremacy, but have also been the joint recipients of fraternal aid and solidarity from the same world forces which helped consolidate the power of the People's Republic of Angola.

The MPLA has never been ashamed of its relationship with the socialist countries, stressing that it in no way affects its independence. It is the MPLA and the MPLA alone which will determine the direction and pace of the Angolan revolution, even though the People's Republic of Angola may continue to receive the whole-hearted assistance and collaboration of the socialist world in the fulfilment of its task.

Compare this open and frank relationship with the miserable hypocrisy of FNLA and UNITA, who were kept alive by the bloodmoney of the CIA and BOSS, while publicly repudiating them, who begged for arms, men and investments from the west while posing as their enemies, who were ready to sell their countries lock, stock and barrel in return for the award of a licence as local agents of the multi-national corpora-

tions. It was the Guinean President Ahmed Sekou Toure who admitted that in the beginning he had first sponsored the progress of FNLA leader Holden Roberto in OAU circles, but later became aware of his treachery. After an investigation, he discovered that Holden was a permanent resident in Kinshasa and never went to the combat front.

“The evidence is overwhelming and no one can cover up the criminal manoeuvres of Holden Roberto. Holden even used the money sent by the OAU to the FNLA for his own personal use, and this is proved by the tremendous fortune he has piled up in Zaire and in other places, to the detriment of Angola’s liberation. Holden owns a large number of drugstores and other businesses in Zaire . . . a good part of the medicines sent by friends to the fighters was sold by Holden in Kinshasa”. (“Afrique-Asie” No. 99, December 29, 1975.) Similarly UNITA boss Savimbi, while claiming to fight imperialism, was using a plane placed at his disposal by Lonrho chief “Tiny” Rowland, who cannot be said to lack interest in the exploitation of the material and personal wealth of the African continent. Maybe Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi are now figures of infamy lying as rejects on the rubbish dumps of history. We mention them partly because there are others of their kind in our own country, including some of the leaders of Vorster’s proposed Bantustans, who use nationalism as a cloak for their personal ambition, and have also fallen victim to the disease of corruption.

We mention these traitors also as examples of so-called nationalists who use the weapon of anti-communism as though it were a guarantee of their independence, instead of a badge of their servitude to their imperialist masters. Yes, the time has come for all genuine nationalists and anti-imperialists to acknowledge humanity’s debt to the forces of communism which have once again helped to drive back the frontiers of imperialism. Once again in Angola, as in Vietnam, Cuba, the Middle East and so many other storm-centres, the power of the communist world has been placed at the disposal of the oppressed peoples fighting for liberation and independence. Cuba herself, though advancing rapidly under socialism, is still a comparatively poor country by international standards, for obvious political and economic reasons quite incapable of functioning as an imperialist power in Africa or anywhere else. But Cubans have fought and died to help make Angola free, displaying a magnificent spirit of fraternal solidarity which is an

example to the world of disinterested self-sacrifice in the cause of freedom.

The overwhelming majority of the oppressed people of South Africa have supported the cause of MPLA and have been grateful that the international communist movement was able to give the MPLA the power to repel the South African and imperialist invaders. The experiences of the people of Portugal, Chile and now Angola have proved that anti-communism is a weapon of reaction and repression, not of liberation.

Now that the struggle for the liberation of all Southern Africa is steadily rising in pace and intensity, the white racists are perhaps for the first time seriously alarmed at the prospect of endless conflict which confronts them. Rightly or wrongly, they have always been confident that they could contain any combination of forces which the oppressed peoples of South Africa, aided by independent Africa, could forge against them. But they overlooked the extra dimension given to the struggle of the oppressed by the alliance between the national liberation movement and the international communist movement. It is this alliance which has ensured the MPLA victory in Angola and sent the South Africans reeling, and it is the deepening of this alliance which is the key to the final victory. Events since November 11, 1975, have made it clear that those who reject the communists as allies are themselves the allies of Vorster.

It is of crucial importance that this issue be sorted out in the minds of the people of South Africa now that the tide of struggle is surging against our borders. The struggle of MPLA and their allies is our struggle. It is in Angola that the myth of South African invincibility has been shattered, and that racist South Africa has been dealt the most humiliating military and political defeat in its whole inglorious history. But that is not the end of the story, for it is clear that what has happened up to now is only in the nature of a preliminary skirmish and that the grimmest struggles lie ahead. The main bastions of white supremacy in southern Africa are still intact.

The South Africans and the imperialists now express alarm that the "Cubans and the Russians" (how they try to take away from MPLA the credit for its own indigenous achievements!) will not stop at the

Angolan border, but will invade Namibia, Rhodesia, South Africa, Zambia, Zaire, in fact rampage over the whole continent establishing one communist regime after another. There may even be in the ranks of the oppressed those who hope that this will happen, and that freedom will be delivered to us at the tip of a Cuban or a Russian bayonet.

This is to misread the true lesson of Angola, which is that MPLA created the conditions in which the anti-imperialist struggle could be brought to a victorious conclusion. True, it has received the aid of allies, not only from the socialist countries, but also from other African countries such as Guinea and Mozambique. But it is not the job of the Cubans and the Russians to carry the fire of revolution to the rest of southern Africa. Certainly they will help, if they are asked and if they can. But the spark must be lit by our own struggle, fanned into flame by the bellows of our own lungs. It took the MPLA 15 years of unremitting struggle and sacrifice before they came in sight of victory, and it was only when the South Africans and imperialists threatened to dash the cup from their lips that they asked for extra help from their allies – not to make their revolution but to repel the foreign invaders.

For revolution is not just a matter of blood and bullets. It is basically a question of restructuring society, removing the exploiting class or nation from power and substituting the rule of the working class and oppressed peoples, transferring ownership of the means of production from the exploiters to the exploited, led by their vanguard parties and liberation organisations. For a revolution to succeed, certain basic conditions must be fulfilled: 1. The ruling class must be unable to continue to rule in the old way; 2. The oppressed class or nation must be unwilling to continue to be ruled in the old way; 3. There must be a party or liberation organisation capable of harnessing the people's rebellion and mobilising the masses for struggle with a view to seizing power. By the logic of its dialectic, a revolution will only succeed when these conditions have reached maturity. Revolutionary power must have a firm base among the people if it is to survive the counter-revolution.

The Angolan war has brought about a dramatic shift in the balance of forces in southern Africa, and called into question the ability of the white racists to continue to dominate in the old way. The confrontation which still lies ahead can take a variety of forms about which it is

useless to speculate. There may yet be an all-out confrontation between South Africa and the forces upholding the People's Republic of Angola on the Namibian border. The struggle for the final liberation of Namibia may be about to unfold. Encircled Rhodesia may become the independent state of Zimbabwe within the near future. Nor is the struggle for Angola itself necessarily ended — the imperialists and their allies may yet stage a counter-attack of incalculable intensity. But whatever form the struggle in southern Africa may take, one thing is certain: the greater the pressures, the greater the strain on the South African state, the nearer the point of its ultimate collapse.

We have always maintained that the South African state is unstable because it has required the exertion of the utmost force and violence to keep the oppressed majority in subjection. The more the South African armed forces, whether military or police, are committed, the more the possibility arises that even a slight shift in the balance of power can bring the whole structure crashing down. At any rate, whatever the time scale, this is the perspective which is now revealing itself before our very eyes — a perspective which has been greatly foreshortened by the events in Angola. The era of the South African revolution has opened. *Are we ready for it?*

For it is at this stage in history that the oppressed peoples of South Africa are called upon to raise their struggle to new heights. The initiative today is in the hands of the people. Whether the racist South African state manages to survive the pressures to which it is increasingly being subjected depends not on Cubans or Russians or the United Nations but on us and our organisations of national liberation. The hour has come for striking weighty blows for freedom. The enemy must be harassed on every front, whether it be by strike action, by demonstrations, by sabotage or guerrilla struggle. Every South African who longs for freedom must decide now to join the liberation front at its nearest point. The time for talking, complaining and criticising is never over, but now imperatively it is also a time for action, for mass action, for the whole people to resist.

The issue of defeat or victory for MPLA in Angola was decided in a few miraculous weeks following independence. The issue of defeat or victory for the people in South Africa may equally be decided at any stage in the immediate future. History does not easily repeat itself. If

we fail to strike when the iron is hot, we may have to wait years for another chance.

THE PEOPLE ARE ON THE MOVE

At the time of writing, the trial of activists of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) and the Black People's Convention (BPC) is resuming after another long adjournment. By their militant stand and their defiant attitude towards the police, the court and the whole system of legalised racism the accused have demonstrated the rising assertiveness of our people. Throughout their long and testing ordeal the accused have borne themselves with courage and great spirit, in the finest traditions of our liberation movement which has always sought to turn the courtroom into another field of battle where the enemy can be exposed and the cause of liberation advanced.

Nor are the Black Consciousness militants alone at this time. Several other current trials under the Terrorism Act testify both to the authorities' desire to imprison or intimidate all opponents and to the failure of these tactics: the very process of picking off various individuals and small groups only makes others more determined than ever to overthrow the racist regime. The arrest of 25 or more Africans in Natal, including some prominent SACTU and ANC men, will prove equally futile for the same reasons. The tide of liberation is beginning to run fast now and no amount of brutal repression can stop it.

A GREAT FRIEND OF AFRICA

The death of Paul Robeson last January removed from the world stage not only one of its outstanding cultural figures, but one who allied his art to the cause of human freedom and liberty everywhere. Born in Princeton, New Jersey, in 1898, the son of a presbyterian pastor and teacher and the grandson of a slave, Robeson had to struggle against racial and political discrimination all his life, but he never wavered in his dedication to the cause of his people, to the cause of human emancipation and social progress, to the cause of peace.

Possessed of talents which raised him to the heights as scholar,

lawyer, sportsman, singer and actor, Robeson never succumbed to the temptations which must often have been placed in his way to "look after No. 1" and forget his people. He records in his autobiography "Here I Stand" that "in 1936, when I was in London, John Hamilton, then national chairman of the Republican Party, visited me with a proposition that I return to America and campaign among Negroes for Alf Landon against President Roosevelt. My reward would be that as an actor I could write my own ticket in regard to future Hollywood contracts and starring productions, since the big film magnates were staunchly Republican and hated the man in the White House. I declined the offer and today I can smile at the thought that anyone could imagine me stumping the country, urging Negroes to spurn the New Deal and return the party of Herbert Hoover to power! Much earlier in my career, in New York, I had declined the offer of an important impresario to sign me a lucrative ten-year contract while he would take full charge of my public life. I did not have many fixed ideas in those days, but one of them happened to be a strong conviction that my own conscience should be my guide and that no one was going to lead me around by a golden chain or any other kind".

Because Hollywood could not offer him any roles except those of Negro stereotypes of the "Uncle Tom" variety, because of his refusal to sing before segregated audiences, because of the humiliations daily heaped upon him by the white racists of America, Robeson was driven to seek a better life abroad. From 1927 to 1939 his home was London, and it was there that his philosophical and political ideas crystallised. The British upper classes fawned on him, trying to absorb and neutralise him as they have done with so many rebels who sought sanctuary in their class-ridden country. But he went into as many working class homes as country houses, and remained true to himself.

More, since London was the centre of the British Empire, "I 'discovered' Africa. That discovery, which has influenced my life ever since, made it clear that I would not live out my life as an adopted Englishman, and I came to consider that I was an African.

"Like most of Africa's children in America, I had known little about the land of our fathers, but in England I came to know many Africans. Some of their names are now known to the world — Nkrumah and Azikiwe, and Kenyatta who is imprisoned in Kenya. (Robeson was

writing this in 1958 – Ed.) Many of the Africans were students, and I spent long hours talking with them and taking part in their activities at the West African Students' Union building. Somehow they came to look upon me as one of them; they took pride in my successes; and they made Mrs Robeson and me honorary members of the Union. Besides these students, who were mostly of princely origin, I also came to know another class of Africans – the seamen in the ports of London, Liverpool and Cardiff. They too had their organisations and had much to teach me about their lives and their various peoples.”

As an artist it was natural that his first interest in Africa was cultural. He studied several African languages and was amazed to discover the richness and variety of the African cultural heritage. at that time largely unknown to the Western world and even to the American Negroes, many of whom “believed that the African Negro communicated his thoughts by means of gestures, that, in fact, he was practically incapable of speech and merely used sign language.”

It became one of his main concerns to dispel this abysmal ignorance of its own heritage in the Negro race itself. “I felt as one with my African friends and became filled with a glowing pride in these riches, new found to me. I learned that along with the towering achievements of the cultures of ancient Greece and China there stood the culture of Africa, unseen and denied by the looters of Africa’s material wealth . . . My pride in Africa, and it grew with the learning, impelled me to speak out against the scorers”.

He became involved in the overall struggle against imperialism and was helped in his political reorientation by visits to the Soviet Union. “It was like stepping into another planet. I felt the full dignity of being a human being for the first time”. He was especially impressed with the progress which had been made by the so-called “backward races” of the Soviet Union, the Asian communities who had been freed from Czarist oppression by the 1917 revolution. He was a lifelong supporter of the Soviet Union and the cause of socialism.

Robeson specifically espoused the cause of the oppressed black peoples of South Africa, and gave concerts to raise funds for the 156 who were on trial for treason between 1956 and 1960, and also to help the newspaper *New Age*, voice of the Congress and progressive movement.

For his pains, Robeson was hounded and victimised by the McCarthyites in the United States, his concerts were broken up by hooligans, his passport was taken away from him. But he stood his ground, refused to submit or conform. His last years were shadowed by illness, but, as his son Paul said at his funeral in Harlem, he “retired undefeated and unrepentant”.

Robeson was not only a great artist but also a great human being, great in his physique, great in his talent, great in his courage and his loyalty to his ideals. Nobody who ever met him, or was moved by his songs or his acting, could ever forget him or the message of peace and human brotherhood which he transmitted to his audiences. The American essayist Alexander Woolcott wrote of him:

“By his unassailable dignity, and his serene, incorruptible simplicity, he strikes me as having been made out of the original stuff of the world. In this sense he was coeval with Adam and the redwood tree of California. He is a fresh act, a fresh gesture, a fresh effort of creation. I am proud to belong to his race. For, of course, we are both members of the one sometimes fulsomely described as human”.

All progressive mankind, enriched by his living, are the poorer by his passing, and share the sorrow of his loss with his family, to whom we take this opportunity of extending our heartfelt condolences.

“The Enemy Hidden Under The Same Colour”

Statement of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party on the racist and anti-Communist activities of the group of eight recently expelled from the African National Congress.

'the other face is that of the indirect and secondary enemy, who presents himself under the cover of a nationalist and even as a revolutionary thus making it difficult to identify him . . . THE FIGHTER MUST DISTINGUISH FRIEND FROM FOE EVEN IF THE LATTER IS CONCEALED UNDER THE SAME COLOUR, LANGUAGE, FAMILY TIES OR TRIBAL MARKINGS AS THEIR OWN, EVEN IF HE RAISES HIS FLAG WITH US'.

— President Samora Machel.

South Africa's press has given a great deal of space to anti-Communist, anti-ANC and racist propaganda with which it has been fed by the group of eight who were recently expelled from the ANC for persistently betraying its political and organisational principles. For the enemy this group's campaign against the people's struggle could not have come at a better moment. It fits in very well with the Vorster government's desperate attempts to find black collaborators both inside and outside the country, in order to break up the unity of the liberation forces and to cover its criminal aggression against our brothers in Angola. Times are changing and our ruling class is being forced to find new ways to keep white power alive. Both inside and outside

South Africa it desperately needs the Savimbis and the Holden Robertos, to divide the people under banners of so-called nationalism, anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, and thus to prevent true liberation. Vorster and BOSS Chief van den Bergh must indeed be satisfied to see how well *their* cause is being served by this group of renegades from the ANC who are capturing so many headlines in the racist press.

The issues on which they have chosen to attack the liberation movement are as old as the struggle itself. The slander that the ANC is run by the Communist Party is not something new; it has always been spread by the racists and those who act as their agents. And it has always been designed to weaken the people's struggle. As early as the 1920s, liberals like Ballinger helped destroy the ICU by raising the banner of anti-Communism, and spreading scare stories about 'Communist take-overs'. In the late 50s, the break-away PAC group also used the white liberal parrot-cry that 'the Communists were running the ANC' in an attempt to destroy it.

The principled stand of the ANC against the so-called 'homelands' policy has been attacked by the Bantustan collaborators as 'Marxist-inspired' and the creation of Communists who 'dominate the ANC'. The latest tragic example of the way racists and reactionaries act together to exploit this kind of slander, is in Angola. There, a few doomed black collaborators are again raising these cries together with Vorster and his Western imperialist allies, in a hopeless attempt to destroy Angola's newly-won independence, and to discredit its undoubted leaders - the MPLA.

GHETTO 'NATIONALISM'

Erecting obstacles in the way of the unity of all revolutionaries has also always been the tactic of South African white supremacists. It is for this reason that they devised a law (the Prohibition of Political Interference Act) to prevent Africans, Indians, Coloureds and whites from working together. Now the group of 8, like the PAC clique before them, are shouting 'poqo' (we alone) for the same reason. Under the guise of an admirable claim to be building the unity of the African people, they spread racialism and a Savimbi kind of nationalism. They cover their real purpose by pretences about what they call 'a unity be-

tween equals'. We shall show later that in fact they clearly want to exclude even proven revolutionaries who are not African from any form of collective participation in the ANC's External Mission, on grounds of race alone. Like Vorster, they believe that the place of a Coloured and an Indian is to work only in his own ghetto amongst his own people. The race character of their so-called nationalism is revealed further in their statement that it is the duty of non-Africans in the struggle to 'humble themselves'. This is clearly the language of racism not of comradeship or revolutionary nationalism.

White supremacists have always shown their contempt for the African people in their insulting belief that Africans are inferior and will invariably play a secondary role if they work with Coloureds, Indians or whites. In exactly this spirit, this group of 8 scream 'manipulation' and 'domination' at the very thought that Coloured, Indian or white revolutionaries should work side by side with Africans. For example, the ANC's Revolutionary Council is overwhelmingly African in composition including in its ranks only one Indian, one Coloured and one white, and with 100% African membership at its Headquarters. According to this group, this is enough to put the Revolutionary Council 'under the hegemony' of the 'clique of non-Africans'.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Indeed, on this question of liberation unity, as on so many others, the group of 8 find themselves repeating (sometimes word for word) the mouthings of those whom they have themselves, until very recently, condemned as traitors to the cause of African liberation. Refer, for example, to the recent statement by the group of 8 read on their behalf by Tennyson Makiwane to an invited audience in London in December 1975, which not surprisingly included well-known PAC leaders. It is certainly no accident that there is such striking similarity between the words used in that statement, and those used by Leballo in 1958 justifying the PAC break-away of that year.

LEBALLO (all quotes from *CONTACT*, 1st November 1958):

'The leaders (of the ANC) . . . do not want to see the emergence of an African nationalism. Subscribing as they do to the myth that this is a

class struggle, they see an obstacle in nationalism.'

GROUP of 8:

The 'non-African clique' who have 'highjacked the ANC' have attempted 'to substitute a class approach for the national approach to our struggle.'

LEBALLO:

'The present ANC leadership both national and Transvaal, is dominated by . . . people of leftist inclination.'

GROUP of 8:

'The SACP relies entirely on using the ANC as its . . . front organisation.'

LEBALLO:

'If the Indians, for example, are also an oppressed group they should unite and fight as an Indian group.'

GROUP of 8:

The 'clique of non-Africans, rather than spend time organising their own people, has sought to impose its hegemony . . .'

LEBALLO:

'Since the advent of the present ANC leadership, a fetish has been made of loyalty to the leadership as such.'

GROUP of 8:

'Criticism of official ANC policy and practice has come to be regarded within the leadership circles as nothing less than treason.'

And so on and so forth.

It is not surprising that the group of 8 find themselves in that kind of company, echoing the ancient and discredited PAC politics.

Who are the leaders of this new group of splitters? Amongst them are some who not long ago were found guilty of organising factional groups in the ANC, and were removed from positions of responsibility in the organisation for that reason. Their persistent efforts to return to positions in the leadership (at the same time refusing to accept the organisation's discipline) have been frustrated by the rank-and-file in the African National Congress which has nothing but contempt for their political and personal past. So now (with London as their base)

they spread the malicious lie that their exclusion is all due to a conspiracy by the 'Communists' and a 'non-African clique'. They have spent some years gathering together a motley collection of dissidents whose history is only too well-known. Most of them have made many somersaults in their chequered political careers, always following what seemed to serve their ambitions at the given moment. Some of them have been Communists at some time and anti-Communists at others; some, racialists at times and multi-racialists at others; tribalists and African nationalists; strongly pro-Soviet, and equally strongly anti-Soviet and pro-China. Some of the loudest so-called nationalists amongst them were activists of the white-led Liberal ARM when they were in South Africa; not of the ANC or its military wing Umkhonto. Some of them are not new to factional activities within the ANC, and have in their time attempted to use both Communist Party attitudes and anti-Communist Party attitudes to advance their personal careers. Included in this group of 8 are two gentlemen who in 1969 secured their own safety by giving evidence for the prosecution against Dorothy Nyembe and other comrades of the ANC in Pietermaritzburg, helping to send them to jail for decades.

The reason this group now attacks the ANC more openly than ever before is not because the ANC has changed since they were in the leadership. But because they sense the prospect of new advances of the liberation struggle, new break throughs in the new favourable conditions created by the people's victories in the last year or two. And they want desperately to be at the top once again. They play on ignorance, and make their main appeal to prejudice and political backwardness. They distort the truth of the history of our movement, and exploit the problems which have faced it during the difficult period after 1963.

AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM

We will deal more specifically with some of their main distortions; but first it is important to emphasise that, like the PAC before them, this group is the expression of a political trend which seeks to dilute and eliminate the revolutionary content of South Africa's liberation struggle. Basically it wants the ANC to return to a type of nationalism which serves only a small elite and not the masses of the oppressed

people. The social base for this tendency is to be found amongst those classes and groups within the oppressed who seek the kind of 'liberation' which will, at best, replace the white exploiter with a black exploiter. It is the unequivocal rejection of this type of 'nationalism' which gives a special revolutionary quality to such movements as FRELIMO and MPLA. The Simangos of Mozambique and the Savimbis of Angola also in their time paraded under slogans of 'true black nationalism', anti-Communism, anti-Sovietism, etc. They accused FRELIMO and MPLA of being dominated by Marxists, by minorities, and by persons of mixed blood. But in the course of the revolutionary struggle they soon showed their true colours by becoming open collaborators with the oppressor. Our Party is made the special target of this sort of attack precisely because it always exposes the kind of 'nationalism' which only fights the enemy in words, but helps it in action. It is an insidious 'nationalism' because it attempts to use the people's justified grievances and their hatred of the oppressor not against the enemy but against the people's interests, against comrades in the struggle, and against revolutionary unity.

The policy of our Party on the national question in South Africa is well known. Its essentials are contained in the Programme adopted at an underground Party conference in Johannesburg in 1962. We pioneered the concept that the main content of the present phase of the South African revolution is the liberation of the African people. For this reason we have always recognised that the leading role in the liberation front is played by the national organisation of the African majority, the ANC. But unlike the Liberals we understand that racism is not just a human failing; it has roots in the system of capitalism and in South Africa especially in the economic exploitation of the black working class. We believe too that the working class is, in the words of our Programme,

' . . . the disciplined and advanced class which has no property stakes in present-day South Africa and has been the core and inspiration of other classes in every struggle of our time. The working class seeks a close alliance with the rural people; and with the urban middle classes and intellectuals in the national democratic revolution. Only under its leadership can the full aims of the revolution be achieved.'

The emphasis on the dominant role of the working people in the

struggle for national liberation is the main foundation of the ideology of revolutionary nationalism in the contemporary period. The African National Congress in its strategy and tactics (to which the group of 8 object), and movements such as FRELIMO, MPLA, PAIGC, the Congolese Party of Labour, also stress the fundamental role of the working people at all stages of the liberation struggle. For South Africa this approach involves a theory of revolution which takes into account both class and national factors. What then are the politics of the group of 8?

BACKWARD POLITICS BEHIND BACKWARD NATIONALISM

The group of 8 complains that it is a Communist trick to dismiss those with whom they disagree as 'racist' and 'bourgeois nationalist'. Let us therefore briefly examine some aspects of the group's political standpoint as expounded in the Makiwane address.

The group claims that the South African struggle is

'no different from the post-World War II, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist struggles which have been waged and are being waged by our brothers on the African Continent as well as similar struggles in Asia and Latin America,

It hardly needs theory to remind us that the fruits of victory in many of the struggles on our Continent (as well as in parts of Asia and Latin America) have not been gathered by the mass of the exploited people; they have been gathered by these small groups who stepped into the shoes of the colonial oppressors and exploiters. Where this has happened, it is precisely because the *dominant classes* in the national struggle were the self-seeking petit-bourgeoisie together with the emerging national bourgeoisie. The dominant ideology of such movements was therefore bourgeois-nationalist in character; in saying this, reference is made not to the social background of the individual leaders, but to the class interests served by their policies.

In South Africa there is perhaps the oldest and most experienced black working class on the African Continent, with a growing trading and bureaucratic black petty bourgeoisie and, in the Bantustans, even the beginnings of a black commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. It is

therefore particularly important for South Africans to distinguish between a nationalism designed to serve the interests of an elite or an aspirant bourgeoisie, and a nationalism which is revolutionary and designed to serve the interests of the mass of the oppressed people. In other words, it is not enough merely to speak of 'nationalism'. Nationalism, like all ideology, has a class content and it is necessary to say whether, in the long term, that nationalism is progressive or reactionary, bourgeois or revolutionary. In our view therefore, it is impossible to separate nationalism from the class struggle; and the depth and closeness of this connection will have a vital bearing on the future of the South African revolution.

On the nature of our national struggle the ANC's Strategy and Tactics says:

'The national character of the struggle must therefore dominate our approach. But it is a national struggle which is taking place in a different era and in a different context from those which characterised the early struggles against colonialism. It is happening in a new kind of world - a world which is no longer monopolised by the imperialist world system; a world in which the existence of the powerful socialist system and a significant sector of newly liberated areas has altered the balance of forces; a world in which the horizons liberated from foreign oppression extend beyond mere formal political control and encompass the element which makes such control meaningful - economic emancipation. It is also happening in a new kind of South Africa; a South Africa in which there is a large and well-developed working class whose class consciousness and in which the independent expressions of the working people - their political organs and trade unions - are very much part of the liberation front. Thus, our nationalism must not be confused with chauvinism or narrow nationalism of a previous epoch. It must not be confused with the classical drive by an elitist group among the oppressed people to gain ascendancy so that they can replace the oppressor in the exploitation of the mass. But none of this detracts from the basically national context of our liberation drive. In the last resort it is only the success of the national democratic revolution which - by destroying the existing social and economic relationships - will bring with it a correction of the historical injustices perpetrated against the indigenous majority and thus lay the basis for a new - and deeper internationalist - approach. Until then, the national sense of grievance is the most potent revolutionary force which must be harnessed. To

blunt it in the interests of abstract concepts of internationalism is, in the long run, doing neither a service to revolution nor to internationalism.'

But the group of 8 see in this stress on the revolutionary role of the working class only a sinister Communist diversion to narrow the base of the national struggle. They echo the kind of attack which the most backward political forces in Africa have used under instigation from Western imperialism, to try to dragoon such movements as MPLA into some sort of acceptance of and accommodation to reactionary and counter-revolutionary nationalist forces in the spurious name of 'national unity'. The group of 8 complains that the SACP identifies

'two strands in this situation - a *so-called* bourgeois nationalism and a *so-called* revolutionary nationalism . . . Such dogmatic infusion of Marxist terminology into a situation with special characteristics of its own only serves the forces of confusion and division.'

Again they say that the SACP talk about the 'progressives' on the one hand and 'reactionaries' on the other is

' . . . in fact nothing more than a highly disguised sectarian attempt to substitute a class approach for the national approach to our struggle. Its most dangerous implication being to narrow down the broadly based African resistance and seeking to highlight only a workers' and peasants' conflict against capital.*

An example of the type of nationalism which is not revolutionary but reactionary, and which objectively serves those who seek a neo-colonial type of 'liberation', is provided by the ideology of the group of 8. The group regards an emphasis on workers' and peasants' struggle

*In fact the current fashion amongst ultra-left academic critics of our Party's policy is to accuse it of the very opposite: a failure to highlight the workers' and peasants' conflict against capital. But in their frenzied enthusiasm to attack the 'Communist-controlled' ANC and SACP from every possible angle, the group of 8 in fact contradict themselves earlier in the document when they say that a source of the organisational crisis in the ANC was a 'misguided and opportunistic definition of the nature and content of the S.A. freedom struggle and *projecting it as if it were merely a struggle for the elimination of race discrimination*'

against capital as an unpatriotic diversion. They believe that the concept of a bourgeois nationalism is a devilish invention of the Communists and that blackness alone is the test of the credentials of a South African nationalist. In effect they would like to see the ANC retreat into the past, and restrict its public policy to a vague, undifferentiated kind of patriotism which pretends to be classless, but which in practice serves the interests of the elite, the bureaucratic, the petty bourgeois minority.

They show the same spurious 'classless' formulation in their approach to the world struggle against imperialism, when they state that in international affairs they will work to change ANC attitudes by 'reinstatement of a foreign policy based on non-alignment.'

It is characteristic of the self-seekers amongst oppressed nations that they present their 'nationalist' ideology everywhere as if it were not ideology at all; the group of 8 follow that presentation. They claim that

'The ANC is not a political party committed to any political ideology.' (!!)

But, in fact, the history of its whole struggle has forced the ANC to reject this formlessness, just as it has for so many other revolutionary organisations. For such organisations as FRELIMO, MPLA and the PAIGC, it was the maturing of ideology, and steadfast safeguarding of their political line which enabled them to fight and defeat not only Portuguese fascism but also racist reaction and bourgeois nationalism in the ranks of their peoples. The importance of commitment to a revolutionary political ideology was stressed by the great Amilcar Cabral, speaking from the African experience:

'The ideological deficiency, not to say the total lack of ideology, within the national liberation movements - which is basically due to ignorance of the historical reality which these movements claimed to transform - constitutes one of the greatest weaknesses of our struggle against imperialism, if not the greatest weakness of all . . . Nobody has yet made a successful revolution without a revolutionary theory.' (*Revolution in Guine - an African People's Struggle* p. 75).

In Guine the working class, in the sense which Communists use the

term, hardly existed; and yet Cabral goes on:

'We know that a struggle of the kind we hoped to lead - and win - had to be led by the working class; we looked for the working class in Guine and did not find it . . . We realised that we need to have people with the mentality which could transcend the context of the national liberation struggle, and so we prepared a number of cadres from the 'small group of urban workers' . . . and even some peasants so that they could acquire what you might call a working class mentality . . . We are not a Communist Party or a Marxist-Leninist Party but the people now leading the peasants in the struggle in Guine are mostly from the urban milieu and connected with the urban wage-earning group.'

Of tribalism in the Guine-Bissau struggle, Cabral emphasised the way in which it is exploited mainly by 'detrified individuals or groups within the national liberation movement'. These groups corruptly play on tribal divisions to create a power-base for themselves in order to advance their careers. In the middle sixties, this is precisely what some of the leading members of the group of 8 were attempting to do within the ANC.

BEATING THE RACIST AND ANTI-COMMUNIST DRUM

But now they are beating another drum, equally emotive and basically racist. In this respect too, they again follow the patterns set by the PAC in 1958. The group's statements and other pronouncements are filled with such phrases and expressions as 'non-African clique', 'the white-led CP', the 'failure of the non-Africans to humble themselves' and 'submit themselves' and so on. 'The Morogoro Conference', they say, 'was a multi-racial affair'. This, they assume, damns it beyond redemption.

On the surface their main complaint is against the Morogoro decision to integrate non-African revolutionaries into the ANC's External Mission. Yet all those in the group of 8 who were present at the Conference neither voted nor spoke against the decision. We will return to the way in which this decision has been distorted. But for the moment we should ask what lies behind their policy of denying all non-African revolutionaries any place or any effective part to play in the work of the External Mission of the African National Congress. This policy

means, in effect, that there is no place at all for a non-African revolutionary in exile, as they are well aware. For there is a long-standing decision adopted by the African National Congress leadership in the early sixties and endorsed by all the other partners in the Congress Alliance, that the whole South African liberation movement abroad would be represented to the outside world by the ANC only, acting for all and in the name of all.

Can it be that the group of 8 is saying that Indian and Coloured comrades on Robben Island and white comrades in Pretoria prison, some serving terms of life imprisonment for their part in both armed and unarmed struggle, should not have played a part, but should have restricted themselves to organising only among their own communities? Are they saying that non-African revolutionaries like Basil February, killed alongside Partick Malaoa in Umkhonto's fighting ranks against racist troops, had no right to participate in the ANC's External Mission, or ever to be a member of the ANC's Revolutionary Council? But, of course, they *are* saying all this. And, we suspect, more than this. Their prime purpose is to create a constituency for themselves and their reactionary ideology by appealing to racist emotionalism, prejudices and political backwardness.

Once again they ape the PAC who used precisely the same arguments when *they* were expelled from the ANC in the late fifties, long before the Morogoro decision was taken. It did not take long for the PAC to demonstrate what was really behind their attack on so-called non-African influence in the ANC. Shortly after their formation, they brought the white Liberal Patrick Duncan into their leadership and made him their official representative in Algeria; Gora Ebrahim became their chief ideologist and spokesman in Dar es Salaam; and others were brought into their top leadership. These acts fully exposed the hypocrisy and dishonesty of their criticism of the ANC. Clearly the truth is that white, Coloureds and Indians are acceptable as long as they are anti-Communist, anti-Soviet, and not left. The real attack on the ANC, then, was an attack on revolutionary nationalism, and the emotionally-charged approach of racism provided the smokescreen under which the attack was launched. Leballo in fact said as much when he let slip that

'The African people in general . . . know them (the non-white partners in the Alliance), and when we want to fight for our rights, these

people weaken us. This is so because they use campaigns for their own ends and also *because the government will not listen to our requests and demands because of their outlook.*' [our emphasis]

In the case of the expelled group of 8 it is equally clear why they are using the racist argument: firstly they hope that in the atmosphere of emotion that they build up by talk of 'non-African cliques' and 'high-jacking of the ANC', the real reason why they were excluded from the top leadership of the ANC will be forgotten. Secondly, whilst the racist bogey cannot be used against African Communists (who constitute the overwhelming majority of our Party's leadership and membership) it becomes a convenient weapon of attack against national leaders like Dadoo and other non-African Communists.

THE LIES AND DISTORTIONS

The offensive which has been launched by the group of 8 against the ANC and the SACP is 'supported' by a stream of lies and distortions mostly about events which occurred some years ago. They hope that people who did not take part in these events will be misled into becoming hostile towards the leadership of the ANC and its allies in the liberation struggle. Let us examine just a few of the lies, distortions and half-truths which the group is attempting to spread.

Why the Morogoro Conference was called

The group of 8 states that the 1969 Morogoro Conference was called under pressure from the SACP and minority groups.

The facts:

The decision to call the Conference was taken unanimously by the NEC of the ANC which at that stage included four members of the group of 8 and the late Robert Resha whose name is being opportunistically exploited by the dissidents. Those who were present at the Conference could have had no doubt that it was convened because of the overwhelming feeling of the rank-and-file of the ANC and Umkhonto that a radical reappraisal was needed in a number of important areas. It was clearly felt necessary —

- (a) to create a more effective division between external and internal

work by setting up special machinery under the NEC which would devote itself exclusively to problems of the internal struggle without being diverted by external solidarity work.

(b) to examine the composition of the National Executive Committee which had, by external cooption, grown to an unwieldy size. In addition, the personal misconduct of some of the Executive members had been severely criticised by the rank-and-file who were, as a result, beginning to lose confidence in the leadership.

(c) to find an effective place in the ANC's *External* apparatus for non-African revolutionaries who were expected (by a decision of the ANC at home) not to create their own separate external units.

The preparations for the Conference were perhaps the most remarkable that any exile movement has undertaken. A six-month period of intense, uninhibited and democratic discussion was encouraged. Literally scores of individual and collective written memoranda and other contributions had been submitted. In other words, it was perhaps the most representative and the most democratic ANC assembly since the days of legality. Just as the pressure for the Conference clearly came from the rank-and-file and the cadres in the camps, so it was the same groups who were the prime influence on the decisions which finally emerged.

The Composition of the Morogoro Conference:

The false version of the group of 8 is that the Morogoro Conference was unduly influenced and dominated by non-Africans. In the Makiwane memorandum it is described as 'a multi-racial affair which was attended by Africans, Coloureds, whites and Indians'. The innuendo is clear and is intended once again to invoke the ghost of 'racial parity'.

The facts:

The non-Africans who attended were in fact appointed as delegates by the ANC's executive (which at that stage included men like Makiwane, Resha and Matlou) to ensure the presence of at least a few comrades who had connections with the ANC's allied organisations – the SACP, SAIC, CPC and SACTU.

In any case, non-Africans formed a minute proportion of those who

attended. Out of approximately 70 to 80 delegates there were only three coloureds, five Indians and three whites. The proceedings themselves were overwhelmingly dominated, both in numbers and in contributions, by the rank-and-file delegates, particularly from Umkhonto.

The change in leadership:

The change that took place in the composition of the National Executive Committee of the ANC, has been described by the group of 8 as a sinister manoeuvre resulting from pressure by the Communists and the non-African groups who attended Morogoro.

The facts:

Morogoro did not dismiss the NEC of the ANC. The NEC in fact came to Morogoro with the announcement that it had resigned en bloc and that it had mandated the Acting President General with full powers (assisted by the late J.B. Marks and Moses Mabhida) to reconstitute the Executive. The Acting President General announced that in carrying out his mandate he had been guided only by the *African delegates* at the Conference whose views he had canvassed. During the proceedings the delegates from the camps did not hide their outrage about the personal misconduct of some of the officials and members of the NEC. Most of those belonging to the dissident clique who were members of the NEC were also targets for such criticisms.

The non-African delegates to the Conference were neither singly nor collectively consulted on the composition of the new Executive. The Conference was informed that Executive members Temba Mqota (Alfred Kgokong) and Ambrose Makiwane had already been suspended from the Executive because of their pre-Morogoro attempts to organise an anti-leadership faction. When the names of the new Executive were announced all members of the previous Executive, such as Makiwane, Resha, Joe Matlou and others who were present at Morogoro, pledged their support to the new leadership and offered their services in any capacity. It should also be recorded that some of those who were not reappointed to the new Executive were S.A. Communist Party members who had also forfeited their right to serve on the leadership because of personal misconduct.

Non-African revolutionaries:

The version spread by the group of 8 about the decision to integrate non-African revolutionaries into the ANC's External Mission is a deliberately misleading and grotesque distortion of the facts.

The facts:

It is now conveniently 'forgotten' by those in the group of 8 who were present at Morogoro, that they did not speak or vote against the decision to integrate the non-African revolutionaries into the External Mission of the ANC. They in fact joined in the unanimous and tumultuous cheering which accompanied the adoption of this decision.

What in fact was actually decided? The decision was to integrate Coloured, Indian and white revolutionaries into the *External Mission* of the ANC. For this purpose branches were to be formed in those areas with a big concentration of South African exiled revolutionaries. The group of 8 has selected this decision (to which some of them were a party) as their main target for attack. It is in this area that their dishonesties, distortions and half-truths reach truly monumental proportions.

In every one of their pronouncements, including the above-quoted Makiwane statement, they baldly state that 'ANC membership has been opened to whites, Indian and Coloureds' but they dishonestly omit to mention that the decision explicitly referred **ONLY TO THE EXTERNAL MISSION OF THE ANC**. They also conveniently omit to mention that the decision **EXPLICITLY EXCLUDED NON-AFRICANS FROM SERVING ON THE NEC OF THE ANC**.

What then was behind the decision to allow non-Africans to participate at **CERTAIN LEVELS** of the External Mission? A brief look at some relevant post-1960 developments will throw light on this question.

We have already referred to the decision which was taken by the internal leadership of the ANC that, externally, its representatives should be the sole spokesmen on behalf of the liberation alliance and that the SAIC, CPC and COD should not establish separate external missions. This decision was taken after the break-up of the United Front which had operated outside for a short while and had included the PAC. It

was endorsed by the leadership of the SACP and the other Congresses inside the country. Thereafter, as a result of the post-Rivonia terror, most internal organised levels of the liberation front (including the ANC) were, for a time, completely destroyed or incapacitated. It became necessary for the external forces to assume greater responsibility in many areas including the most important area of internal reconstruction.

Hence, inside the country the Congress Alliance in the form that it was moulded in the 50s, ceased to exist. And outside the country non-African revolutionaries loyal to the original decision about the ANC's external mission could neither create their separate communal organs nor participate as members of those ANC organs also mandated to speak on their behalf. In addition there was widespread recognition that with the disappearance of the Congress Alliance there was no longer any *public* expression (either inside or outside the country) of the true character of the revolutionary front in South Africa and, in particular, of the non-racial content of our struggle. Indeed, reports indicated that the sudden disappearance at all public levels of the liberation front of leaders like Dadoo (whom the South African masses had always regarded as more than merely communal leaders) was being interpreted by many as reflecting a new policy of African exclusiveness.

It was partly in order to deal with these important problems that in the mid-sixties the NEC created a new apparatus in London under the late Robert Resha. In terms of his mandate Resha created an *ANC collective* which included non-Africans. At about the same time, leaders like Dadoo and September were being appointed to represent the African National Congress at international conferences as part of its own delegation and not as representatives of the CPC or SAIC. The practice also began of inviting leading personnel like Dadoo, September and Slovo to some of the extended meetings of the NEC. Executive members like Resha, Matlou and Makiwane welcomed this procedure and indeed were partly responsible for establishing it in the late 60's. They were also part of the collective which ensured that the Morogoro Conference was what they now disparagingly call a 'multi-racial affair'. What was different about Morogoro was not the fact that it had the usual sprinkling of leading non-African revolutionaries, but that it decided to find a place within the ANC External Mission (at levels below

the top leadership) for non-African rank-and-filers who had proved themselves in the struggle.

The Strategy and Tactics document adopted by the Morogoro Conference showed no ambiguity on the ANC's approach to collaboration with other revolutionary groups. Now, six years after the event, the group also, *for the first time*, dissociate themselves from the ANC Strategy and Tactics Document which they say 'was never discussed in the Conference'. Yet at the Conference itself they voted in favour of the document which like all others had been circulated for discussion long before the actual Conference took place. It stated:

'Whatever instruments are created to give expression to the unity of the liberation drive, they must accommodate two fundamental propositions: firstly they must not be ambiguous on the primary role of the most oppressed African mass and, secondly, those belonging to the other oppressed groups and those few white revolutionaries who show themselves ready to make common cause with our aspirations, must be fully integrated on the basis of individual equality. Approached in the right spirit these two propositions do not stand in conflict but reinforce one another. Equality of participation in our national front does not mean a mechanical parity between the various national groups. Not only would this in practice amount to inequality (again at the expense of the majority), it would lend flavour to the slander which our enemies are ever ready to spread of a multi-racial alliance dominated by minority groups. This has never been so and will never be so.

'Therefore, not only the substance but the form of our structural creations must, in a way which the people can see, give expression to the main emphasis of the present stage of our struggle. This approach is not a pandering to chauvinism, to racialism or to other such backward attitudes. We are revolutionaries, not narrow nationalists. Committed revolutionaries are our brothers, to whatever group they belong. There can be no second-class participation in our movement. It is for the enemy we reserve our assertiveness and our justified sense of grievance.'

And indeed the apparatus created after Morogoro in no way departed from this approach. The Executive retained its 100% African character. The Revolutionary Council (which includes one white, one Indian and one Coloured) is overwhelmingly African in both numbers

and executive function. Every external mission is (with the exception of New Delhi and London) headed by an African. It therefore seems clear beyond any doubt that the continuous attack on the London office of the ANC because it is represented by a national leader like Reg September (who happens to be Coloured) is either crude Vorster-type racism or is cynically used as a cover for advancing corrupt political ambitions.

The Congress Alliance:

On this question, as on so many others, the group of 8 invents 'facts' which it then supports with racist slander. Their document states that the Congress Alliance was dissolved in 1960 for 'two important reasons': one, the ANC and the COD were outlawed and the COD disbanded itself; two, the ANC decided to embark on armed struggle, 'but some of the constituents of the Alliance, the South African Indian Congress and the Coloured People's Congress, the South African Congress of Trade Unions, did not adopt the policy of armed struggle.' The group alleges that the non-African section outside wanted to revive this Alliance in its original form but 'the main basis of the ANC's rejection (of this attempt) was on the ground that the non-African contingent and their organisations had to consider the repercussions for all involved in a situation wherein some organisations had adopted a policy of armed struggle whilst others had not'.

The facts:

In the first place it is not true that the Congress Alliance was dissolved in 1960 or at any stage in the sense described by the group of 8. After the outlawing of the ANC, the Alliance continued to operate in clandestine conditions. Leaders of the Congress Alliance met regularly and there is public evidence of raids by the Security Police on some of these meetings under the chairmanship of the late Chief Albert Lutuli. This arrangement continued until the Rivonia setback which, as we have seen, for a time destroyed most internal levels of organisation of the whole liberation front. In this sense it could be said that it was enemy action which effectively destroyed the Congress Alliance inside the country.

The policy of armed struggle was initiated in 1961 (and not 1960)

by the ANC *and the* SACP (a fact which is deliberately omitted by the group of 8). For tactical reasons both organisations decided that the armed wing of the liberation movement - Umkhonto - should operate as an 'independent' body. It was some time after the commencement of the sabotage campaign in December 1961 that MK's connection with the liberation movement was divulged externally by Robert Resha.

For the same tactical reasons (which seem very obvious) *it was decided that the SAIC, CPC and SACTU should not do anything to jeopardise their legality by an open commitment to armed struggle.*

But right from its inception Umkhonto (by decision of its founders - the ANC and SACP) incorporated militant revolutionaries from every section of the Congress Alliance. Robben Island and Pretoria are still filled with 'a fair share' of Indian, Coloured and white revolutionaries who 'waged war'. And the group of 8 have the temerity to say 'how very immoral indeed are some people to speak of a Council of War before they have even taken a decision to wage war'. How very immoral indeed are some people, like Makiwane and Mqota, who have never lifted a finger to engage in war whilst in South Africa, to talk this racist reaction about the Kathradas, the Naidoos, the Februarys, the Aprils, the Goldbergs and the Fischers!!

But in any case it is completely untrue to suggest that there was an attempt outside by any group to revive the defunct Congress Alliance in exile in the form in which it had been historically formed in the 50s. Certainly as far as our Party is concerned the position we consistently adopted is contained in the 1970 report to a Plenary Session of our Central Committee which says:

'Our movement has moved away from the concept that the Alliance necessarily implies a single formal defined structure. We see it operating at a number of levels and simultaneously in a number of different ways. We must discover and integrate individual revolutionaries. We must achieve a broad collaboration between the ANC and the other community bodies. We must cement a formal working relationship between the Party and the ANC and so on. As our work inside the country develops, consideration will have to be given to the need for collaboration between our revolutionary movement and other bodies such as student, trade union, peasant movements etc.

This will not necessarily imply the incorporation of these bodies into a formal front with a defined structure. It is clear that in this sphere there can be no rigidity. The different structures which are created from time to time must serve the political needs and the political realities. The primary problems at each stage is the mobilisation of the maximum number of forces for revolutionary aims. The precise manner of achieving this is complex and many-sided and must not necessarily be sought for in a single formula and a single structure.'

The Party

It is for our Party that the group of 8 reserves its most poisonous distortions. In their hymn of hate against us, they falsify our history and deliberately distort the composition of the Party and the true nature of its relationship with the liberation movement. We say 'deliberately' because in the case of at least two of the clique (Kgokong and Makiwane) they were both members of the SACP during the 50s. Both were subsequently expelled when, outside the country, they attempted to use the Party as a base for their tribalist and factionalist activity against the ANC.

Examining only the opening paragraph of the section in the Makiwane document headed 'The South African Communist Party', we find that every single line bristles with deliberate distortions and lies. The paragraph reads:

'The SACP was formed in 1921 as a white organisation. It remained as such for a full decade and when, during the thirties, it decided to recruit Africans into its ranks, it was to pursue a consistently incorrect policy on the national question. For instance it resisted the slogan of the Communist International calling for the setting up of a Black Republic in South Africa, and it opposed all moves aimed at consolidating African trade unionism, insisting on a multi-racial set-up despite the fact that the white working class had shown its determination to carve for itself a position of privilege and was to support Industrial Colour Bar and Job Reservation.'

It is a fact of history that the SACP emerged largely from the organised white labour movement at a time when the black proletariat was still in its infancy and the white working class as a whole had not yet been fully coopted politically into the ruling class. Nevertheless, right

from its inception its constitution was non-racial and its membership included blacks. It is untrue that the Party was a white organisation for a decade and that it only began recruiting Africans into the Party in the thirties. Already by 1928, of the 1,750 Party members, 1,600 were Africans. It was also during the middle and late twenties that names famous in South Africa's working class and national movements, like J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, Albert Nzula, Gana Makabeni, E.T. Mofutsanyane, Johannes Nkosi, Josie Mpama, were already leaders and activists of the Party. By 1929 Albert Nzula was the Assistant General Secretary of the Party and was acting as Editor of its official organ, *The S.A. Worker*. Gumede, the President-General of the ANC, told the February 1927 Congress of the League Against Imperialism in Brussels:

'I am happy to say that there are Communists in South Africa. I myself am not one, but it is my experience that the Communist Party is the only party that stands behind us and from which we can expect something.'

And at the ANC's annual conference in *June 1927*, in his Presidential Report President Gumede said:

'Of all political parties, the Communist Party is the only one that honestly and sincerely fights for the oppressed people.'

It is also a fact of history that the call for a Black Republic was adopted at the Party's 7th Congress in 1929. True enough (and understandably) a spirited debate within the Party preceded the adoption of this history-making policy. But our Party has the distinction of being the first organisation in the history of our Continent to call unambiguously for black majority rule on the basis of universal suffrage. This was at a time when even the ANC stopped short of this demand. Why then do the authors of the Makiwane document falsify so blatantly when they say that the Party 'resisted the slogan'?

It is also a fact of history that from the twenties onwards Communists were right in the forefront of attempts to build and consolidate African trade unions. By 1926 Black Communists were active enough in the ICU to provide Kadalie and his liberal advisers with the excuse to push through a resolution excluding Communist Party members from holding office in the ICU. This move was, like all such moves, designed

to steer the ICU towards a more 'moderate' and 'sensible' policy. Already at its 3rd Congress in 1924 the Party decided that failure by the existing trade unions to admit African workers required the Party to go all out to organise separate African unions. It was the Communist Party and its activists which both inspired and helped to build the Federation of non-European Trade Unions in the twenties and thirties and the Transvaal Council of non-European Trade Unions in the forties. It was our Central Committee which went on trial for the Party's role in helping to build the African Mineworkers' Union and supporting the historic African mineworkers' strike of 1946. Communists were again in the forefront of those who, in the fifties, helped found and organise the South African Congress of Trade Unions, the membership of which was overwhelmingly black. And against all this incontrovertible evidence, we are now told by this middle-class clique that the SACP 'opposed all measures aimed at consolidating African trade unions'.

We have dealt with the opening paragraph of the group's diatribe against our Party as an example of their reckless and deliberate disregard for truth. The balance of their document is equally studded with petty lies. They know (certainly those of them who were members of the Party during the fifties) that in the stirring campaigns of the fifties our illegal Party played a most important role. Yet they say that after dissolving in 1950 the Party 'remained dormant for a whole decade'. Some of them know too that the overwhelming majority of the membership and the leadership of the Party is black, yet they nevertheless spread the smear that it is 'white-led'. They are aware that by the fifties the Party's illegal network had spread to every major South African centre, and that by 1960 five underground national conferences had already taken place. And yet they resort to another childish invention that the Party had to 'rely on a number of members of the ANC to help out' with the first illegal leaflet distribution. On this question, too, the jails of South Africa have the answer: Robben Island and South Africa's other jails hold many of the Party's leaders and activists.

It is clear from the few distortions we have dealt with that there is no limit to the depths to which this group is prepared to sink in its unprincipled assault against our Party and all sections of the liberation movement.

Above all the group has attempted to distort the true character of the collaboration between our Party and the national movement.

Our movement has never hidden the fact that there is a relationship between the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party on those questions of policy which both organisations share in common. In particular both organisations believe that in the present stage of the revolutionary process in South Africa, the primary aim is the national liberation of the most exploited and most oppressed section of the South African people - the Africans. It is well known that throughout the forties, fifties, and sixties, the two organisations collaborated on many issues. Dr. A.B. Xuma was meeting with representatives of the Communist Party. Chief Lutuli had the closest working relationship with Comrade Moses Kotane who was both General Secretary of the S.A. Communist Party and also a member of the NEC of the African National Congress.

'This collaboration', says the Central Committee report to the 1970 Plenary Session, 'is not, as our enemies always allege, a ploy to create front organisations or to 'capture' fraternal organisations and transform them into wings of the Party. Indeed, where objective circumstances require it, the true independence and political expression of other social forces (whether economic or national) must be safeguarded both in the letter and in the spirit. A Party exercises its vanguard role in relation to trade unions not by capturing them or transforming them into wings of the Party, but by giving correct guidance in the best interests of their members; and by individual Communists proving that they are the most loyal, the most devoted and the most ideologically clear members. The same principle applies when we examine a situation such as ours in which the main content of the immediate struggle in our country is the liberation of the African people whose national movement is devoted to this end.'

In the middle sixties, the late Robert Resha was the first to announce externally at a meeting in London (when questioned about the need for liberation unity) that there was in fact liberation unity in South Africa and that it correctly expressed itself in an alliance between the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and the other Congresses. In deeds, as well as in words the basis of collaboration between the two organisations has always been

founded on a respect for the absolute organisational integrity and independence of each.

* * * * *

In his closing address to the Morogoro Conference, Oliver Tambo received a prolonged standing ovation when he exhorted the delegates present to:

'wage a relentless war against disrupters and defend the ANC against provocateurs and enemy agents. Defend the revolution against enemy propaganda, whatever form it takes. Be vigilant, comrades. The enemy is vigilant. Beware of the wedge-driver, the man who creeps from ear to ear, carrying a bag full of wedges, driving them in between you and the next man, between a group and another, a man who goes round creating splits and divisions. Beware of the wedge-driver, comrades. Watch his poisonous tongue.'

And now the wedge-drivers who had been working behind closed doors against the whole liberation movement and its policies have come out into the open. They are part of the impure load which every revolution carries and when that load is thrown aside the journey to victory is always a swifter one.

“An Act of Solidarity in ANGOLA”

By Fidel Castro

Extracts from speech at the closing session of the first Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba on December 22, 1975.

While this Congress was being held, the President of the United States declared that, as a result of our aid to the sister people of Angola, any prospects or hopes or possibilities of improving relations between the United States and Cuba were – more or less – cancelled.

It is odd that the President of the United States, Mr. Ford, should threaten us with that. Before, when we did have relations, they cut them off; when there was trade between the United States and Cuba, they cut it off, but now they have nothing else to cut off, and now they cut off hopes. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE) This could be called ‘the hope embargo’ on the part of the President of the United States. (LAUGHTER) He has actually embargoed that which no longer exists. (LAUGHTER)

They were already indignant at the holding of the Conference of Solidarity with Puerto Rico, claiming that it seriously affected any possibility of improving relations. But, if we must renounce this country’s dignity, renounce this country’s principles in order to have relations with the United States, how can we possibly have relations with the United States?

Apparently, according to the mentality of the U.S. leaders, the price for improving relations, or for having trade or economic relations, is to give up the principles of the Revolution. And we shall never renounce our solidarity with Puerto Rico. (APPLAUSE)

What kind of people do they think we are? What country do they think they are dealing with? The old Cuba? No! This is the new Cuba and this is a different country! (APPLAUSE) And until they get this fact into their heads, I cannot see any possibility of improving relations, because we shall never desert our Puerto Rican brothers, even if there are no relations with the United States for a hundred years. (APPLAUSE)

Now it is not only Puerto Rico; now it is also Angola. In all our revolutionary process we have always followed a policy of solidarity with the African revolutionary movement. One of the first things the Revolution did was to send arms to the Algerian combatants who were fighting for their independence. This impaired our relations with the Government of France, which was indignant at the fact that we were sending arms to the Algerian combatants and supporting them in the United Nations and in every international forum. But we were firm in that policy and helped them.

After the victory of the revolution, when the new Algerian state had to face certain risks and certain dangers, we did not hesitate in sending them our help, and we did send it.

As regards those who fought in Guinea-Bissau - we have the case of Pedro Rodriguez Peralta, member of the Central Committee, who was fighting side by side with the patriots of Guinea-Bissau.

We have given our support to the progressive governments and revolutionary movements in Africa since the very moment of the victory of the Revolution. And we will continue supporting them! (APPLAUSE)

This assistance has taken different forms: sometimes we have sent weapons, on other occasions we have sent men; we have sent military instructors, or doctors or construction workers, and sometimes we have sent all three, construction workers, doctors and military instructors. (LAUGHTER) Loyal to its internationalist policy, what the Revolution has been doing since the beginning is to help whenever it can help,

wherever it may be useful and, moreover, wherever this help is requested.

Similarly, we are helping the MPLA and the people of Angola, (AP-LAUSE) with whom we have had relations and have been cooperating since the very beginning of their struggle for independence against Portuguese colonialism. Many of the Angolan cadres studied in Cuba.

But, what happens? Undoubtedly, Ford's statements are occasioned by the fact that the imperialists are irritated with us. And why are they irritated? Because they had it all planned to take hold of Angola before November 11.

Angola is a territory rich in natural resources. Cabinda, one of the Angolan provinces, has large oil deposits. This country has great mineral wealth - diamonds, copper, iron. This is one of the reasons why the imperialists want to take hold of Angola.

And the story is perfectly well known: many years ago, when the imperialists realized that these colonies would some day fight for their liberation, they began to organize their movements. Thus, they organized the FNLA, with CIA people. We are not the ones who say so, it has just been exposed by The New York Times in detail that the FNLA was organized by the CIA.

When the Angolan people were about to attain independence - just as Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Cape Verde and other countries attained their independence - imperialism worked out a way to crush the revolutionary movement in Angola. They planned to take hold of Cabinda, with its oil, before November 11, to seize Luanda before November 11. And to carry out this scheme, the U.S. government launched South African troops against Angola.

You know that South Africa is one of the most hated and most discredited states in the world, for three million whites oppress fourteen million black Africans. And there they have established one of the most ignominious, shameful and inhuman regimes that could ever be thought of, condemned by the whole of the world progressive movement, condemned by all nonaligned countries, and condemned by the United Nations.

South Africa not only maintains this fascist and racist regime in the

south, but also occupies the territory of Namibia, where it has established a kind of protectorate.

And the U.S. government, absolutely devoid of all scruples, launched the South African regular troops against Angola. Thus Angola was being threatened on the north by the FNLA and was attacked on the south by regular troops organized into armoured columns. Everything was ready to take over Angola before November 11. And the plan was very solid; it was a solid plan; the only thing was that the plan failed. They had not counted on international solidarity, on the support given to the heroic people of Angola by the socialist countries, in the first place, and by the revolutionary movements and progressive governments of Africa, or the support we Cubans, among the world's progressive governments, also gave Angola. (APPLAUSE)

The imperialists did not count on that. What was the result? On November 8 they launched an offensive against Cabinda and were crushingly repelled. What they went through in Cabinda was a sort of Giron: in 3 days, in 72 hours, the invaders were annihilated. In Luanda, they were 25 kilometers from the capital on November 10; they attacked with armoured columns; now they are more than 100 kilometers from Luanda. The South African armoured columns, which had been attacking since October 23 and had advanced some 700 kilometers in less than 20 days, in a sort of military parade, were halted at more than 200 kilometers from Luanda and have not been able to advance any further.

That is how the heroic struggle of the Angolan people, supported by the international revolutionary movement, has made the imperialist plan fail.

And that is why the imperialists are irritated with us, among others. Some of them wonder why we help the Angolans, what interests we have there. They are accustomed to thinking that whenever a country does something, it is in pursuit of oil, or copper, or diamonds or some other natural resource. No! We are not after material interests and, logically, the imperialists do not understand this, because they are exclusively guided by chauvinist, nationalist and selfish criteria. We are fulfilling an elementary internationalist duty when we help the Angolan people! (APPLAUSE) We are not looking for oil, or copper, or iron; we are not looking for anything at all. We are simply practising a

policy of principles. We do not remain passive when we see an African people, a sister people, that the imperialists all of a sudden want to swallow up, and that is brutally attacked by South Africa. We do not remain passive, nor will we remain passive!

Thus, when the imperialists ask us what are our interests, we will have to say: 'Look, read a manual on proletarian internationalism so that you may understand why we are helping Angola.'

That is the cause of their irritation and threats.

Can you imagine what this country's future would be like if the price of renewing relations with the United States were a return to the past? (SHOUTS OF 'NO!')

That this country refrain from expressing its solidarity with its revolutionary brothers in the rest of the world? (SHOUTS OF 'NO!')

That we refrain from expressing our solidarity with the Vietnamese, the Lao People, the Cambodians, the Africans, the Yemenites and the Arabs, and with Syria, Algeria, Guinea and all those countries? (APPLAUSE)

Our policy of solidarity is no secret. And one of the factors, one of the finest elements of this Congress was international participation. On the one hand, the presence of the representatives of the countries which have helped us, and among them the delegation of the Soviet Union, (APPLAUSE) which has given us great proofs and great lessons of internationalism. Because, in spite of the distance between us, the Soviet Union did not allow imperialism to stifle us, to swallow us up and to destroy us, because it sent us oil when they left us without oil, because it sent us weapons when we were threatened with aggression, because it also sent us men when they were needed. (APPLAUSE)

And numerous representatives of prestigious countries have been present. They have spoken and have addressed our people with great affection and with great respect, and have made us feel that we belong to a great revolutionary family, and that that family is a powerful one. (APPLAUSE)

The representative of Algeria spoke here. The representative of the Republic of Guinea spoke here. The representative of Guinea-Bissau

spoke here. The representative of Somalia spoke here. The representative of Yemen spoke here. The representative of the Congo spoke here. The representative of Syria, a country at the vanguard of the struggle against imperialism in the Middle East, spoke here. (APPLAUSE)

And it is no secret to anyone that at a given moment of danger and threat for the Republic of Syria, our men were in Syria. (APPLAUSE) It is also no secret that at a moment of danger for the Republic of Algeria, our men were in Algeria. (APPLAUSE) And the cooperation of our people and of our Armed Forces with numerous countries in Africa and Asia has been very broad. And to the Vietnamese we said: 'For Vietnam we are willing to give our own blood!' (APPLAUSE)

Thus this revolutionary family has been forged. What is imperialism aiming for? That we break with this family? (SHOUTS OF 'NEVER!') That we stop being a people in solidarity with those sister peoples fighting against imperialism? (SHOUTS OF 'NEVER!') Then, which hopes or possibilities or prospects are embargoed by the President of the United States? Because at that cost, then, there will never be relations with the United States! (APPLAUSE) Despite the fact that the policy of our Revolution is a policy of peace and of relations and coexistence with regimes of different ideologies and of different social systems. But they are not satisfied. It is as though we were to tell them they had to carry out an agrarian reform or to nationalize the electric power company in order to establish relations with us. What sort of conditions does imperialism intend to impose on our country?

We practise our solidarity with Angola, we are helping Angola. And we will continue to help the people of Angola! (APPLAUSE) And what we ask of the Congress of our Party is simply to support the policy adopted by the leadership of the Party of helping the heroic people of Angola in all possible ways and with all possible means! (ALL DELEGATES, STANDING, RAISE THEIR CREDENTIALS, LONG APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF 'ANGOLA, ANGOLA, ANGOLA!')

Let the imperialists know what the stand and the line of our country is. On the other hand, a more stupid policy than that which the imperialists are following in that country cannot be conceived. It is stupid, for they have just come out of the adventure of Vietnam and they are getting involved in one as serious as that of Vietnam. Why? Why? We

want to give you some facts.

South Africa, that is to say, the racists, fascists, of South Africa, are hated tremendously by all the peoples of Africa. To say South Africa in Africa is to say Israel among the Arab countries. The policy of the United States supporting the aggression and encouraging the aggression of South Africa against Angola divorces them from and makes them the irreconcilable enemies of all the peoples of Africa.

But there is something else. The province of Cabinda is firmly in the hands of the MPLA. As I told you before, the attack on November 8 was vigorously repelled. From that moment on, the popular forces have grown in strength and it will not be easy for the imperialists to take hold of Cabinda. There is, however, large-scale oil production in Cabinda, on the shelf, and there are installations along the coast. There are many U.S. citizens working in oil extraction. And, in spite of the war, production has not stopped one single day. And these are U.S. enterprises, and it is the combatants of the MPLA who watch over those facilities and have offered security and guarantees to the U.S. citizens working in those facilities at Cabinda. While the United States arms mercenary armies, while the United States launches South African troops against Angola, the MPLA combatants guarantee and give security to U.S. facilities and citizens in Cabinda.

In our opinion, this policy is correct. It evidences calmness, it evidences wisdom, it evidences maturity on the part of the African revolutionary movement. Those facilities are difficult to operate. The technology of oil exploitation on the coast is very complex. And what has been the policy followed by the Angolans? To give security, to give guarantees, to facilitate the development of this work.

This also proves the common sense of the Angolans, the intelligent way in which they conduct their policy. And it proves that the African revolutionary movement is willing to negotiate the exploitation of any natural resources when it is to their convenience to do so.

Something the African revolutionary movement will never negotiate with is racism, apartheid; it will never negotiate with the occupation of Angola by South Africa. Because the occupation of Angola by South Africa represents a grave danger for the whole of Africa; the occupation of Angola by the racists of South Africa represents a grave danger

for Zambia, it represents a grave danger for Mozambique, for Zaire and for the People's Republic of the Congo, it represents a grave danger for the whole of Africa. And Africa is determined to support the movement of the MPLA, the struggle of the MPLA. And there are ever more governments and more countries in Africa willing to send weapons and to send men to fight against the South African racists. Africa is not going to let itself be devoured by South Africa. And the Cuban people will be side by side with the African peoples in that struggle. (APPLAUSE)

If South Africa insists on its policy, on its attempt of getting hold of Angola, it will have to face the struggle with all Black Africa.

I do not think the European countries would do such a stupid thing as to associate with South Africa in that fascist and racist crusade; and it is undoubtedly an act of great stupidity on the part of the U.S. government to associate itself with that campaign, when the Angolans themselves are giving proof of their sober and correct policy, to the extreme - I repeat - that it is the MPLA combatants who are now guaranteeing the oil installations and U.S. citizens in Cabinda.

We do not understand how the Ford administration will be able to justify that before the U.S. public opinion, or what pretext he may have in carrying out that policy of aggression against Angola, in connivance with the South African racists.

This is the foreign policy issue we wanted to discuss; we want to tell the imperialists that we are not after anything there, that we practise our traditional internationalist policy; that we are helping the people of Angola, and that we are firmly determined to help them! (APPLAUSE) And that we, of course, greatly regret that Mr. Ford finds himself in the need of having to 'cancel' and 'embargo' the hopes. As far as we know, those hopes, in the context of such a policy, had no grounds.

ISLAND OF FREEDOM

Report on the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, by ESSOP PAHAD, who attended as a member of the delegation from the 'World Marxist Review'.

In his closing speech to the historic 1st Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba last December, Fidel Castro declared to deafening applause, that just as the Cubans 'were willing to give even their own blood for Vietnam' they are now prepared to do the same for the people of Angola led by the MPLA. This declaration and its overwhelming endorsement by the delegates to the Congress emphasised the deep and passionate commitment of the Communist Party of Cuba (CPC) and the people of Cuba to the struggle of the MPLA against the forces of reaction, aggression, racism, fascism and neo-colonialism. As is to be expected, the imperialist press, including that of white South Africa, is now conducting a well-orchestrated anti-communist campaign against the Soviet Union and Cuba for doing their internationalist duty to the newly-formed People's Republic of Angola.

The people of Cuba know from bitter experience the consequences of imperialist intervention and aggression. Yet, despite the cold war, McCarthyism, political and economic blackmail, intrigue and naked aggression, we have in Cuba a small island of Freedom on the very door-

step of the most criminal and aggressive imperialist power. Cuba is a country in which power belongs to the working people, a country in which the means of production are collectively owned, a country in which the alliance of workers and farmers is an unbreakable bond, cemented, guided and organised by the CPC, the leading force in Society and in the State. No wonder US imperialism used every dirty trick in the book, CIA engineered intervention and aggression, assassination attempts and plots against the leaders, especially Fidel Castro, in a vile attempt to destroy this haven of socialism in the Western hemisphere.

Thus the 1st Congress of the CPC is of historic significance, not only for Latin America, but for the entire International Communist Movement and the struggle for national liberation and independence. The Congress met from December 17-22, 1975, in Havana at the Karl Marx Theatre which was especially adapted for the occasion. At the back of the stage — on which sat Political Bureau and Central Committee members together with heads of foreign delegations — on a background of a beautiful purple coloured velvet curtain were the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Marti, Maceo, Gomez, Mella, Camillo and Che, signifying the historic continuity of the struggle, and the links between the struggle for national and social liberation.

The Congress proper met for only 6 days, but the preparations began much earlier. In, Cuba 1975 was designated 'Year of the First Congress of the Cuban Communists'. This is a part of Cuba's tradition to name years after the principal objective at each stage of the struggle. Throughout the length and breadth of the country millions of people participated in the preparations leading up to the Congress. Every city, town, village and farm was bedecked with the red flag flying side by side with the Cuban national flag. Slogans welcoming the Congress could be found on every street, housing estate, factory building-site, school, college and university. Almost all the billboards throughout the country carried slogans dealing with the Congress, most prominent of which was the Congress motto 'For New Victories of the Motherland and Socialism'. Workers, farmers, intellectuals, students, artists and mass organisations all enthusiastically worked to make the Congress a huge success.

This was vividly and concretely expressed in the special emulation for the 1st Congress. Industrial, agricultural and construction plans

were fulfilled and over-fulfilled. Students at all levels worked to improve their results qualitatively and quantitatively, and with great vigour and enthusiasm applied the principle of linking work with study. Intellectuals and artists produced special programmes and works in honour of the Congress. For example a special film was produced about Mella, the founder of the first CPC in 1925, by a collective of the finest producers, directors, actors and technical staff. The long preparation and organisation of the Congress strengthened the ties of the Party with the masses and it can truly be said that it was a People's Congress.

Altogether, 3,116 delegates, of whom 65 per cent were of working class origin and 22 per cent of peasant stock, attended the Congress, reflecting the composition of the Party membership. The majority of the delegates were members not in charge of the Party and State leadership. 30 per cent were political leaders of various levels, 16 per cent were cadres, 19 per cent came from the defence and security organs and 35 per cent were engaged in production, teaching and service activities. Approximately 15 per cent of the delegates were women.

Amongst the delegates were black, white and brown men and women all participating equally in the work of the Congress. On the surface, looking at the kaleidoscope of colour of the delegates, one almost felt one was in South Africa. For me, it was a special emotional experience and one which once more demonstrated the utter futility, waste and complete barrenness of racist ideas. Present, too, amongst the delegates, were veterans of the revolutionary struggle, members of the first CPC, trade unionists, students, underground political workers and the heroic survivors of the Moncada attack in 1953 and the *Granma* expedition of 1956.

The high esteem in which the world revolutionary forces hold the CPC was demonstrated by the attendance of representatives of more than 80 parties and organisations as guests. The impressive array of guests included Mikhail Suslov, member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; Todor Zhivkov, first secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party; Janos Kadar, first secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party; and the legendary General Vo Nguyen Giap, member

of the Political Bureau of the Vietnam Workers' Party. The delegates showed their great feelings of internationalism by regularly bursting into tumultuous applause at the mention of the Great October Revolution, Soviet Union, Chile, Angola, Vietnam and other countries and leaders in the front-line of the struggle against imperialism, fascism and neo-colonialism.

Amongst the important decisions taken, the Congress also adopted with acclaim the draft of the new Socialist constitution. The draft had a truly mass character which demonstrates the profound content of socialist democracy and democratic norms to ensure the fullest participation of the masses in all aspects of government. For many months the draft was discussed at numerous meetings organised by the Party, YCL, mass organisations and in military units and missions abroad. Approximately 6,200,000 persons took part in the discussions, analysis and criticisms of the draft. Out of this, 5,500,000 voted to maintain the draft without any further modification, 16,000 proposed various modifications and additions supported by the votes of more than 600,000 participants. After taking into account all the suggestions and criticisms, the new draft was presented to the Congress and unanimously adopted. The conference decided to submit it to a referendum by secret ballot on February 15, 1976 and, when endorsed, to proclaim it on February 24, the 81st anniversary of the War of Independence of 1895, consummating the stirring efforts of that great Cuban and Latin American Jose Marti and his Cuban Revolutionary Party.

Moreover, each thesis adopted by the Congress had been previously studied and analysed by Party members and in many cases the mass organisations too. It is through the widest discussions that the Party endeavours to ensure that the people as a whole understand the Party's positions on fundamental economic, political, social and cultural questions and the possibilities and pit-falls in the building of a socialist society. The content of the main thesis was finalised following 685,214 meetings in which millions participated.

Here is socialist democracy in practice and no amount of calumny, lies and half truths of the imperialist ideologues and mass media can distort this truth. What a thrilling experience for me – a South African – who like all the black people of our tragic country is denied the right to vote merely because of the colour of my skin. I kept on thinking about

the way in which the new 'Republican' constitution was adopted by the racists in South Africa in 1961. Then there was no discussion of the substantive issues and, above all, the vast majority of our people were denied any voice; and when the oppressed people did protest they were arrested, persecuted and imprisoned. Cuba is different because they have ended forever the exploitation of man by man and the social system — capitalism — which breeds, nourishes and fans the flames of racism.

But this historic Congress, 90 miles from the most predatory power in the whole world, would not have taken place without the rivers of blood shed by numerous victims in the struggle against Spanish colonialism and later US imperialism, neo-colonialism and open armed intervention and aggression. The Congress was a real tribute to all the heroes, known and unknown, who had sacrificed their lives for the common struggle. In the glorious pages of Cuba's revolutionary history against Spanish colonialism, we have three outstanding revolutionaries: Antonio Maceo a black man from the most exploited section who proved to be a great soldier and an outstanding thinker; Maximo Gomez, a Dominican, who in the finest traditions of internationalism became an extraordinarily brilliant General in the liberation army; and Jose Marti whose genius and deep commitment to the unity of all revolutionary forces made possible a united anti-colonial movement which led to the overthrow of Spanish colonialism. Jose Marti, like Simon Bolivar, is a symbol of the struggle for national liberation from colonial and imperialist domination throughout Latin America.

In the struggle to free the land of Maceo and Marti from the shackles of US domination, an outstanding role was played by the first CPC. Inspired by the Great October Revolution of 1917, a small group of young people led by Balino and Mella founded the first Marxist Leninist Party in Cuba in 1925. It was the communists who, under the most difficult conditions of illegality, persecution, cold-war rabid anti-communism and character assassination, unflinchingly disseminated the ideas of Marxism-Leninism. As happens today in the capitalist world, the leaders and members of the Party were vilified as 'Moscow's agents', 'Red Spies' and 'Traitors'. For years bourgeois academics, historians and sometimes even well-meaning friends had distorted the real and decisive contribution of the first Communist Party to the liberation

struggle. This record has now been corrected and in the Central Committee report presented by Fidel the role and contribution of the pioneer communists were highlighted because 'History must be respected and recounted exactly as it occurred'.

But in the circumstances obtaining in Cuba in the early 50s it was necessary for new young revolutionaries to carry further the banner of the revolutionary struggle. This was the July 26 movement led by Fidel, Che, Camillo and others who, after 25 months of guerilla warfare, overthrew the hated Batista regime and on January 1, 1959, proclaimed the independence of Cuba. Following the cowardly attack at Playa Giron in 1961 Fidel declared - amidst an outburst of joy and the letting off of rifles in the air - that, armed with the might of Marxism-Leninism, Cuba had chosen the road to socialism. These events were to have profound repercussions in Latin-America, Africa and Asia. But for this struggle to achieve its aims, the correlation of forces nationally and internationally had to be present. As Fidel points out in the report:

'Not for a moment do we forget that without international solidarity, without the support given to the resolute struggle of our working people by their class brothers of the whole world, and especially by the great people of the Soviet Union, in the face of a powerful, ruthless and aggressive imperialism, which has been virtual master of the destinies of the people of this hemisphere, it could have been possible for the Cuban revolutionaries to die heroically, like the Communards of Paris, but not to triumph.'

The report of the Central Committee, a lengthy document covering the history of Cuba up to the present time and drawing the course for the future, is a great contribution to the rich storehouse of revolutionary experience and should be studied with care and attention by all Marxists and revolutionary forces. It covers the various subjects in an exemplary Marxist-Leninist way – objective but partisan. It is however, not possible to convey the full richness and diversity of the report in this article and I shall therefore highlight only three major themes. Nor is it possible to convey the political and emotional experiences that we went through whilst listening to the report delivered by Fidel Castro in his most articulate and eloquent style. Throughout the report the vast majority of the foreign delegations enthusiastically joined in the spontaneous applause which erupted at every major point.

1. Criticism and Self-Criticism:

In the finest Leninist tradition Fidel's report examined the mistakes made by the Party and especially the leaders in the course of building a socialist society. The honest appraisal of the mistakes made will certainly contribute to a greater understanding and to enriching the knowledge of all peoples desirous of building a socialist society. Fidel pointed out that the Cuban revolution failed to take the necessary advantage of 'the rich experience of other peoples who had undertaken the construction of socialism long before we had.' The report criticised all forms of voluntarism, economic direction methods, wastage of productive resources 'which ignored the reality that there are objective economic laws by which we must abide' and economic mismanagement. Fidel pointed out that interpreting Marxism idealistically and ignoring the experience of other socialist countries led to the decline of economic accounting and elimination of commodity relations which adversely affected the economy. The leaders failed to take adequate account of material incentives which led to absenteeism and labour indiscipline. The shortcomings of inner Party life were also brought out. The phenomenon of sectarianism, the decline of the study of Marxism-Leninism, the failure of the Central Committee to exercise properly its functions, and the lack of systematic work in the Direction of the Party and the State were some of the issues raised in the report.

It is no doubt a remarkably honest and forthright evaluation of the mistakes committed. What is, however, even more remarkable is the faith that the Party, its leaders and members have in the revolutionary capacity, consciousness and enthusiasm of the people of Cuba. It is this abiding faith which enabled the Party to face up squarely to its mistakes, knowing that the working masses will understand them, study them earnestly and learn from them. It is a great tribute to the everlasting strength of Marxism-Leninism, the people of Cuba and to the CPC. Moreover as the report said:

'We have pointed them out (the mistakes) with the same conviction with which we maintain that our organisation is already a great Party, courageous and vigorous, forged in the flames of an extraordinary revolution that has left these difficulties behind it, and that, on the basis of very solid roles and principles, with an iron and vigorous discipline, spotless purity and heroic militancy, will lead our people

towards the most worthy and wonderful future. The historic Congress we are now holding is the most eloquent part of it.'

2. Cuba and Proletarian Internationalism:

From its very inception the Cuban revolution had a profound internationalist content which was and is expressed in tangible concrete forms in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe. Cuba's foreign policy, like that of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, proceeds from the fundamental Leninist thesis of subordinating whenever necessary the national needs and interests to those of the worldwide struggle for socialism and national liberation.

At present this is most tangibly and vividly expressed in Cuba's concrete material and moral assistance to the MPLA and people of Angola. The imperialist powers and their allies, with racist South Africa taking the lead, are hysterically attempting to denigrate and distort this legitimate and fully justifiable support for the MPLA. Of course the intention is to divert attention from the fascist aggression and intervention of racist South Africa and US imperialism which, with the support of the domestic forces of reaction, seeks to thwart the development of the revolutionary process in Angola.

In Cuba today the profound political and deeply passionate commitment is so high that the Cuban people consider it the greatest honour if they are asked to assist the MPLA in its struggle for national liberation, peace and democracy. At the Congress the MPLA representative Lara received a standing ovation as tumultuous as those given to Suslov and Giap. Indeed almost every foreign guest who addressed the conference expressed militant support and solidarity for the MPLA and the People's Republic of Angola.

The Cuban people, as Fidel so proudly declared at the mass meeting which followed the Congress, are a Latin-African people. Everywhere I went the people, party leaders and members, workers, farmers, teachers and students expressed their support for the struggling peoples of Africa, especially Angola and racist South Africa. The day after the mass meeting a large number of billboards in the most prominent parts of Havana carried Fidel's picture and with it the statement he made about Cuba's everlasting friendship and support for the people of

Africa. There is no doubt that in the years ahead the bonds of comradeship, brotherhood and militant friendship between Cuba and progressive African countries and national liberation movements in Southern Africa will be immeasurably strengthened, not least because of Cuba's principled internationalist support for the MPLA and the Angolan masses.

Above all, Cuba's internationalist position stems from its unbreakable alliance with the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and the International Communist Movement. In every factory, farm, construction site, office, university and school one sees the tangible proof of the deep bond of friendship between the Soviet Union and Cuba. Fidel's report constantly referred to the profound internationalist character of the Soviet Union and the CPSU and the tremendous role played by that country in the fight for national liberation and socialism. To give only a few examples:

'Without the resolute, firm and generous help of the Soviet people, our country could not have survived the confrontation with imperialism;

'The debt of gratitude to the glorious Party of the Soviet Union and its heroic people will always be in our hearts'; and

'There are people who regret that the USSR is a powerful country. This extraordinary power was acquired by the USSR in the economic field through the dedicated work of its sons, without exploiting the labour of other peoples, and in the military field because of the imperative necessity to defend itself from interventions, invasions and strategic base encirclement by imperialists. We Cubans regret that Yankee imperialism, the people's enemy, is powerful; but no true revolutionary, in any part of the world, will ever regret that the USSR is powerful, because if that power did not exist, mankind would never have been freed from fascism, the peoples who fought for liberation in the last 30 years would have had no place from which to receive decisive help, the imperialists would already have redivided the world again, and all small and under-developed nations, of which there are many, would have been turned into colonies once more.'

3. The decisive role of the Party and the science of Marxism-Leninism:

The Cuban experience has once more demonstrated the fundamental truth that in order to build a socialist society the decisive role has to be

played by a vanguard Party resting on the firm bed-rock of the science of Marxism-Leninism. As a Cuban journalist pointed out to me, 'the ideas of Marxism-Leninism didn't come to Fidel and the other leaders of the July 26 movement by mail.' There had been a Communist Party in Cuba since 1925 and 'from the fountain of this Party, the library of this Party' Fidel and the other fighters took the ideas. The unity of the Cuban masses, their resolute determination to resist all kinds of aggression would not have been possible if they were not based on a revolutionary ideology and that ideology is Marxism-Leninism. It is only the Party (200,000 members) who can guide and direct the mass organisations with a membership of over 5 million in fulfilling and over-fulfilling their mutual tasks and targets. In every aspect of life in Cuba, as in the other socialist countries, we see the prime necessity of a Party to lead, to guide and to direct, and for its members to be the most disciplined with the highest revolutionary consciousness.

The CPC has over the last few years immeasurably strengthened its moral authority, more clearly defined its tasks and proved to be always highly receptive to the views and aspirations of the working masses. The Congress took a number of important decisions to strengthen the Party organisations, to raise the cultural level of its members, to intensify the study of Marxism-Leninism and to recruit into its ranks only the most disciplined and revolutionary conscious workers, farmers and intellectuals. Indeed in the selection process the views of the working masses who are not Party members are given the greatest consideration. The CPC also has the principle of the renewal of the membership of the Central Committee - which means that at the next Congress some Central Committee members will be replaced not because they are deficient but due to the principle of renewability. The Party, as the main report says,

'is a synthesis of everything within it are guaranteed the ideas, the experiences, the behests of the martyrs, the continuity of the work, the interests of the people, the future of the homeland and the indestructible ties with the proletarian builders of a new world all over the world. The Party today is the soul of the Cuban Revolution.'

When Fidel completed the report there was an extraordinary outburst of joy with chants of 'Fidel' 'Fidel' resounding around the hall.

Looking at the faces of the delegates you could see how much they loved and respected Fidel Castro, the first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party.

Towards the end of the Congress the new Central Committee was elected. It in turn elected the First Secretary, Second Secretary and members of the Political Bureau and Secretariat. On the last day of the Congress every single person in the Karl Marx theatre went through a great experience when Fabio Grobart, a founder-member of the Party, whose life and work symbolises the glorious traditions of the first Cuban Communist Party, amidst tears and deep emotional feeling and tremendous applause announced that Fidel Castro had been re-elected First Secretary of the CPC. Once more the delegates - some with tears of happiness running down their faces - chanted 'Fidel', 'Fidel', 'Fidel'.

On December 22, the final day of the Congress, a mass rally, the 'Congress of the People', was held at the Jose Marti Revolutionary Square in Havana. Attending the meeting were more than a million people. What an extraordinary achievement, since the total population of Cuba is only 9 million. This demonstrated in all its brilliant colours the great revolutionary enthusiasm of the people of Cuba. All around the square on the facades of the surrounding buildings were displayed the emblem of the 1st Congress and portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Marti, Maceo, Gomez, Baline, Mella, Camillo and Che.

As Fidel approached the podium, the vast crowd burst into great shouts of 'Fidel', 'Fidel', 'Fidel hit the Yankees hard.' The discipline of the crowd and their enthusiastic support for the decisions adopted by Congress are indescribable. When the various speakers spoke on behalf of the mass organisations pledging their support to the Congress resolutions you could hear a pin drop, such was the silent attention of more than a million people.

Personally I have three abiding memories of this unique meeting. Firstly, the speech of Ines Dominguez, a young beautiful black girl of about 7-8 years who spoke on behalf of the Union of Pioneers of Cuba. She addressed more than a million people in the presence of some of the most outstanding communists in the world with a remarkable de-

gree of confidence. Her magnificent voice never faltered as it resounded all over the square and at that moment one had the great feeling that the future of Cuba is secure in the hands of these young women and men. One realised more than ever the fundamental truth that the building of socialism in Cuba is *irreversible*.

Secondly, after Fidel's brilliant speech in which he launched a bitter attack on the racists in South Africa and US imperialism, more than a million voices joined in unison to sing the Internationale. The true meaning of that anthem was expressed by the fact that communists from every part of the globe sang the Internationale whilst several thousand pigeons - symbolising the communists' love for peace - were released from the base of the huge and beautiful Jose Marti monument.

Thirdly, the way in which the crowd dispersed after the meeting. Here once more we were to witness the collective spirit of the people and their elevated sense of revolutionary duty and discipline. There was no pushing or shoving, some groups were singing, whilst others were shouting slogans or just conversing with one another. Moreover, all the schoolchildren were in collective groups and could be identified by the particular uniform they were wearing. As soon as a comrade fainted or was tired, the whole group would rally round and offer their assistance. It is even difficult to imagine that a million people can disperse without an incident and without the necessity of police control. This was only possible due to the high degree of self-conscious discipline and collective spirit of the people.

For me as a South African revolutionary the 1st Congress was an unforgettable political and emotional experience. To experience first hand how racialism has been eradicated and relegated to the dust-bins of history, how proud the Cubans are to have flowing in their veins the blood of Africa, Asia, American Indian and Europe. To feel that great love of friendship, brotherhood and militant comradeship that ties our oppressed people to the free people of Cuba. To see how in Cuba a new society and with that a new man is being created. When one considers the many millions throughout the world who are suffering from hunger, poverty, disease, illiteracy and unemployment due to imperialist plunder and local exploiting classes, one can appreciate the true dimension of the great progress made in Cuba in such a short space of time. Today in Cuba there is no unemployment, hunger, poverty, beg-

gars and prostitutes. Every person has a right to a free education, a job, social security, free medical treatment, child-care, welfare and the fullest opportunities to enjoy the arts and culture. This is in accordance with the main aim of Socialism - the ever increasing satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of the working masses.

The Cuban revolution has a lot of lessons for the developing countries. The eradication of illiteracy; the new educational system based on the principle of work and study; the voluntary micro-brigade where volunteers from different work places work on construction sites whilst their fellow workers carry out the duties of the volunteer who has left so that production does not suffer; the firm relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries; the principled commitment to proletarian internationalism - these are just some of the profound lessons from which the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America can and should benefit immeasurably.

The work of the Congress has not ended. Because once more the main report and the various resolutions adopted by the Congress will be discussed by Party members and the entire people organised in their place of work or residence, so that the future plans, especially the new five-year plan, should be fulfilled and over-fulfilled. There can be no doubt that the Party and the people of Cuba following this great Conference will go from strength to strength achieving ever greater victories and cementing the ties of friendship with the Soviet Union, the Socialist countries, the international communist movement and revolutionary democratic forces. As the report justifiably declares:

'This Congress will be like a luminous star to guide us along the road. The Party, its rules, its principles, its organisation, its strength, will carry us invincibly ahead. There is no difficulty that we cannot overcome, no mistake that cannot be avoided if anticipated or promptly rectified if made.'

'Capitalism has no future. The future belongs entirely to Socialism'.

South Africa's involvement in Latin America

by F. Meli

When we talk of the Caribbean it is important to bear in mind that we are dealing with an area which in many respects has lagged behind Latin America and has been somewhat isolated from the Latin American mainstream.

There are in this area four language groups: Dutch, Spanish, French and English and the people are of diverse ethnic origin: Latin, African, East Indian, Javanese (Indonesian) etc. These are descendants of ex-slaves and indentured labourers, successors of Amerindians and carriers of and heirs to progressive traditions of their people – traditions which in some cases date back to pre-Hispanic (or pre-Columbian) days; people who collectively through their labour, sweat, blood and lives moulded and shaped the history and present of the Caribbean. Gordon Lewis, a noted authority on Caribbean affairs has remarked that the reconstruction of the Caribbean society is all the more difficult because it 'cannot build, as can the emergent African states, upon a rich pre-European historical past; it would be difficult to compose a book on the area which would match Basil Davidson's *Old Africa Rediscovered*.'¹

This is, of course, only one side of the coin because the people of

gars and prostitutes. Every person has a right to a free education, a job, social security, free medical treatment, child-care, welfare and the fullest opportunities to enjoy the arts and culture. This is in accordance with the main aim of Socialism - the ever increasing satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of the working masses.

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'Capitalism has no future. The future belongs entirely to Socialism'.

The social conditions of the working people in the Antilles are miserable partly because the ruling classes and cliques in this area do not respond to the plight of the masses. There exists racial (ethnic) animosity between Africans and East Indians in Guyana (in the Dutch- and English-speaking Caribbean the people of African descent call themselves Africans and are also referred to as such by other ethnic groups); African, East Indian, Javanese etc. in Surinam and other areas. Ideas and concepts of cultural nationalism, narrow-minded ethno-centrism or religious fanaticism and racial loyalties hinder the emergence of a broad Caribbean identity. Jamaica, historically regarded as the "cradle of African Nationalism" (Marcus Gravey is regarded as one of the national heroes in Jamaica) has a relatively influential "Ethiopian" movement, the Rastafarians – named after Ras Tafari, the name of Haile Selassie before his coronation in 1930. This explains the strong feeling about or concern for and even commitment to the cause of African liberation which one notices everywhere in Jamaica. Yet internally, the 21 families who number no more than 100 people constitute a "closely knit oligarchy" which dominates economic, political and social life. Surinam seems to have all the signs of a country which is on the verge of replacing Dutch colonialism with international, especially US, neo-colonialism. In Trinidad and Tobago the neo-colonialist octopus is steadily entrenching its tentacles and in Guyana the period of the electoral fraud³ is being replaced by a seemingly progressive foreign policy.

This situation demands proper assessment, re-evaluation and flexibility of tactics on the side of revolutionary forces. According to the *Trinidad Guardian* (August 7, 1975) the People's Progressive Party took this into consideration when its leader Cheddi Jagan announced a change of tactics from "non-cooperation" to "critical support" during the party's 25th anniversary celebrations held in the same month. There is also the case of Haiti. With 90 per cent of the infants dying before they reach the age of five, Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and "on a world scale being second only to those in Upper Volta in Africa."⁴

The problems facing the Caribbean are not only of a social nature; there are also questions of inter-state relationships. Let us take the case of Venezuela for instance. Venezuela, an oil-rich country with some

2,700 kilometres of coastline in the Caribbean Sea and economically one of the powerful countries in this region, has been accused by some countries in the Caribbean of having "colonialist intentions."⁵

These are some of the problems facing the people of the Caribbean: they only represent an aspect of Caribbean reality today.

THE REVOLUTIONARY FORCES

The revolutionary working class organisations in the Caribbean carry a heavy responsibility of having to show the masses the way out. There exist different political groups with heterogeneous and, at times, conflicting ideological outlooks — a natural and at times healthy process.

The problem facing the revolutionary forces in the Caribbean is *not* a unique problem; it is a problem which faced all countries during the early period of the birth of working-class organisations: the problem of providing the working class with a socialist perspective. The Communist Parties of Guadeloupe and Martinique are strong and have influence on the other left organisations and trade unions. In Guadeloupe the mayors of the two largest cities, Basse Terre and Pointre-A-Pitre, are leading members of the Communist Party.

In the English-speaking Caribbean — with the exception of Guyana where a left party, the People's Progressive Party, has been in existence for two and a half decades — socialist ideas took long to penetrate. According to Trevor Munroe, General Secretary of the Workers' Liberation League, a Jamaican Marxist organisation,* the cause is "the backwardness of the intellectual tradition of British colonialism" which differed from French colonialism "where the French working class

* Recently it was reported that a new party, The Communist Party of Jamaica, has been launched and, according to a press release under the signature of Mr. Chris Lawrence, first secretary, the inaugural meeting adopted the Party rules and objectives, a programme for the ensuing 12 months, and a statement of policy.⁶ No revolutionary can be against such a step. But it seems a discussion with all Jamaican Marxist groups and left movements is necessary so as to avoid or solve problems of misunderstanding, sectarianism, opportunism and political adventurism.

movement was much more highly developed in France and therefore, through the intellegentsia, transmitted developed political revolutionary ideas into the French colonies.”⁷ This point is developed by Munroe’s colleague Don Robotham who maintains that scientific socialism:

“... developed least in the Anglo-Saxon countries because those were the strongholds of the capitalist class with a privileged position in the world market. From the super-profits which this privileged position generated, the capitalists of Britain, and later of the United States, were able to bribe an upper crust of workers to betray their own class and to cleave to their enemies.”⁸

In the Dutch colony of Surinam, the Demokratsich Volks Front has all the potential of an emergent vanguard. Here there is need to organise trade unions more energetically, perhaps along the lines of the militant Transport and Industrial Workers’ Union of Trinidad and Tobago. In St. Vincent – the radicals call their country Youlou – unity of all the nationalist elements is necessary, perhaps around the Youlou United Liberation Movement (Yulimo) which came about as a result of the unification of the three earlier existing revolutionary organisations: Black Liberation Action Committee; Organisation for Black Cultural Awareness and Young Socialist Group.⁹

We have discussed some aspects of the class struggle in the Caribbean and have also dealt with some social problems. It is also important to note that the struggle of the people of the Caribbean has a *profound national content*. Let us take the case of the East Indians in the Caribbean. (The term “East Indian” is used here to denote people of Indian origin. The distinction is used so as to avoid confusing them with Amerindians. It goes without saying that as Caribbeans they are obviously West Indians). Recently, at the first-ever conference on “The East Indians in the Caribbean” which was sponsored by the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Institute of African and Asian Studies of the University of West Indies, St Augustine, it was stated that the East Indians, who constitute almost a quarter of the English-speaking Caribbean and in the French and Dutch-speaking area and in Guyana are the overwhelming majority, are in most cases alienated from political power.¹⁰

The impact and revolutionising influence of the Cuban revolution in the Caribbean cannot be over-emphasised. The victory of the Cuban revolu-

tion meant the *triumph of socialism in a Caribbean country* and Cuba, as the first country to challenge successfully the US in that hemisphere, established a government based on national independence, social justice and racial equality and harmony. Cuba existed despite her geographical position – 90 miles from the USA – and despite the hostility of the USA and hardships she suffered due to the blockade. This was possible because of the assistance rendered her by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

It is also worth remembering that Cuba, herself struggling for survival and liberation from the blockade, did not forget her internationalist duty towards the other Caribbean countries. Cheddi Jagan of Guyana remembers vividly Cuba's assistance to his government:

“After discussion with Dr Ernesto Guevara in 1960 and 1961, the Cuban government agreed to lend us in equipment and materials – cement, steel, generators etc. – the equivalent of the external cost of the \$32 (B.G) million hydro-electric project at Malali Falls”.¹¹

And in 1963:

“It was at this stage that I appealed to the Cuban government for help. The Cuban government readily agreed”.¹²

The shift in the world political scene, Cuba's militant and heroic stand against US imperialism and the triumph of international detente in the 70's influenced the political situation in the Caribbean, with the result that some countries in this area started to review their position vis a vis Cuba and in 1972 took a decision to resume diplomatic relations with Cuba. The relations between Cuba and other Caribbean countries are improving, as the visits to Cuba in 1975 by Williams (Trinidad and Tobago), Burnham (Guyana) and Manley (Jamaica) testify. According to the joint communique signed between Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago at the end of Williams' visit to Cuba, these relations are based on the ‘fundamental unity of Caribbean identity, which transcends linguistic differences of the people of this area.’¹³

The other aspect of the internationalist outlook of the Cuban revolution is the assistance it gives to the revolutionary movements in this and other areas. The Conference of the Communist Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean which was held in Havana on June 9-13, 1975 marked a new stage of development of Latin American and Caribbean solidarity. The communists of this area met to exchange

views, to define the enemy – US imperialism – and to work out common tactics and strategy on how to fight and destroy him.

SOUTH AFRICA'S INVOLVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

In the 70's imperialism has suffered defeats on many fronts and at all levels. There arose a need for readjustment. The shift in South Africa's foreign policy became noticeable in 1973 when that country was affected by a partial oil boycott as a result of her participation on the side of Israel in the Arab-Israel confrontation. (Iran came to her rescue by supplying South Africa with 40 per cent of her petroleum needs).

It is true that as early as 1972, when the Brazilian Foreign Minister made the much-publicised trip to eight African countries, imperialism had assigned a special role to be played by Brazil. Her "natural bonds", that is language and culture, with Portugal and her former colonies were important assets. The events which took place in Portugal in April 1974 and the resultant developments in the colonies disturbed these plans.

It then became important that South Africa be more "active" in this regard. Bissel, an apologist for US neo-colonialism, states that trade between Latin America and South Africa "has always been minimal . . . but by all indicators, ties had been tenuous until 1974."¹⁴

He then goes on to say:

"One key factor in the equation, Brazil, caused events to take a new course . . . But Brazil by 1974 saw itself as joining a fancier club of nations . . . talking of joining the 'nuclear club', and seeing itself as the paramount power in Latin America. South Africa wanted to link up with that power . . ."¹⁵

In March 1974 the South African Foreign Minister, Muller, and the Chief of the South African Navy, Vice-Admiral Johnson, attended the inauguration of General Ernesto Geisel as President of Brazil.¹⁶ Recently racist Vorster visited Paraguay and Uruguay and the Chilean junta emissary, Felipe Verela, son of the editor of *El Mercurio*, went to Pretoria to ask financial assistance – which he got without difficulty.¹⁷

South Africa has economic interests in Latin America. The advanced mining technology and its relative proximity to Latin America are

favourable conditions. It is said that:

“Some years ago the South African General Mining Company and Roberts Construction established the pattern with work on a massive irrigation scheme in Peru. South Africa’s exports to South America consist mainly of capital goods . . . Mining machinery makes up a large portion of trade, and Pretoria may transfer its mining counsellor stationed at Buenos Aires to Santiago . . . Chile, with its mineral resources and weakened labour movement, is now a prime target”.¹⁶

South Africa is also interested in a “diplomatic offensive” and Latin America, which holds 24 votes in the UN, is important for South Africa. At the 29th Session of the UN when the question of South Africa’s credentials arose, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Uruguay voted against the rejection of South Africa’s credentials while Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, The Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Venezuela abstained.¹⁹

It is impossible to assess South Africa’s involvement in Latin America properly without taking into account the *central role* played by the US in these devilish schemes. It is therefore no accident that William Bowder, a member of the National Security Council of the US and known for his CIA activities in Latin America, has been appointed ambassador to South Africa. In fact in the recent past a number of US diplomats, notorious for their CIA activities in Latin America, have been reassigned to Africa. We may mention Nathaniel Davies, ambassador to Chile during the 1973 bloody coup – he was until recently Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; or Dean Hinton, a specialist in economic intelligence, Director of the Agency of International Development (AID) in Chile (1969-71) and a member of the National Security Council Sub-Committee on “Nationalisation of U.S. companies” abroad who is now US ambassador to Zaire; or Frederick Latrash, the AID official who was an accomplice to the overthrow of the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954, undermined the government of Dr Nkrumah in Ghana in 1966 and served as the Political Director of the US Embassy in Santiago. He has also been assigned to Africa.²⁰

There is no doubt that the positive developments in Southern Africa increase the responsibility of our movement. But the negative developments in Southern Africa do untold damage to our prestige and, above all, to our cause. We have Vorster's "detente" offensive in mind. The rapprochement between some independent American states on the one hand and fascist-racist South Africa on the other should not be taken lightly because it is not just a defensive measure on the side of imperialism, but a *calculated offensive* designed not only for the immediate future but for a long-term perspective.

The growing alliance between fascist-racist South Africa and the fascist dictatorships in Latin America is in the interests of US imperialism and therefore an aspect of US imperialism's global strategy. It is correct to conclude that the US is not only an accomplice but the *main culprit* in this new development. This is in the spirit of the notorious "Memorandum 39" – and Vorster is desperately seeking friends all over the world, including the "non-white" world, so as to strengthen his weakened position and that of his class *allies* in independent Africa and fascist countries in Latin America. In assessing the South Africa-Latin American connection it is important to note that South America – and this includes the Caribbean – belongs together with Southern Africa, Australia and New Zealand to the Southern Hemisphere which, according to imperialist strategists, must be secured for the West: hence the significance of the Simonstown Naval base and the unification of the Indian Ocean and Diego Garcia.

What is Africa's response and reaction to this challenge and provocation?

The African people and some progressive African states see the *struggle for economic and social emancipation in their own countries* as an integral element of the struggle for the *national liberation* of the southern tip of Africa from fascist-racist and colonial minority regimes. This is easy to explain: the existence of such regimes is a stumbling block to African development and unity. Africa needs *unity* and *solidarity* against the external and internal enemies of the people. But what seems even more urgent is that Africa must define and characterise her enemies clearly and be bold enough to stand up to the challenge.

The struggles of the people of Indo-China, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and more relevantly Angola have shown (and continue to do so) that solidarity is one of the most dynamic and effective weapons in the hands of the working masses and oppressed people. By solidarity we do not mean some abstract declarations or messianic appeals to 'brotherhood', but effective mutual assistance and support based on common interests and faith in the triumph of the common *struggle* and cause against the common enemy. There is a direct interconnection between world public opinion and our *concrete actions in the field of battle*. Our duty as participants on the scene of action is to intensify the struggle in our countries. By so doing we will be weakening US imperialism and contributing directly to the cause of our brothers and sisters in Latin America, the Caribbean and the United States.

Footnotes

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- 2 W.G. Demas, *The political Economy of the English-speaking Caribbean - A Summary View*. Study Paper No. 4.
- 3 cf. Janet Jagan, *Army Intervention in 1973 Elections in Guyana*, A PPP Education Committee Publication.
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- 5 *Trinidad Guardian*, Port of Spain, June 27, 1975.
- 6 *The Daily Gleaner*, Kingston, August 6, 1975.
- 7 T. Munroe, *The Way Forward in the Caribbean Today*, in: *Socialism* Vol. 12 No. 4 April 1975, p. 19.
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- 12 Ibid, p. 277.
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- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 *Morning Star*, London, September 8, 1975.
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African Commentary

By Sentinel

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

At the July 1975 Conference of African political parties in Tunis, the Congolese Party of Labour submitted an extremely interesting analysis of the problems of the Congolese revolution.

The document emphasised that the present phase of the revolution is 'national, democratic and popular.' National, because it aims to abolish the domination of French imperialism and also because it seeks to build

a Congolese nation in place of tribalism and regionalism. Democratic, because it aims to substitute the domination of the vast majority for that of a small minority. Popular, because it lays the foundation for the next stage, which is the socialist revolution, by 'mobilising the disinherited masses under the banner of the proletariat and its vanguard, the CPL.'

In the struggle to achieve this phase of the revolution, the PCL sees the main contradiction as being:

- 1) Between the whole Congolese people and foreign monopoly capitalism,
- 2) Between national unity and tribalism and regionalism,
- 3) Between the most exploited classes and the national bourgeoisie,
- 4) Between intellectuals and manual workers.

The document affirms that, objectively speaking, classes exist in the Congo in both rural and urban society.

In the countryside land is divided into 'territorial lordships'. Within these lordships there are two distinct social classes. Firstly, there is the class of chiefs who have certain economic and social privileges, notably the right to receive royalties from the products of the soil, of hunting, of fishing, etc. Secondly, there is the class of free men who are not directly part of the chieftainship nobility. This class of free men constitutes the majority of the population. It is linked to the class of chiefs by vague ties of family and culture, usually expressed by a belief in a distant common origin and by the existence of a common ritual and so on.

It appears that conflict between these rural classes is not very acute. But the PCL believes that this should not become a pretext for saying that there are no social classes in the countryside. If class conflict is not very apparent, it is simply because the weak development of the productive forces and the relations of production are 'still coloured by traces of a family relationship'. But, here and there, the objective conditions for confrontation are present and elements of these two classes do take up class attitudes and occasionally confront each other seriously.

In the towns, the largest group of workers are the civil servants.

Within this group there are significant divisions. The upper ranks hold the reins of power because they occupy positions of command and of decision, both on the political and administrative level. At the opposite end there are the clerks, labourers and petty functionaries.

The post-independence history shows that under the First Republic, from 1960 to 1963, those who held political and administrative power helped themselves lavishly, in the course of their dealings with state property. In effect, by virtue of their decision-making power, they saw to it that they received generous salaries. They thus not only lived well but also managed to accumulate large sums which enabled them to start profitable ventures through nominees, often elderly relatives. Others of this group used their position of privilege to create, always through nominees, enterprises which supplied goods and services to the state. 'These suppliers could inflate the amount of the invoices in the knowledge that they would not only escape prosecution for fraud but would be paid in full and in advance.'

The document emphasised the point that those who were engaged in this activity were in fact exploiting the rest of society and were behaving like a privileged class with distinct class attitudes. In the opinion of the PCL these elements constituted a 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie'. The few examples of their conduct which have been mentioned illustrate how this bourgeoisie acts like 'a leech on the nation' and 'exploits the state to launch itself in business and mingle with what we call the comprador bourgeoisie'.

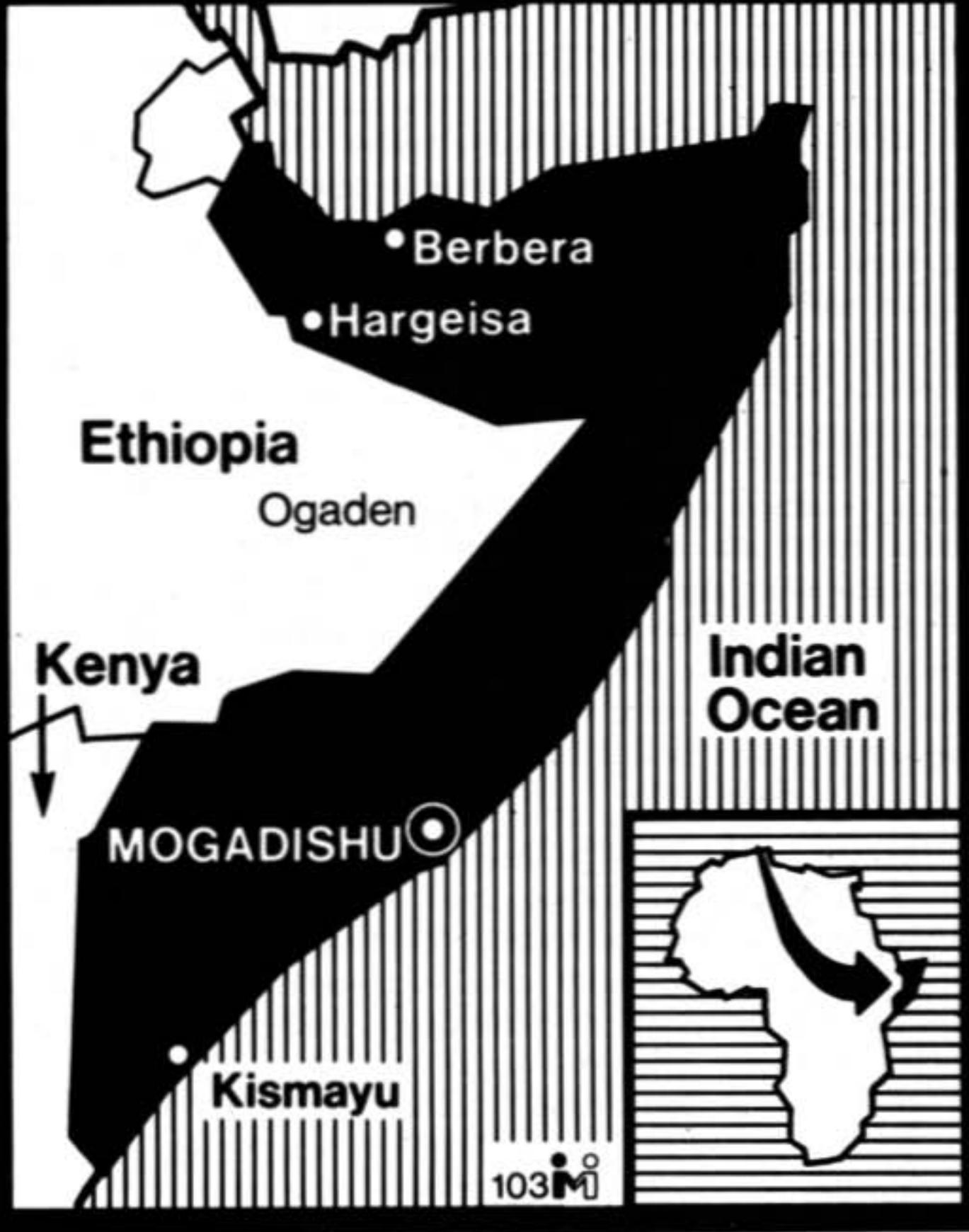
The document goes on to point out that in countries like Congo Brazzaville which, upon independence, inherited nothing but a top-heavy administration and a budget devoted essentially to the payment of civil servants, this bureaucratic bourgeoisie was the main ally of imperialism and used its power to the detriment of the nation as a whole.

SOMALIA

Some of Somalia's post-independence problems were discussed in the address delivered by Somalia Vice-President, Ismail Ali Abokor, at the

SOMALI REP.

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Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba last December.

During the period 1960-1969 the Somali economy continued to be an appendage of the world capitalist-imperialist system. This international system of exploitation continued to underdevelop Somali society. Social relations began to suffer from the development of glaring inequalities reflected politically in a system of pseudo-political parties and pseudo-elections based on petty-bourgeois competition, tribalism, corruption and chaos. The stagnation of the Somalia cultural heritage was symbolised by the fact that there had never been a script for the Somali national language and no steps were taken to prepare one by the neo-colonial regime up to 1969.

Comrade Abokor went on to say:

'The struggle against neo-colonialism obliges the national liberation movement to turn, as Lenin predicted, against capitalism and imperialism. The contradictions of neo-colonialism called forth the Somali revolution of October 21, 1969 led by our progressive armed forces and supported by the workers, farmers, nomads and revolutionary intellectuals. The Somali revolution declared its objective, to construct socialist society. Since 1969, Somali revolutionary masses have been inspired and are continually learning to organise a struggle against capitalism, against imperialism, and for the main goals of our epoch - peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.'

The Somali leaders were aware that real political independence could not be achieved without the genuine liberation of the Somali economy from imperialist and neo-colonial domination. Significant aspects of the Somali economy were nationalised in 1970 and further nationalisation measures were implemented in 1975.

The leaders of the Somali revolution have put a great deal of emphasis on the ideological campaign for scientific socialism. Concepts such as 'Arab socialism', 'African socialism' are regarded as instruments to isolate Africans and Arabs from the rest of the world. In the mass media and in the cultural and educational institutions, great emphasis is placed on correct political orientation campaigns based on the 'universal truth of Marxist-Leninist teaching'. At the same time

'We also realised the urgent necessity to apply Marxist-Leninist

teachings creatively to suit our specific historical conditions. We are fully aware of the obstacles facing us, of the specific economic, social and cultural conditions of our country, of the special features presented by the problematics of the transition to socialism in the Somali context, such as the current state of the relatively small proletariat with the bulk of the working masses engaged in farming and pastoral nomadism. Nevertheless we draw inspiration from the other societies with similar socio-economic backgrounds which have successfully tackled the problems presently confronting us through a systematic application of socialist measures.'

The nationalisation measures have provided the beginnings of a framework for a planned economy without which underdevelopment and dependency cannot be destroyed. But certain serious problems still remain, ranging from the location and utilization of the economic surplus, questions of management and efficiency, and dealing with the sabotage of the expropriated classes.

The most serious problem faced by the Somali people was the paucity of 'readily investable resources for social and economic development'.

In the absence of such resources

'... we have put maximum reliance on the people - their mobilisation for work, and political consciousness - for after all the productive capacity itself is created by many and for many. We have tackled many problems of construction by relying on the voluntary labour of our population. Through such self-help schemes we have carried out a great deal of rural development - canals, feeder roads, schools, dispensaries, and soil conservation work - and in some areas even the incessant activity was simultaneously accompanied by ideological orientation of the masses, so as to combine the explanation of socialist principles with practical daily activity of national construction.'

The rural development campaign in Somalia (which included startling advances in the sphere of wiping out illiteracy) coincided with a most serious drought in which 40% of livestock died and over 200,000 people were rendered destitute.

'It was in this struggle against the despotism of nature that the far-

reaching effect to the rural development scheme in our society manifested its first results. Relief communities were immediately established in the affected areas which were a greater part of the country, suffering people were collected from remote areas, water and food provisions were made available to those who still had some animals left, sometimes they and their livestock were moved by trucks to better areas. In this epic struggle both mind and muscle were provided by the rural campaign - volunteers and others who joined them as the situation became more serious; and the communications network established for the literacy campaign, became the nerve-centre for the relief operation.'

EGYPT

News has come from Egypt's underground that the Egyptian Communist Party has been re-established. The announcement stated that 'the banner of Marxism-Leninism has been hoisted high again in our country, confirming the determination of the Egyptian working class to have its own Communist Party, which is capable of leading its struggles for the achievement of its aims and the aims of all the toiling masses of the whole people of Egypt.'

The main, immediate tasks which this newly-emerged Party sets itself include

- 1) complete liberation of the Arab territories occupied in 1967; fulfilment of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and securing their absolute right to self-determination in their homeland; rejection of, and struggle against, unilateral, partial and capitulating solutions;
- 2) repulsing imperialist conspiracies aiming at including Egypt in the imperialist plans, isolating it from the Arab anti-imperialist and anti-zionist movements and 'opening its doors' to imperialist capital for the purpose of restoring its domination of the key sectors of the Egyptian economy;
- 3) struggle against rightist, reactionary plots serving the imperialist plans and aiming at reversion of economic development, retrogression of the progressive economic and social achievements and launching an offensive against the hard-won gains of the workers and farmers;

- 4) completion of the tasks of the national democratic revolution and advancing on the road of social progress to socialism;
- 5) struggle for an overall democratic transformation, securing the broadest democratic rights for the Egyptian masses;
- 6) struggle for the satisfaction of everyday economic demands of the workers, farmers, revolutionary intellectuals and toiling masses;
- 7) struggle for an Arab unity possessing progressive national democratic content and based on democratic foundations;
- 8) repulsing the attempts of imperialism and home-reaction to weaken and frustrate the militant alliance with the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union; and struggle for consolidating friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

The Party further announces that it is aware that the main guarantee for successfully solving the above tasks lies in further cohesion with the masses of the working people, and more co-operation with all patriotic and democratic forces in Egypt and more solidarity and unity with the world revolutionary and Communist movement.

ZAIRE

The serious economic situation facing Mobutu's Zaire is dealt with in the September 1975 issue of *African Development*. Zaire's foreign exchange reserves have fallen dramatically from £370m. to £12m. With an inflation rate of nearly 30% and the growing payment deficit Zaire's dependence on foreign assistance is increasing. It has been forced to turn more and more to the International Monetary Fund and the Euro-Currency Market.

A serious aspect of Mobutu's economic failure is the crisis in the agricultural sector. About 70% of the population of Zaire is engaged in agriculture although this sector accounted for only 15% of Gross Domestic Product in 1972. *African Development* states that:

'Since then (1972) the position has deteriorated to such an extent that Zaire spends 30% of its foreign exchange to pay for imports of foodstuffs and local foodstuffs are now in short supply. Meanwhile

the rural population, dissatisfied with the prices and wages that they get from farming, are flocking into the towns and the growth of Kinshasa goes on apace despite high local unemployment.'

The role of nationalisation in a neo-colonial state is well illustrated in Zaire. President Mobutu's main 'popular' economic initiatives consisted of Africanisation measures of November 1973, nationalisation measures of December 1974 and financial measures of January 1975 which demanded that Zaireans should surrender all their overseas property to the state. But, in practice, as *African Development* states:

'... wealth has been concentrated in the hands of a few wealthy families and party officials who have stood to benefit from such measures, while the mass of the people have been pinched by unemployment and caught in the universal net of inflation.'

The extent of mass dissatisfaction and mass opposition to Mobutu's authoritarian regime is difficult to gauge. But the recent kidnapping of personnel from a wild-life camp on the shores of Lake Tanganyika has drawn world attention to the existence of organised armed opposition within Zaire. The raid was carried out by an armed force calling itself the People's Revolutionary Party. It is claimed that this is only one of the many rebel groups holding enclaves all over eastern Zaire. Little is known of the PRP's political platforms. One of those kidnapped stated:

'Our captors repeatedly emphasised that they were not bandits or pirates out for personal gain, but that they represented an organised political and military force. Their aim was the liberation of all the people of the Congo from the government of President Mobutu, and the establishment of a just and democratic government for all their people.'

The kind of 'democracy' which Mobutu practises in the Congo took a rather bizarre turn in the recent national assembly elections. All 244 candidates of the ruling People's Revolutionary Movement (MPR) were elected in a nation-wide 'hand-clap poll' on November 2nd. There were no polling booths or voting papers. The names of local candidates were read out at public meetings and the level of applause was gauged and calculated by officials. The official news agency Zaire Presse announced that Zaire had 'done away with the ballot box' in favour of this 'more authentic' procedure.

MADAGASCAR

New land reform measures have been announced by the Malagasy Republic government aimed at 'abolishing feudal and imperialist relations of landed property and at leading landless peasants (85% of the population) to take an interest in increasing agricultural production.'

Whole categories of privately owned land would be covered by the reorganisation programme and distributed to the peasants. The land affected would be mainly privately owned land left fallow or insufficiently cultivated, privately-owned land cultivated by tenants paying a tithe to the owner, and, eventually, privately owned land exploited through paid-labourers or agricultural machinery. The aim of these measures is eventually to create two basic types of cultivation: 'family exploitation' and 'collective exploitation' administered by the traditional grass-root collectives.

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“It is not wrong to fight for freedom & equality”

On November 13, 1975, Raymond Suttner, aged 30, a senior lecturer in law at Natal University was sentenced to 7½ years imprisonment in the Durban Supreme Court on two counts of contravening the Suppression of Communism Act. He had pleaded guilty to furthering the aims of the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress. Evidence was led that he had been an important link in the work of the organisations both inside and outside South Africa, that he had recruited two helpers (Kuny and Miss Roxburgh) and formed an underground cell to distribute pamphlets.

On November 6, after the close of the state case against him, Suttner made the following statement from the dock:

I have furthered the aims of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. This was carefully considered. I want to tell the court why I acted in this way and still consider it correct.

From my earliest encounters with black people, I have been aware of the contrast between my own living circumstances and theirs. I felt, from the beginning, that it could not be right that some people, merely

because they were black, should have to live with less than they needed.

In my home background I was encouraged to treat all human beings with dignity and respect. I learnt that a man's colour is no indication of his worth. I learnt that black people had hopes and worries like everyone else, that they needed health and security, food and shelter.

Nothing that I learnt as I grew older seemed to justify the situation where the rights that people have, the disabilities that they endure, the place where they live, where they can work, who they can love should all be determined by the colour of their skin.

At school, and especially at University, I used every opportunity to argue against racism and for a common society where Black and White could live together in peace and justice. Despite what I heard from most whites, I came to feel that equal rights was not something to be feared but the basis for real security. With all that was claimed for apartheid, there were, nevertheless, few who would argue that it could benefit *all* people, or that it could benefit all people *equally* or that it could even provide *sufficient* for all people.

Notwithstanding its rechristening as 'separate development', none of the main features of apartheid have changed. The black people have never sought Bantustans and similar unrepresentative institutions. Their real leaders have made it clear that they consider the whole of South Africa to be their homeland and they will accept nothing less than their right to share fully in its power and prosperity.

The suppression of the A.N.C., the Communists and other allies in the liberation movement has meant that we do not hear calls for equality in one undivided South Africa, as frequently as we should. Their banning may have created the illusion of wider acceptance of apartheid than there in fact is. We do not hear the most outspoken critique of apartheid nor what this movement would substitute for it. It is hard to find out what the A.N.C. and its allies stand for. We generally only hear what its opponents say about them.

I have been cut off from information about the A.N.C. and Communist Party for most of my life. I was told of the evils of these organizations and heard all the charges of their alleged villainy. I was never allowed to hear their answer. In trying to find a meaningful poli-

tical role in our situation, I sought information about the A.N.C. and its allies. When I read their literature and heard their aims, I saw that they did not, as their detractors suggested, advocate indiscriminate violence nor the setting up of a tyrannical regime. I found they had simple aims - to make a new society that would benefit not a few, but all. 'South Africa' in the words of the Freedom Charter 'belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and . . . no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people.'

My own political experience, mainly as a university student, and what I know of our political history, has led me to conclude that radical criticism, no matter how valid, is either ignored, rejected as illegitimate or suppressed. Even in quite legal activities, militants stand a good chance of finding themselves banned, arrested without trial or with other restrictions.

When I studied their background, I had little doubt that the banning of the A.N.C. and Communist Party were undemocratic and unjustified acts. There had been no evidence of these organizations using violence before they were made unlawful bodies. Similarly their turn to violence could hardly be called unprovoked or without cause. What response had their many years of non-violence received? Chief Albert Lutuli, a man of peace, if ever there was one, gave this answer:

'Who will deny 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.'

For many years, I participated in protest activities - organising petitions, holding placards, marching and various other demonstrations against racial discrimination. None of these or similar protests had any effect. But what is more, the government denied our right to oppose them - leaders were banned or arrested without trial.

Around 1969 I started to ask myself whether I was doing this out of habit or whether these activities were achieving anything. The Minister of Education had left few illusions about their impact when he said in



Raymond Suttner gives the clenched fist salute during his trial.

one statement that student petitions went straight into his waste paper basket.

Every year, new laws made protest more difficult. Yet every year seemed to make opposition more necessary. Although black people grew increasingly dissatisfied, it made little impression. The white people did not have to consider the views of those who were disenfranchised.

I could see no possibility of ending apartheid through appeals to the government and that was virtually the only course open to opponents accepting our constitutional framework.

I continued to read about and discuss A.N.C. policy. What I heard and read strengthened the admiration that I had felt for the selflessness and dedication of men like Albert Lutuli, Bram Fischer, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada and Denis Goldberg - some of the leaders of the liberation movement.

I came to feel that I could contribute most by aiding the A.N.C. and its allies. I came to believe that the course that they followed was the only way to achieve freedom in our country. It is true that this means supporting a policy including the use of violence. The law under which I am charged does not ask the court to enquire what precipitated the violence. The court cannot dismiss these charges because the A.N.C. and its allies were forced to take up arms. It cannot rule that A.N.C. violence is a response to the violence of the apartheid regime.

Yet there are factors in the A.N.C. decision that make it abundantly clear that they did not desire violence, that they use it reluctantly. A.N.C. strategies are aimed at minimising conflict and promoting democracy. Violence is not seen as an instant answer to all problems. Certain types of actions such as terrorism or undisciplined heroic acts, even if well-motivated, are rejected as exacerbating the bitterness and hostility. I am convinced that this policy responds to suppression and oppression in the only way possible.

The work that I have done for the freedom movement made rigorous demands. It was not pleasant to spend my spare time licking envelopes, duplicating, typing, sticking on stamps. Most of the time I did this work on my own. It is true that I need not have done this. But this

was the course that I honestly concluded to be the best way of contributing to our future. The goals for which I worked warranted whatever sacrifices were required.

It is obvious that these activities had to be carried out in secret, that I had to conceal them from my closest friends and family. Though I am used to being frank and open, the nature of the work forced me to be silent. Though I would have been pleased to debate these ideas freely, I could not jeopardise the security of my organizations and others who were not involved, but who could have been prejudiced by knowledge of my acts.

With regard to the evidence of Kuny and Miss Roxburgh, I acted on the basis of strong indications from them that they were willing to act in unlawful activities, that they knew the dangers and were prepared to accept the consequences of their involvement.

While I strongly discouraged withdrawal for practical and security reasons, I never said that they could not withdraw.

Kuny has suggested that it was necessary to conceal from me his reading of a certain political work with which I would not have agreed. Since I would have considered a discussion of such a book valuable, in order to clarify his and my own views, I cannot understand that he had any reason for stealth.

Regarding the charge of training, this was for the most part ancillary to the production and distribution of pamphlets.

With regard to the letter that I addressed to 'Joe Ben Msoni' I had no idea of its contents or its actual destination.

I have no doubt that the policies of the A.N.C. and Communist Party hold out a bright future for us. I know that the liberation movement is neither anti-white nor terrorist, that it works for the day when men and women will have all the comfort and security that they need. I realize that this is not the picture that is presented to South Africans. But because I know that it is true I could not obey a law expressly aimed at suppressing these democratic forces. It was my duty, I believe, to act honestly and for the benefit of all our people, to inform them of their situation and the way to an alternative, free society. That was the

aim of all my work.

I am not the first, nor the last, to break the law for moral reasons. I realize that the Court may feel that I should have shown more respect for legality. Normally I would show this respect. I would consider it wrong to break laws which serve the community. But I have acted against the laws that do not serve the majority of South Africans, laws that inculcate hostility between our people and preclude the tolerance and cooperation that is necessary to a contented and peaceful community.

For this I will go to prison. But I cannot ever accept that it is wrong to act, as I have done, for freedom and equality, for an end to racial discrimination and poverty. I have acted in the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people. I am confident that I have their support.

As the judge entered Court to pass sentence on Raymond Suttner, Mrs. Winnie Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned leader of the African National Congress of South Africa, spoke briefly to the prisoner in the dock.

She told him: 'You have done one of the greatest things in life by being part of the formation of the history of this country. Have courage.'

Albert Nzula Our 1st African General Secretary

By Historicus

November 16, 1975 marked the 70th anniversary of the birth of Albert Nzula, one of the leaders of the Communist Party of South Africa in the late 20s and early 30s and the first African to hold the post of general secretary in the Party. Nzula's life was tragically short - he died in Moscow on January 17, 1934, at the early age of 29. But though his period of activity in the Party was limited to a bare six years, he made a profound impression on all who met him, and made a vital contribution to the Africanisation of the Party which took place at that time, and to the strengthening of the ties between the South African Party and the international working class movement.

Nzula was born at Rouxville, in the Orange Free State, the son of a worker whose religious beliefs led him to accept the burdens of white domination with Christian resignation. From the outset of his life Albert Nzula's temperament led him in a different direction, and his own fiery nature, stimulated by the popular upsurge which marked the depression years 1928-1933, pitched him into a maelstrom of intense political thinking and activity.

After qualifying as a teacher at Lovedale, Nzula moved to Aliwal

North where he took up a teaching post, earning a little extra money by interpreting at the local magistrate's court. These were the years when the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (I.C.U.) was at its height, and Nzula was given his political baptism in its ranks, acting as secretary of the local branch. Later he moved to the Transvaal, obtaining a post at the A.M.E. Mission School at Wilberforce.

Nzula's entry into the Communist Party took place at a time when the slogan of an Independent Native Republic was being fiercely debated in Party circles. The slogan had been adopted, after lengthy discussion both in South Africa and overseas, at the 6th congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in 1928, and was later to be formally incorporated in the new programme of the Communist Party of South Africa at its conference held at the Inchcape Hall, Johannesburg, from December 28, 1928, to January 1, 1929. The full slogan read:

'An independent native South African republic as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' republic, with full equal rights for all races, black, coloured and white'.

This is not the place to set out again the arguments for and against the slogan. Suffice to say the slogan speeded up the decisive shift in Communist Party orientation from the ranks of the white workers and intellectuals to those of the millions of unorganised black workers and peasants, the leading elements of which began to enter its ranks in increasing numbers. Among those who joined the Party in these years were many black intellectuals and militants rebelling against white domination and seeking a political philosophy and an organisation to implement it, including, in addition to Nzula himself, men like Edwin Mofutsanyana, S.M. Kotu, J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, Johannes Nkosi, J. Sepeng, P.G. Moloinjane and many others. The President General of the African National Congress, J.T. Gumede, though not a Party member, was a firm supporter of the Native Republic conception and was later to be thrown out of the leadership by his more conservative colleagues because he was regarded as 'soft' on communism.

The manner of Albert Nzula's entry into the Communist Party has been described in a memoir written by Douglas Wolton, one of the Party leaders of that time who supported the Native Republic resolution.

'It was a day to be remembered in South Africa when in 1928 a Communist meeting was held at Evaton, Transvaal', writes Wolton. 'A group of African teachers had asked me to address a meeting to explain the Native Republic'. The vision of the African national movement set out in the Native Republic resolution had aroused great interest, especially among Africans. 'There was considerable opposition to this concept by many of the white chauvinist European members of the Party who considered that such a policy would alienate the white working class and encourage African bourgeois nationalism.

'It was in this situation that the Evaton meeting was held and, despite the rain that fell, the audience did not disperse but remained until the end. After the meeting a young teenage African came forward to ask for further information which resulted in his joining the Party. His name was Albert Nzula and he was a teacher in the local school'.

Wolton can be forgiven for mistaking Nzula's age. He was 23 at the time, but looked younger. Describing the same meeting, E.R. Roux in his biography of S.P. Bunting writes that Nzula 'was impressed by the fact that Wolton had continued to address the meeting even after rain began to fall'. However, Nzula's interest was obviously a little deeper, and Wolton records that as a result of the discussions they had that day, Nzula came to the Party headquarters at 41a Fox Street, Johannesburg, 'and immediately showed great interest in the library which contained many of the Marxist classics and also a wide range of scientific and philosophic works. Albert Nzula became a daily visitor to the office and studied enthusiastically, revealing an increasing desire to engage in Party work. Long discussions took place on all aspects of Party work; on the theory, history and the day to day work.

'It soon became apparent that Albert Nzula was an avid reader and student and quickly revealed a brilliant intelligence and an extremely wide understanding of the role of the Party in South Africa; moreover he showed a deep grasp of understanding of the role of the national movement in South Africa. Quite early in his experience he was emphatic that the leadership of the Party must pass primarily into the hands of Africans. For too long, despite the Party's acknowledgment of the role of Africans in the revolutionary movement, no Africans had been brought into effective leadership of the Party. At best they were filling the role of interpreters for white speakers. It was a negative

attitude which implied that in due time changes would take place.'

Wolton overstates his case somewhat. Africans had been members of the Party's leading committees, including the Central Executive Committee, since 1925 and many of them played a leading role in carrying the Party to the people, acting as main speakers at meetings and not merely as interpreters for whites. However Wolton is right in stressing that the advent of Nzula speeded up the process.

'He soon began to expose the attitudes of those who could not understand the role of the national movement or who accepted black and white unity in theory but who had no confidence in Africans fulfilling the role of leadership in the Party.

'Albert Nzula began to work mainly amongst the Africans in and around the Party, including Johannes Nkosi, Gana Makabeni and Thibedi; to develop a responsibility and to create a nucleus of understanding, determined, capable and devoted cadres who could fight through all opposition to win leading positions in the Party.

'Because of his strong and fearless personality his influence rapidly grew, not only amongst Africans but amongst whites also. He proposed addressing the traditional white meeting at the Johannesburg Town Hall steps. Although it was considered unwise and dangerous by the white comrades, Albert Nzula insisted and it was finally agreed. When he appeared on the steps and began speaking there was amazement and consternation amongst the white audience and even more so amongst the fringe of Africans who gathered at the outskirts of the meeting. Gradually the atmosphere settled down and soon there was applause. At the end of the speech he was congratulated, and particularly by the Africans who were present. This occasion was not repeated but it was a manifestation of the man, his courage and determination, and his spectacular achievements. Steadily Nzula's attitude was strengthening the confidence of the other Africans in the Party and beginning to crystallise a real and factual leadership'. Moses Kotane, now our general secretary, was one of Nzula's recruits.

Nzula had strong feelings of African nationalism, but his political philosophy extended beyond nationalism. A few weeks after his entry into the Communist Party he wrote in the Party paper *The South*

African Worker: 'I have come to the conclusion that every right-minded person ought to be a communist. I have hesitated all the time because communism has been misrepresented; I have been brought up on capitalistic literature which is never satisfactory when it tries to explain working-class misery. I am convinced that no half-way measures will solve the problem. There is a clash of interests between the capitalists and the workers which cannot be removed by anything except by the abolition of capitalism. Once the workers understand that they will know how to act. I am prepared to do my little bit to enlighten my countrymen on this point'.

Nzula gave up his post as headmaster of the school at Evaton and came to Johannesburg, where he helped Charles Baker with the work of the Communist Party's night school. He was also active in the Party-sponsored Federation of Non-European Trade Unions, became one of the leading speakers on Party and ANC platforms, and was a regular contributor to the columns of the *S.A. Worker*. In February 1929 he delivered a lecture to the members of the Party school on General Hertzog's Native Bills then advanced as a means of abolishing the limited African franchise. On the evidence of two African police spies who were in the audience, he was charged with inciting to racial hostility because, it was alleged, he had urged his audience to 'hate the enemy' and 'fight the white man'. Despite defence evidence that Nzula had not used the words complained of, that the two police spies had insufficient knowledge of the English language to know what was being said, and that their memory was curiously restricted to the words actually appearing in the charge sheet and nothing more, Nzula was convicted and fined £10, with the alternative of a month's imprisonment with hard labour. Baker, who had been chairman of the meeting at which Nzula spoke, wrote a furious full-page denunciation of the verdict in the *S.A. Worker*, in the course of which he accused magistrate Backeberg (whose name, Baker assured his readers, was not Backveld) of being 'biased from the start by his class and hereditary prejudices' and either 'an imbecile or an idiot' for preferring the evidence of the police to that of the defence. Not surprisingly, Baker was then charged and fined £10 for contempt of court.

Nzula quickly rose into a position of leadership both in the Communist Party and in the other organisations in which he was active. He

had been elected assistant secretary of the Communist Party at its conference on January 1st, 1929, and soon thereafter took over as acting editor of the *S.A Worker*, thereby freeing Bunting and Wolton for their election campaigns in Tembuland and Cape Flats respectively. The short-lived League of African Rights which had been formed as a sort of united front to rally opposition to the Hertzog Bills saw Nzula appointed as joint secretary with E.R. Roux. In January 1930 Nzula was in the chair at an 'all-in' conference held at the Trades Hall, Johannesburg, to launch a campaign to fight repressive legislation introduced in Parliament by General Hertzog's Justice Minister, Pirow, later to become one of Hitler's greatest admirers and the founder of the Nazi New Order movement which flourished during the war. In April 1930, at the annual conference of the African National Congress, Nzula played a leading role, together with John Gomas, Ndobe, Tonjeni, Champion and other militants in the defence of the President General Josiah Gumede who was under fire for his declaration that 'Soviet Russia was the only real friend of all subjected races' and for being always willing to work with the Communist Party in promoting the aims of the national liberation movement. The conservatives triumphed at that congress, and Gumede was replaced as President by Seme. But the battle which had been waged at that conference saw issue years later when the consistent line of the progressives, coupled with the failure of the 'good boys' to secure any concessions from the government, finally procured the expulsion of the conservatives from the leadership of the ANC.

On October 26, 1930, Nzula was in the chair again at an anti-pass conference held at the Inchcape Hall in Johannesburg. Africans were in a bitter mood, subjected to endless harassment by the police who had started using the tactic of midnight raids and arrests with victims thrown like so many bundles of washing into the pick-up vans to be herded into the jails. The October conference was meant to be sponsored by all of the other organisations of the oppressed people, but was finally left to the Communists because the 'good boys' of the ANC and other bodies were afraid of militant mass action. The 50 delegates from the Transvaal, OFS and Natal decided to work for a mass burning of passes on Dingaan's Day, December 16.

Writing about the history of Dingaan's Day in the *Negro Worker*,

organ of the International Trade Union Committee of the Negro Workers of the Red International of Labour Unions, in December 1931, Nzula explained that it was in 1929 that —

‘The Communist Party, which is the only Party fighting for the freedom of the natives, proclaimed Dingaan’s Day an anti-imperialist national liberation day, a day of mass demonstrations and strikes against Dutch and British oppression and tyranny. For those who know South Africa it is easy to realise what consternation this decision caused in the camp of the white ruling classes. They mobilised all their reactionary forces, including Negro reformist ‘leaders’, middle-class doctors, lawyers and teachers to spread rumours to frighten the masses away from the communists by telling them that they would be massacred. The whole capitalist press, a powerful and mighty force, published the most hair-raising stories of what would happen if the Negro toiling dared to go on strike and demonstrate. The right-wing opportunists who were still in the leadership of the Party succumbed to this propaganda but a determined and energetic campaign overcame their hesitations.

‘The response of the Negro workers was astounding. Throughout South Africa on December 16, 1929, thousands of Negro workers came out into the streets in all the chief industrial centres. The white fascist bands organised to break the demonstrations were repulsed. Only at Potchefstroom, a hotbed of reaction, they dared attack the demonstrators, killing one and wounding four Negro workers. The Negro workers replied to this cowardly shooting in such hot fashion that for the fortnight following this attempt these ‘brave saviours of white civilisation’ in ‘dark benighted’ Africa, were nowhere to be seen at demonstrations.

‘With the deepening of the economic crisis in South Africa, severe in its effects especially upon the Negro toiling masses, on Dingaan’s Day 1930 the demonstrations were even sharper than 1929. Five Negro workers including comrade Nkosi were killed by Pirow’s armed police thugs at Durban. The South African Negro masses are realising, however, in the face of landlessness, unemployment, misery and starvation, that the only force capable of their emancipation is their organised strength and the fighting solidarity of black and white workers against their common enemy - the imperialist exploiters. They are realising that the only way out of imperialist bondage and economic misery is

the revolutionary way out - a South African Black Republic as a stage towards a Workers' and Peasants' Republic'.

In the days before Dingaan's Day 1930, Nzula had called for united action in the pass-burning. 'Whether educated or uneducated, rich or poor, we are all subject to these badges of slavery', he wrote. He himself, as an educated African, did not carry a pass, but a pass exemption certificate, which he had to produce on demand to prove that he did not have to produce a pass on demand. On Dingaan's Day 1930, Nzula dramatically consigned this document to the flames at the Johannesburg pass-burning. Though thousands throughout South Africa followed his example, the 'good boys' once again abstained.

Nzula had stayed for a week with Johannes Nkosi just before Dingaan's Day to help with the Durban preparations. 'When I left Durban', wrote Nzula in his obituary of Nkosi in the *S.A. Worker*, 'he hinted to me that I was seeing him for the last time. Other comrades in Durban also state that Nkosi had a premonition of his death. This knowledge of the danger he was in did not in the least dampen the spirits of our comrade . . . As he lived, so Nkosi died, without fear and always thinking of the cause and its success. A thousand Africans must take his place.'

As the depression deepened in South Africa, and thousands of whites were to join the blacks in the ranks of the unemployed, the desperation wrought by poverty undermined colour prejudice among those who shared a common misfortune. Wolton writes in his memoir of Nzula:

'Activities had increased amongst the white unemployed and daily meetings were held at the Johannesburg Town Hall steps by Issy Diamond. Meetings of African unemployed workers were held by Albert Nzula at Market Square. On May Day 1931 demonstrations of African workers led by Albert Nzula, and white workers led by Issy Diamond merged into one huge procession of some thousands, and marched past the Rand Club to the consternation of its habitués whose apprehensive faces were glued to the windows. May Day 1931 revealed an influence and potential for the Party work amongst both African and white workers which had never been seen before.'

The unemployed, shouting 'We want bread', attempted to enter both

the Rand Club, Johannesburg's most exclusive sanctum of privilege, and the Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg's most exclusive and expensive hotel, and there were violent clashes with the police. Eight whites and two Africans were arrested and charged with public violence. The two Africans were fined £2 each. Two whites, De Villiers and Jones, who had previous convictions, were jailed for 18 months; Issy Diamond, who had a clean record, got 12 months for 'incitement to violence'.

Nzula was lucky to get away scot free. He was demonstrating outstanding qualities of leadership, initiative and courage, and an ability for polemicising, pamphleteering and public speaking which must have singled him out for special attention by the police, but he managed to elude their grasp. Perhaps they were at a loss as to how to deal with him, because he was not the type of African they were used to man-handling. He was articulate, self-possessed and he knew his rights. Not that he was without his weak points. According to Roux, he was not a good organiser. He was also over-fond of drink, an instrument of personal destruction which has at times caused severe damage in the ranks of the liberation movement over the years.

However, what Nzula signified was the appearance of a new type of African in the liberatory movement, a nationalist who was also an internationalist, a man of intellect and educational attainment who was not afraid or embarrassed to identify himself with the black masses, to go into the streets and fight side by side with them for liberation, a militant and a Communist. One can perhaps best judge what type of man Nzula was by comparing him with the older generation of African leaders whom he himself called 'misleaders' in an article in the *Negro Worker* in April 1932. Nzula accused Professor D.D.T. Jabavu, for example, of running to the British Government for help in the campaign against the pass laws when it should have been obvious to him that the Hertzog Government in South Africa was nothing but the agent of British imperialism. And he quoted Jabavu as telling an audience in the United States: 'Although the Africans are not rich, they do not starve. For those who have give to those who have not got. And furthermore the African peoples are not so barbarous as some people think, because they are more obedient to law and order than any other peoples.'

Nzula commented: 'What stupidity! What childish hypocrisy! One

can hardly imagine a more asinine statement by a man who prides himself with the title, 'professor'. Jabavu has not a word to say about the misery, the poverty and starvation among the native masses. He does not express a word of condemnation against his imperialist masters who have stolen our land and enslaved us on their reserves and in their compounds and have enacted the most brutal and anti-labour and racial laws to be found in any part of the world in order to maintain their imperialist robber policy.'

Nzula was typical of a new generation of young Africans who were growing up in South Africa, men and women who were not prepared to cringe and crawl, but demanded and were ready to fight for their rights. And Nzula was not only a rebel, but also a thinker, who was led to rebellion by his philosophy, and whose philosophy was forged in the heat of struggle. Wolton writes in his memoir of a period in 1930 or 1931 when 'Albert Nzula and I went to Durban to help in the organisation of Party work. We shared the same room and long discussions took place on the role of the national movement in South Africa. Discussions also took place with A.W. Champion, the Zulu leader of the I.C.U. (Yase Natal) who was to work closely with the Party and render great assistance later. When I was arrested at an I.C.U. meeting on Cartwright's Flats after being invited to speak on the Native Republic, Champion indicated that he would see to the defence. When Chaka, the African nickname for the famous (or infamous) white detective, brought the case to court, the charge fell to the ground as one after another of the African witnesses produced by Chaka said that the affidavits sworn by them were made under the threat of imprisonment if they did not sign and that the affidavits were not true. Each of the witnesses testified similarly and the charge against me was withdrawn. Zulus were chuckling for many a day over Chaka's discomfiture.'

When he was in Moscow in 1930, Wolton had been asked by the Comintern executive to take steps to strengthen the African leadership of the Communist Party. Leaving his wife Molly in Moscow, where she attended the Lenin School, Wolton returned to South Africa and in 1931 arranged for Albert Nzula to be sent to Moscow for political education. Nzula was smuggled out through Cape Town boarding a ship with a passport under the name of the former I.C.U. leader Conan Doyle Modiakgotla, which one would have thought sufficient to alert

any customs officer, but which carried him safely on his way. On August 25, 1931, he arrived in Moscow under the name of Tom Jackson, and enrolled at the Lenin School, the first African from South Africa to enter its portals. In later months and years Nzula was followed by Moses Kotane, Edwin Mofutsanyana, J.B. Marks and others who were to play a leading role in the affairs of the Communist Party in South Africa over succeeding decades.

The remaining year and a half of Nzula's short life were crowded with meaningful activity. In addition to his studies at the Lenin School, he began work with the Profintern (the Red International of Labour Unions) and before long became a member of its central committee. He was also an executive member of the international trade union committee of negro workers of the Profintern which published the monthly journal *The Negro Worker*, in whose pages some of his most brilliant writings appeared. The longest of these was 'The Struggle of the Negro Toilers in South Africa', which was published in series form over a period of six months. In these articles Nzula examined at length the position in the struggle of different sections of the African workers - industrial workers, miners, migratory workers, farm labourers. He analysed the character of the national liberation movement, tracing its traditions back to the colonial wars of the 19th century. He dealt with the formation of the African National Congress in 1912, the character of the peasant rebellions and the important part played by women in those movements. But the major part of his writings were devoted to the working class movements, the Communist Party and the trade unions, to strikes and demonstrations of the workers in town and country.

These articles were published in *The Negro Worker* after his death. Other articles by Nzula published in *The Negro Worker* included 'The Fusion Movement in South Africa', an analysis of the 1933-34 fusion of the Smuts and Hertzog parties; the short historical essay 'South Africa and the Imperialist War', dealing with the Mendi disaster of 1917 when 700 Africans were drowned at sea after their troopship struck a mine; 'The Coloured Workers in South Africa' and other interesting items.

Repeated continually in *The Negro Worker* over the years was the slogan of Karl Marx: 'Labour with a white skin cannot emancipate it-

self where labour with a black skin is branded.'

Nzula's interests were not confined to politics, but extended to the study of history and African culture. He engaged in research with the Association for Scientific Research in the Study of National and Colonial Problems at the Communist University for Workers of the East. One of his teachers was Andre Sik, born in 1891, the Hungarian Communist who lived in the USSR from 1915 until 1945, when he was able to return to Budapest. Sik was rightly regarded as one of the first great Marxist Africanists, and towards the end of the 1920s founded an African study centre in Moscow where later Nzula worked with Sik and other pioneer Soviet Africanists, especially Ivan Potekhin, with whom he was very friendly, and Alexander Zusmanovich. Together with them he wrote a book *The Working Class Movement and Forced Labour in Negro Africa* which for the first time chronicled the achievements of the working-class movement in Africa. While in Moscow Nzula also issued a pamphlet on South Africa entitled *Country of Diamonds and Slaves* and contributed a number of articles on South Africa to Soviet and international newspapers and journals.

Nzula also promoted knowledge of the Zulu culture among Soviet Africanists. He helped the Leningrad scientist I.L. Snegirev to learn the Zulu language, thereby enabling Snegirev to translate Zulu songs and fairy tales into Russian. In the introduction to his book *Zulu Tales* Snegirev said of Nzula: 'The translator considers it his duty to point out that the late A.T. Nzula was his teacher who gave him his knowledge of the Zulu language. It is because of his direct help and advice that much of this book exists.' Snegirev dedicated his book 'to the memory of Albert Thomas Nzula, fiery revolutionary and leading fighter for the cause of liberation of the Negro working people.'

Nzula died in hospital in Moscow on January 17, 1934, of pneumonia. His body lay in state in the Maly Hall of Trade Unions during the morning and afternoon of January 20, and was cremated at 5 p.m. on that day. Announcing his death in *Pravda*, the Executive Committee of the Profintern expressed its deep regret at the passing of 'one of the most active fighters for the national liberation movement.' An obituary notice in the *Negro Worker* concluded: 'Nzula has gone but he is not forgotten. The memory of his work and his dedication to the struggle of the workers and peasants for their liberation from the hated

imperialist rule will rouse hundreds of workers to join the ranks from which he was torn by death, to continue the battle for the liberation of the enslaved working people of South Africa.'

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BOOK REVIEWS

AN APOLOGIA FOR CHAUVINISM

The Puritans in Africa by W. de Klerk, published by Rex Collings. £5.

The author, a well known Afrikaans writer loosely described as a liberal sub-titles his 376-page book 'A Story of Afrikanerdom'. In his note of acknowledgement prefacing the book he writes: 'Last but not least, my debt is towards my own people, in whose communal life, in whose tradition I must fully share, for good or ill, for better or for worse. With them I have conducted a life-long dialogue on their particular human existence here in the far south of a vast continent.'

As the book makes clear, de Klerk himself took part in the volk discussions of the thirties and the forties which, under the guidance of the Boederbond, eventually led to the formulation of the apartheid policy. His dilemma is that, as a ware Afrikaner, he must stand by his

people and accept his share of the blame for what has been done collectively in their name; while as a liberal openly acknowledging his debt to the moral principles of 'Western civilisation' he is also obliged to dissociate himself from the unacceptable tyranny of the ruling Nationalist Government. The result is a long, rambling and confused study which leads the reader to a dead end.

As a mere writer, de Klerk has the inestimable advantage that he can dabble in history and philosophy without exposing himself to the criticism of the professionals. This is why he can describe the legislation of the Pact Government after 1924 as 'socialist nationalist' with 'no mere racial' motives, while conceding that after the outbreak of World War 2, when many of the new Nationalists were looking to Hitler Germany for inspiration: 'The tradition of socialist nationalism, in which Hertzog had played such a great part, now prepared them for long-distance appreciation of national socialism.'

Socialist nationalism converted into national socialism! A neat inversion, the sort of paradox beloved of stylists who prefer wit to logic; but a dangerous one. and de Klerk is obliged almost immediately to claim that, while in Germany millions of Jews were being sent to the gas chambers 'in the name of radical politics: a messianic, millennial idea, a socio-political ideal, the ultimate theology of politics', at the same time in South Africa: 'no Afrikaner political leader in the tradition of nationalism was as yet able to understand this.' He objects to the labelling of the war-time Nationalists as 'Malanazis'. Mr. de Klerk may want to distance himself from the taint of Nazism, but no one who reads the words of Pirow, Verwoerd, Eric Louw, Otto du Plessis and other Nationalist leaders of the day can be under any illusion as to where they stood; nor to be reminded that two of the most Nazi-minded Nationalist leaders of that time. Prime Minister Vorster and BOSS-chief Van den Bergh. are the main instigators of South Africa's latter-day imperialism dignified by the name of 'detente'.

The bulk of Mr. de Klerk's book is devoted to demonstrating the way in which Calvinism influenced the Afrikaner people, whom he describes as the Puritans in Africa, with all the virtues and vices of Puritanism. He frankly admires the men of the Broederbond who led the volk to power, he praises their dedication to the ideal of apartheid, their 'collective sense of vocation'. In one Churchillian passage he

writes of their achievement after coming to power in 1948:

'Never in history have so few legislated so pragmatically, thoroughly and religiously, in such a short time, for so many divergent groups, cultures and traditions, than the nationalist Afrikaners of the second half of the twentieth century. Never has such a small minority of all those affected done so much with such a high sense of purpose, vocation and idealism. Never have so few drawn such sharply critical attention from a wondering world. Never has such a volume of criticism been so wide of the mark.

'For almost all of it was directed against the 'harsh, oppressive policies' of the Nationalist Government; against the 'tyranny of apartheid'. *It was ineffective because it did not understand that the manifest harshness, the patent injustices, were all the oblique but necessary results of a most rational, most passionate, most radical will to restructure the world according to a vision of justice; all with a view to lasting peace, progress and prosperity.*' (De Klerk's emphasis) He compares Verwoerd with Prometheus.

What, then, went wrong? Retreating from any direct discussion of practical politics, de Klerk concludes that the South African Puritans have not properly understood the inner core of Calvinism. The death of freedom is idolatry. All human certitudes are suspect. The individual is imprisoned by the system.

'If the law can be the kind of yoke which prevents us from being fully human, how much more will it not be the case where we have enclosed ourselves within the framework of a radical political system? For this, more than anything else as we have seen, becomes the tyranny, the all-pervasive presence, of a total idea . . . All-inclusive systems of any kind hold the mind in thrall.'

De Klerk finds the assassination of Verwoerd, the martyrdom of Abram Fischer, ironical, because these events show that the creators of the new society have at the same time built into its foundations the time bomb which will eventually destroy it. And he ends on a note of religious pessimism 'To be immersed in the human situation is to assume without illusion, in the mood of playful irony, all that life requires from us. It means accepting, with the prospect of humour, conflict, struggle, disaster, death, never surrendering to depression or guilt.

but rather to the knowledge of human frailty; to meet the world as it comes, knowing that life can and should be a shining experience.'

This sort of stuff may sound fine from the pulpit, or at the graveside, but is of no help to the millions of the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa who cannot reasonably be expected to accept their knowledge of life under apartheid as a shining experience, to be taken as it comes, passively, without protest or resistance. Such rhetoric does, however, relieve De Klerk of any necessity to pass judgment on the whole notion of apartheid, or separate development, in whose name he admits grievous crimes have been committed against humanity. Nor is he obliged to propose any alternative solution to the problems confronting the country. He, personally, does not need to find a way out because, continuing to operate on the periphery of Afrikanerdom, he can accept the benefits and reject the blame at will. As a true Calvinist, he is answerable to no one except his own conscience, or his God, whom he will only confront when he is dead.

In fact, nowhere does De Klerk indicate that the basic concept of apartheid, racial separation, is unacceptable to him. He specifically approves the Bantustan concept. It is the means, not the end, which he criticises, and one is left with the suspicion that when the chips are down, and the bullets begin to fly, he will take cover in the laager, the refuge of his people, 'in whose tradition I must fully share, for good or ill, for better or for worse.' So be it: the worse for him, if he cannot or will not break away, and prefers to die in a bunker.

Peter Mackintosh

A MINOR IMPERIALIST POWER, BUT A MAJOR THREAT TO AFRICA

South Africa in Africa - a study in ideology and foreign policy. Sam C. Nolutshungu (Manchester University Press 1975)

Mr. Nolutshungu has tackled the fascinating job of describing and

analysing South Africa's foreign policy in relation to the African continent between 1945 and 1973. The main thesis he puts forward is that 'the Africa policies of South Africa remained the same during the whole period, namely, to establish an African political context which was ideologically and organisationally favourable to white minority rule in South Africa.' He succeeds in demonstrating this incontrovertibly.

The author, a black South African, set about his task in a scholarly and wide-ranging way. In addition to a great deal of library research he interviewed numerous politicians; his list of acknowledgements reads like a 'Who's Who' of Southern African statesmen and liberation movement leaders. Fussy, pedantic and occasionally muddy, his book is nevertheless streets ahead of the only other academic book in the field, James Barber's account of South Africa's foreign policy in the same period. Where the latter seldom rose above the descriptive, Nolutshungu constantly subjects the material to critical scrutiny, and his analysis has many original observations.

Least interested in the decade before his own political awareness must have begun to dawn, the author nonetheless sketches an outline of the Smuts government's imperialist designs in Southern Africa, in particular its desire to incorporate the three High Commission territories and South West Africa. He stresses Smuts' personal view that small imperialist countries must collaborate closely with the major imperialist countries. With the advent of the Nationalists in 1948 some of this could have been expected to change. But the changes were marginal. The grip on South West Africa was tightened, the hope of annexing the Protectorates lived on (and gained strength with the emergence under Verwoerd of the Bantustan blueprint). Only the Afrikaner nationalists' anti-British republicanism stood in the way of continued close Anglo-South African relations, and it proved to be insignificant in that context.

If anything, Malan was even keener than his predecessor on white South Africa's playing an active role in Africa in conjunction with the West. His 'African charter', devised before the '48 election and carried into practice after it, was a blatant statement of reactionary aims. Malan said:

'... we shall have to get together all the powers that have interests in Africa . . . - it being still at the beginning of its development, and

the native population in Africa still under the trusteeship of the Europeans, and having to remain under that for years still - we must have a pronouncement that *Africa must be preserved in its development for the Western European Christian civilisation*. . . . For example, the powers that have interests in Africa can agree that the native population should no longer be used in the battlefields of the world, and that they will not be given military training or be armed . . . (emphasis added)

In the same speech he asked rhetorically:

'If Africa is not preserved for the Western European civilisation and if Russia obtains the ascendancy in Europe, . . . and if the whole African continent is thrown open for Communist propaganda and South Africa is the magnet for the natives from the north, then I ask what the future of South Africa is going to be.'

The Communist bogey as raised by Malan harmonised well with Cold War attitudes in ruling circles in the West. The Nationalist government, alarmed by the spread of communist revolution in Asia and offended by India's opposition to apartheid, sought to preserve Africa from communism and expected to be consulted about any changes in the 'native policy' of the British colonialists. But it was a vain hope.

If Britain and France, weakened by the war, could not resist the rising tide of liberation in Africa and Asia, the South African racists certainly could not turn back the waves, much as they might have liked to. Opposed to decolonisation in Africa, the apartheid regime could do nothing to stop it - except in the immediate sub-continent, where Portugal alone was standing firm. In short, South Africa's foreign policy had largely failed by 1961 when most of the African states were independent or about to become so. As Nolutshungu says:

'whereas the Union had hoped to influence 'native policy' in the rest of Africa, the new African powers now wanted to influence 'native policy' in South Africa.' (p. 85)

The author proceeds to trace the development of South Africa's foreign policy regarding Africa in the subsequent 12 years. It is a complicated story, with many facets. Summary is impossible, so three elements will be picked out as examples. First, South Africa's relations with Malawi. The author tears to shreds the reactionary argument that Malawi's policy of collaboration with the racist regimes has been dic-

tated by its geographical position, its economic backwardness and alleged dependence on South Africa. He shows that only a small proportion of Malawi's trade was with South Africa in the sixties, the U.K. being far and away Malawi's major trade-and-aid partner, with Rhodesia a long way behind as a second-string trade partner. As for the Malawian labour on SA's mines, he shows that it accounted for three quarters of the remittances from Malawians working outside their country in the period 1958-67. The Malawi government, viewing labour as an export commodity, and quantifying its returns, ranked labour as the third main export earner after tea and tobacco. But as Nolutshungu points out, this viewpoint is based on narrow budgetary advantages and does not look at the effects on the people and country as a whole.

Decisive proof of how unnecessary it was for Banda to continue the traditional labour recruiting for the gold mines of the apartheid economy has now been given by the curtailment of that recruiting over the past two years. which was done suddenly, without any apparent attempt to provide alternative employment, and yet - it seems - without disastrous consequences to Malawi. It could have been done ten years previously. The way it was done, and some hasty trimming of Malawi's sails by Dr. Banda since the advent of the Frelimo government, suggest that Nolutshungu is right to treat the Banda regime as an inherently unstable one.

The author fares less well in his careful but not always clear account of Zambia's relations with South Africa. One can sympathise with his difficulties. Where the Verwoerd and Vorster regimes have been consistent in trying to lure Zambia to their side, mixing crude threats with subtle diplomacy, Zambia has adopted a policy that some will regard as ambivalent, others as vacillating, even contradictory, its twists and turns affected by many complex considerations, including the state of the economy (especially the price of copper), relations with Britain, the state of the Rhodesian crisis, relations with the OAU and especially with other East African countries, etc. The author plumps for a charitable explanation of all this:

'Kaunda's policy is best understood as a deliberate and elaborate act of balancing the ambiguity of practical policy with his unambiguous hostility to the South African regime. His task was to avoid the 'logic of hostility' precipitating a physical - economic or military -

confrontation at a time when the Zambian State could not, by any intelligent estimate, have survived it.'

All South Africans involved in the liberation struggle will readily concede that Zambia has been placed in a very difficult situation, but all would also agree that for any African government to place its trust in Vorster's blandishments, and to co-operate with South Africa's imperialist aims and activities, is to create far more dangers for itself than firm opposition to apartheid could possibly incur. The current Angolan crisis illustrates this truth very vividly.

Nolutshungu's book was written before Vorster's new 'detente' offensive surfaced towards the end of 1974. What he says about the previous 'dialogue' offensive can thus be read in the light of what followed, and his account is in no way outdated by subsequent events. He is aware that France's role in softening up its former African colonies and pushing some of them into South Africa's arms has been important; but he has not been able to establish how the Franco-South African axis has influenced the Francophone states. Diplomacy being the secret game it is, this failure is not surprising. He is also aware that it is too simple and schematic to equate progressive states in Africa with opposition to apartheid and support for liberation struggles or neo-colonialist states with practitioners of dialogue. He writes (p. 291) :

'It would be a mistake to suppose that the states which oppose 'dialogue' were not apprehensive of the possibility of the Cold War being intensified in Africa in consequence of the revolutionary struggles in southern Africa, or that they were indifferent to the effect their support for a militant stand on South Africa might have on their relations with the former metropolitan powers . . . Rather, it is more likely that many did not feel that they were called upon to choose between the order which prevailed and the alternative future which Houphouet-Boigny and others seemed to have in mind. In a way, also, commitment to the O.A.U., with which the militant stand on apartheid is closely connected, was a means of avoiding precisely the polar division of the continent which the Ivory Coast leader said he feared.'

Yet the overall impression left by the book is an unsatisfying one. The author has not consistently distinguished between the foreign policy (the aims, strategy and diplomatic activities) of the South African government, and (which is much more complex) its actual re-

lations (economic, political, etc.) with the countries of Africa, especially Southern Africa. Mostly in the first part of the book he deals with the former, but more and more the subject matter widens into the latter. When it comes to inter-state relations the author's conceptual limitations are shown up badly. His method being essentially idealist (in the philosophical sense), and foreign policy, in his view, a function of ideology (a term which he uses quite unscientifically), he is unable to provide a really convincing analysis, and one is left with tantalising insights which add up to much less than the subject demands.

Politically Nolutshungu is anxious to appear on the side of the angels, but he hedges his bets, and seems reluctant to commit himself too far in any particular direction, (and especially not in a Marxist direction). A revealing illustration of this is his treatment of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. In the main text he criticises the stance of Buthelezi and others as being at best, ambiguous, and

'at worst, anyone who took such a view merely ended by contributing, through the diversionary power of his illusions, to the very system which grieved him . . . the force of the example of anti-apartheid leaders working within the system was to confer legitimacy on the collaborative roles for blacks which were being institutionalised.'

Wordy, but clear enough, and much the same as the liberation movements have been saying for years. But the author adds a long footnote completely undermining the political value of his assessment; in it he says, amongst other things:

'This is not intended as a judgement on personal political-moral positions. It is merely an assessment of objective effects: it cannot, and is not intended to, impeach the moral validity of the sort of position taken up by, say, Buthelezi.' (p. 118 n.)

South Africa's doomed adventurist aggression in Angola, its apparent success in forging an alliance with Zaire and Zambia against the liberation movements, and its continuing influence on the course of events in Zimbabwe, remind us how dangerous is the apartheid regime, how reckless and destructive are the actions flowing from its policies. Nolutshungu's conclusion is obviously right: what guarantees the failure of South Africa's foreign policy in Africa is its domestic policy, apartheid. Africa will not accept apartheid, and Africa will not stand by and allow

its newly decolonised areas to be recolonised for the West by the South African racists. Today that recolonisation is being attempted in Angola under guise of an anti-communist crusade which echoes all too loudly the outlook of Malan's government a quarter of a century ago. But in that time the world has changed: the national liberation movement in Africa and Asia is infinitely stronger now than it was then; the capacity of the socialist world to support the beleaguered vanguards of the national liberation movements is vastly increased; and the imperialist system of international capitalism is wracked with crisis as never before. The issue in Angola and indeed in South Africa itself is not communism versus the interests of the West (as the reactionaries claim). It is national liberation and social emancipation versus colonialism, racism and apartheid. The Angolan people, led by the MPLA, have dealt out a stinging rebuff to Vorster's troops - the first ever real military setback of the apartheid armies. It will not be the last . . .

J. Villiers

Letter to the Editor

RESISTING FASCIST INTERROGATION

From an Ex-Prisoner

The letter from Florence Modisane published in the *African Communist* recently (No. 62 Third Quarter 1975) under the title 'Resisting Fascist Interrogation' does indeed over-simplify what is a very complex question.

Our comrade is right when she stresses that every revolutionary has the duty to go into interrogation determined not to cooperate, determined to resist to the death if need be, rejecting the defeatist concept of 'everyone talks in the end' because he knows from his own revolutionary traditions, from the inspiring examples set by the heroes of revolutionary movements that the torturer can be and often is frustrated and defeated.

But Comrade Modisane is wrong, and very wrong indeed, in her sweeping condemnation of every comrade who cracks under interrogation as a cowardly traitor unfit to remain in the collective, with no right henceforth to regard himself or herself as part of the army of liberation.

There are those who, like the individual Julius Fucik describes and condemns, turn craven when faced with the reality of imminent torture and capitulate without resistance. There are not many of those. There are those, too, who go over to the enemy completely and actively assist the enemy in hounding and persecuting their former comrades. They number fewer still.

The overwhelming majority of those comrades who crack under torture, however, do not fall into either of those two categories, as every comrade who has undergone the experience of interrogation under torture or has been imprisoned well knows.

An underground organisation faces its most severe test when its enemy drops kid-glove methods of intimidation and resorts to torture as a regular feature of interrogation in his efforts to destroy the organisation. An historic experience everywhere gives proof enough that torture in the hands of trained, ruthless and experienced practitioners is a most formidable weapon indeed.

Comrade Florence takes this into account, but inadequately I think, when she remarks that the movement cannot afford the 'luxury' of counting on all comrades refusing to assist the enemy or revealing important matters when under the 'pressure of fascist interrogation'.

I would put a somewhat different emphasis on it: once our enemies resort to torture on a widespread scale, it is imperative for the movement to work on the assumption that every single one of its members is at risk and, being human, vulnerable. A revolutionary underground movement therefore not only does its utmost to keep the political commitment and fighting spirit of its members at the highest possible level but also, and equally important, adopts structures and methods of work designed to ensure continuity even when whole sections are destroyed from time to time by enemy use of torture.

Fascist police resort to torture because they know it brings results, because they know that by its use they can wring information out of men and women who would not otherwise give them a shred of information if interrogated by any other means.

Interrogation under torture is not simply or solely a test of political commitment, a test of loyalty, a test of courage. It is also a test of physical and psychological endurance, and these are attributes which by their very nature vary in quality from individual to individual, and even from time to time in the same individual.

There are many comrades in prison today who cracked under torture. They did so not because they were or are cowards - many indeed have courage above the average - but because they were stretched, de-

spite all their resolve, beyond the limits of their individual threshold of endurance. They fought as hard as they could – and were beaten. But the majority of them have not remained beaten. Their political commitment remains firm and their loyalty to the movement unshaken.

Some of them form part now of a most important section of the revolutionary collective – that of the political prisoners. They suffer and endure imprisonment together with the fortunate few who were arrested and sentenced without being subjected to torture, together with those who came through the ordeal of torture unconquered.

The solidarity and high fighting morale which is such a marked feature of our political prisoners would certainly not be what it is if those comrades - few or many - of truly heroic stature were to adopt a holier-than-thou attitude towards their weaker comrades. They know what torture means better than anyone, and make no easy or sweeping judgments.

To be beaten into submission under torture is a deeply-wounding, humiliating experience, and we must never forget that, cowards and traitors apart, the majority of those who were beaten into submission were and still are our comrades in the struggle. They went into battle in the name and in the service of the movement, and they were captured and cruelly wounded in the service of the movement.

An army does not rail against those of its troops who are defeated in the heat of battle against great odds. It does not, above all, forsake its wounded. It does everything it can to succour them, to nurse them back to health, to make them as fighting fit again as quickly and as completely as the nature of their wounds and conditions of battle permit.



ZIONISM IS A MOVEMENT OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The UN General Assembly endorsed on November 10, 1975 three important resolutions, concerning the recognition of the Arab Palestine people's rights, the participation of the PLO at every Middle East forum, including the Geneva peace talks; the establishment of a 20-member commission concerning the implementation of the Palestine people's right to self-determination; the definition of zionism as a movement of racism and racial discrimination.

The position of the Communist Party of Israel concerning these resolutions has been expressed in a speech in the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) by comrade *Meir Vilner*, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel. The following are excerpts from his speech.

MEIR VILNER ON U.N. RESOLUTION ABOUT ZIONISM (Knesset, October 20, 1975)

(The Knesset had on its agenda a debate following a government statement on the resolution in the third commission of the UN General Assembly, concerning zionism and racialism).

How did we arrive at such a situation (that UN General Assembly debates on the racist character of the Zionist ideology and practice)?

It is the direct result of Israel's occupation of Arab territories continuing now the ninth year already, which also is a constant danger to peace in the region and the world. It is the direct result of the absolute negation (from the side of Israel's rulers) of the national rights of the Arab Palestine people, its right to self-determination and to establish its own sovereign state alongside Israel. It is the direct result of the brutal oppression practised against the Palestine inhabitants of the occupied territories, the suppression of freedom of speech and freedom of the press there, of mass arrests and imprisonment, of expulsion (of political leaders, among them many communists) from their homeland and the destruction of homes as a 'collective punishment', the massive infringements of international conventions and the Human Rights of the best sons of the Arab Palestine people, who long for peace with Israel on the basis of mutual respect of national rights.

The deliberations in the UN general Assembly are taking place precisely at a time when the (Israeli) colonization of the occupied areas in the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Rafah region (northern Sinai) and in Eastern Jerusalem is intensified. (Official) statements are made every so often that there will never be a withdrawal (from occupied territories) even as a price for peace.

The deliberations at the UN General Assembly are taking place precisely at a time, when inside Israel herself the policy of discrimination and suppression of the national (Arab) minority is intensified. Plans are ready (and published) for the expropriation of the rest of the landed property of the Arab citizens of Israel - and this after the Arab fellahen and beduins have already been robbed of most of their landed property and expelled from it long since. The blueprint for the so-called (renewed on an intensified scale) 'Judaisation of the Galilee' is ready. This is a plan of development of Jewish settlements and towns in this (northern) district and the establishment of new ones, while strangling Arab villages, towns and 'resettling' the Arabs by expulsion. The policy of confiscation of Arab soil and the absolute refusal of giving any construction and building licences in Arab towns and villages aimed at restricting the Arab population.

These things - and they are only a small choice of examples - are shocking to all conscious minded people in Israel and to people all over the world.

This policy is not only directed against the Arab people of Palestine, but it also engenders a grave danger for Israel, her future as a state in the Middle East and for the Israeli people in a neighbourhood of Arab peoples.

And such a policy is *defined by you* (the government) as *zionism and its practical implementation*.

Alas, what great wonder, that the policy of national discrimination and oppression, the policy of occupation and territorial annexations is defined as exactly what you yourself defined it!

We Jews especially, who suffered so much in history at the hands of racists and anti-semites, should avoid using a policy of national discrimination and suppression (against the national minority) in Israel and from a colonialist policy against the Arab Palestine people and the neighbouring Arab states. Precisely because we, the Jews, have suffered so much from racism, the policy of the government (of the Jewish State), combined with that of the (right extremist 'opposition') Likud block, is a tenfold shame.

Fighting this policy, we, the communists, not only defend justice in respect to the Arabs, but not less so, we defend the existence, the security and the future of Israel, and the prospects of peace. And there are now real possibilities to reach peace. If you would have given a hand to the efforts to reach a real peace, instead of sabotaging them, while nourishing illusions that with the support of Washington you may be able to annex (Arab) territories and avoid the establishment of a Palestine state - then, many things would have appeared in another light.

Our opposition to zionist ideology and practice are well known. We do not look upon zionism as being a 'national liberation movement', but as it is in fact, namely, as a bourgeois-nationalist and reactionary movement.

It is a *gross perversity and a crude distortion of facts*, if (as the zionist leadership and the Israeli government circles do) *the concept*

'zionism' is equated with the concept 'Jews', 'Israel', or 'Israeli people'. Therefore it is absurd to talk of the UN resolutions on zionism being resolutions 'against Jews', or 'anti-Israeli', 'anti-semitic' ones.

·We are convinced that precisely the government policy - together with the one of Likud - is anti-Israeli, because it very gravely endangers Israel.

We, the Israeli communists, view as the most important and most crucial task at the present, the struggle for peace and avoidance of a new sanguinary war, the saving of the lives of our youth from further slaughter. For these, our holy tasks, we call for a united front of all forces, circles and personalities with a realistic outlook, with a heart for national responsibility towards the fate of Israei and her people - notwithstanding their political affiliation or adherence to ideological outlooks and among them also zionists. The decisive division of forces in present Israel should not be on an ideological basis, but on a definite political one: Who is for a just, realistic and lasting peace - or, Who is against it? The decision upon this is the one which will decide our future.

Therefore, we also think, that the deliberations in the Knesset on the ideological field, as put upon the agenda in relation to the UN resolution on zionism and its racial character, serves only to divert the mind from the most important matters, such as the struggle for a just and lasting peace, for avoiding new bloodshed, and from the workers' class struggles.

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