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THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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COVER PICTURE: The flag of the South African Communist Party was hoisted by demonstrators at the funeral of community leaders in Cradock last July.



EDITORIAL NOTES

ANC'S REPLY TO THE STATE OF EMERGENCY

“Long live the African National Congress!

“Long live the South African Communist Party!

“Long live the South African Congress of Trade Unions!

“Forward to battle on all fronts, on every front!”

With these rousing slogans the President of the African National Congress, O.R. Tambo, brought the 2nd national consultative congress of the African National Congress to a close on June 23 last, after 8 days of intensive debate and discussion by the 242 delegates who had been brought

together from all corners of the globe. The delegates shouted their enthusiastic responses — “long live” and “forward” — and then sang the national anthem in a spirit of solemn dedication to struggle. Afterwards, chanting freedom songs, they surged out of the conference hall and, in the glare of floodlights in the crisp night air outside, demonstrated their support for their leaders with a fiery war-dance under the appreciative gaze of their President.

If the Botha regime and its security chiefs had been hoping for a crack to appear at the ANC conference, they must have been grievously disappointed by the outcome. In his speech opening the conference on June 16, President Tambo had forecast:

“The days we will spend here will live forever in the records of the struggle for national liberation as marking a turning point in the history of all the people of South Africa. Our conference itself will be remembered by our people as a council-of-war that planned the seizure of power by these masses, the penultimate convention that gave the order for us to take our country through the terrible but cleansing fires of revolutionary war to a condition of peace, democracy and the fulfilment of our people who have already suffered far too much and far too long”.

The very holding of the conference, in the middle of a liberation war, under the noses of the enemy, was in itself a staggering achievement — a demonstration of courage and determination. Only a few days previously, the enemy had launched his barbarous attack on Gaborone in Botswana, killing innocent and defenceless men, women and children as they slept in their beds. The conference itself was held only a couple of hundred miles from the huge South African military base in the Caprivi strip — but even if the enemy had physically attacked the conference and blasted the delegates into oblivion (as he had the capacity to do), the fundamental contradiction between the interests of the racist regime and those of the majority of the population would have remained unaltered. The commitment of the black majority to strive for liberation would not have been quenched. On the contrary, it would have been intensified.

This has been proved by the Botha regime’s resort to emergency powers — an open confession that its attempt to “pacify” the people through a combination of the carrot and the stick was an abysmal failure. Indeed, the government is patently no longer able to govern in the old way. In the townships, its writ does not run at all, its institutions have been destroyed, its emissaries and stooges driven out. The police and military, with the aid of bullets, batons, tear gas, dogs, agents provocateur and undercover assassins, can manage to blast their way into and out of the townships, but all attempts to establish any form of civil authority responsible or responsive to Pretoria

have come to nothing. Schools and universities are shut down. An economic boycott has been launched which has threatened the very basis of the white economy in the urban areas.

In the townships, the people rule, OK? In some areas we see the beginnings even of an alternative civil power set up by the people in place of the stooge councils which have been destroyed. It was in the hope of preventing this process from extending further that the Botha regime resorted to emergency rule last July, blaming its predicament on the “total onslaught” by international Communism which it once again held responsible for all its troubles. But the declaration of a state of emergency solved nothing. On the contrary, it worsened the plight of the regime, making it even more difficult to restore any semblance of peace or order. The drive for the imposition of international sanctions was intensified, with even Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl and their friends under ever-increasing pressure to take effective action. Big business took fright, investors panicked, the rand collapsed and the South African economy faced its biggest crisis since the 1930s.

Botha's resort to naked force is not only useless but counter-productive. Today neither the ANC nor the SACP can be killed by beheading their leadership. Those 242 delegates who attended the ANC conference in Zambia last June represented many thousands of ANC members — in the townships at home, and in the camps and missions in Africa and elsewhere abroad — who had been preparing for the conference and discussing its draft reports for many months beforehand. If need be, those 242 delegates could have been replaced by another 242 delegates elected from the same constituencies, and with the same determination to carry on the struggle until final victory. And beyond the organised ranks of the ANC and the SACP are the masses of the South African people who have been roused to a level of political consciousness today which is being displayed through their actions from end to end of our country, bringing the administration to its knees and finally compelling the declaration of a state of emergency.

The ideas and ideals for which the ANC and SACP stand are so deeply rooted in the people that not all the terror perpetrated by the regime under the blanket of the emergency could wipe them out. After all there is not much more the regime can do than it has already done. Under the Internal Security Act it has had all the powers it needs. It has jailed thousands of people without trial, tortured prisoners to death under “interrogation”, launched treason trial after treason trial, organised death squads to kidnap and murder the people's leaders. With its emergency powers it merely gave the police

and military carte blanche to jail, kidnap, torture and murder without fear of redress, attempting to bring “peace” to South Africa through an intensification of terror. Under the blanket of the emergency the regime has resorted to the foulest stratagems, inciting black against black, African against Indian, in the long discredited imperialist tradition of “divide and rule”. Atrocities and pogroms carried out by the agents of the regime are advanced as justification for the retention of power in white hands. At the time of the shameful attack on an Indian community near Durban last August we saw Buthelezi join hands with Botha to make the disgusting accusation that the UDF and the ANC were to blame when the real responsibility for what happened lay closer to their own door. But as our whole history cries out, these tactics never work. On the contrary, they only intensify the contradictions in our society, raise still higher the level of political consciousness of the people, stiffen their opposition, steel their determination, strengthen their organisation, send thousands more young people flocking to join the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people’s army.

Funeral Politics

The futility of the regime is nowhere demonstrated more revealingly than in its attempt to place a curb on township funerals. After all, it was in the wake of the abductions, beatings and killings in the townships in pre-emergency days that funerals inevitably became political demonstrations, and the flags and banners of the ANC and SACP were hoisted high in the air. It is the regime’s terror which has produced the death-defying courage of our youth. The more repression is intensified, the less likelihood there is of peace. The passion of the people will not be doused by petty proclamations.

It was the military themselves who long ago pointed out to the apartheid regime that they could contribute only 20% to a peaceful solution, and the remaining 80% would have to come from the politicians. This was the origin of Botha’s “reforms”, which he mistakenly hoped would be accepted as the 80% prescribed by the military, but which most interpreted as just a crude attempt to hoodwink not only the people of South Africa, but also apartheid’s critics abroad who were stoking up the disinvestment campaign and clamouring for sanctions.

Yet it is perhaps a mistake to discuss Botha’s “reforms” as purely “cosmetic”. They are more than that. They do not, of course, satisfy the legitimate demands of the people — especially the African majority — but some of them represent a reversal of regime policy and doctrine which is not

without significance. We may scorn the tricameral parliament as a farce, but we cannot dismiss as purely cosmetic, for example, the alterations in trade union law which have facilitated the development of the independent trade union movement and made it possible for African workers to organise legally, take part in collective bargaining and go on strike, albeit with many constraints. Nor can we oppose the scrapping of the Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts, or the colour bar on the mines — the last refuge of job reservation, which Botha has promised to end by the beginning of 1986. And there are many other concessions of a similar kind which have been prised out of a reluctant regime by the mounting tide of internal and external pressure: freehold rights in the townships, freer movement of African labour in both urban areas and Bantustans, the abolition of the Prohibition of Political Interference Act etc.

It is true that all these “reforms”, as Nelson Mandela has pointed out, are mere “pinpricks”. They affect only a tiny handful and leave the fundamental structure of apartheid intact; white supremacy remains. What then is their purpose?

In our view they are clearly part of a strategy which has been worked out by the Botha regime and its “constructive engagement” partners in the west to defuse the South African revolution. Open expression of the thinking behind “reform” was given by Professor Blackie Swart, head of the industrial relations research unit at the University of Stellenbosch and a former member of the Government’s National Manpower Commission, in an appeal widely publicised in the press calling on the government and employers not to use strong-arm tactics against the independent trade union movement. Breaking the present collective bargaining structures could give some companies short-term benefits, he said, but would have disastrous long-term consequences and could lead to unmanageable industrial unrest not necessarily related directly to the work situation.

“My feeling is that if, over the next 18 months to two years, the unions fail to gain reasonable benefits from the negotiating table, they will lose a large part of their power base, become weaker and lose their influence which will result in a shift towards more politically motivated organisations. Unions which fail at the negotiating table and see their influence dwindling may have no alternative but to become more politically motivated’. (*Star* 18.5.1985).

In other words, he is appealing to the bosses to let the unions succeed in negotiations for higher wages and better conditions because failure at the negotiating table would throw the workers into the arms of the ANC and SACP. This explains why so many employers recognised the relevant trade union and allowed it to function. This explains why millions of rand are

being channelled by the ICFTU, AFL-CIO and other bodies towards South African unions which it is hoped will develop into a "third force," drawing the workers away from the ANC. This explains the grant of millions of dollars and pounds by western governments and institutions to "cream off" bright students, trade unionists and even "agitators" for training and influencing to serve imperialist interests.

In his presidential address to the ANC conference President Tambo explained how "through struggle, in which we put to the fore our policy, strategy and tactics, while continuing to intensify the struggle against the apartheid regime, at home and abroad, we defeated this attempt to create a 'Third Force'. The ANC alerted the people to the dangers of the enemy's strategy and called on them to intensify the fight. "We charged them with the task to make the country ungovernable and to defeat the cunning enemy manoeuvre represented by the amended apartheid constitution. And to that call and that challenge our people have responded with unequalled enthusiasm, persistence and courage". And President Tambo presciently warned:

"The apartheid system is in a deep and permanent general crisis from which it cannot extricate itself. The apartheid regime cannot rule as before. It has therefore brought its military forces into the centre of the state structures and is ready to declare martial law when the need arises. The widespread and increasing use of the army in the effort to suppress the mass struggle in our country, even before martial law is invoked, reflects the depth of the crisis engulfing the racist regime".

This was the perspective which confronted the ANC conference. The delegates were fully aware of the dangers that lay ahead, but calmly and without panic went about discussing their plans. Angry at the massacres and murders carried out daily by Botha's assassination squads, they worked out the strategy and tactics needed to destroy the apartheid state machinery. They devised means to strengthen the presence of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe within the country so as to be able to take advantage of the rising mass struggles of the people and lead them towards the seizure of power through a combination of mass political action and armed struggle.

Democracy in Action

The conference was above all an inspiring demonstration of democracy in action. The leadership openly acknowledged mistakes, the rank and file delegates openly voiced their criticisms. Far from the platform imposing its will on the floor, if anything it was the other way around, and the conference decisions bore the emphatic stamp of the majority will. No delegate with a grievance was reduced to silence; no one left the scene feeling he had had no

chance to speak his mind. At the end of the proceedings the entire executive resigned and submitted themselves for re-election. Had there been a wish for fundamental change, this is where it would have expressed itself. By re-electing the overwhelming majority of the outgoing executive, adding to their number some new blood, the conference decisively expressed its wish for continuity, its confidence in the ANC leadership and declared its willingness to follow them on the course that had been chartered.

Where does that course lead? In the words of the conference communique:

“Conference agreed that the Freedom Charter provides the basis for the satisfaction of the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of our people. In this regard, the participants agreed that it was important that we should win as many whites as possible to our side. We should also adhere to our opposition to and our struggle against the Bantustans as well as the apartheid tricameral parliament and related institutions. We must continue to pose the alternative of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa”.

The conference resolution “opening the doors” of the African National Congress to South Africans of all races (two Indians, two Coloureds and one white were elected to the executive which was previously all-African) was a convincing demonstration of ANC self-confidence and maturity. The resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority, with only two delegates voting against and three abstaining. This was no sign of a split, hesitation or uncertainty, but an unambiguous declaration by the African majority that they wished their national liberation organisation to reflect their determination to create a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa on the lines set out in the Freedom Charter.

In the dark days of emergency rule and state terror through which South Africa is passing, more and more people are realising that the strategy and tactics of the ANC provide the only answer to the chaos and misery flowing from the policies of the apartheid regime. The strife and conflict which is tearing our country apart must be brought to an end. The ANC’s consultative conference has shown the way.

A BROTHERLY ALLIANCE

Among the host of fraternal greetings sent to the ANC’s Consultative Conference from all over the world was the following message sent by the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party:

“The South African Communist Party sends warmest fraternal greetings to the 1985 Consultative Conference of the African National Congress and

wishes it every success in its deliberations. Your Conference marks an historic milestone along the road to liberation and will speed up the pace of the liberation forces in their forward march to inevitable victory.

“The South African Communist Party has a long history of association with the ANC — an association which has now developed into a brotherly alliance. Our Party bears the proud record of having been among the pioneers of our land proclaiming the goal of a South Africa without any form of colour discrimination and exploitation of man by man. At a very early stage in our development — under the slogan of a Black Republic — we adumbrated the policy of complete unconditional national liberation which is now the common aim of the ANC, the CP and our whole liberation front.

“What explains the unique and brotherly relationship between our two organisations? The answer was clearly spelt out by our General Secretary, Comrade Moses Mabhida, when he said:

“Our Party’s relationship with the ANC is based on mutual trust, reciprocity, comradeship in battle and a common struggle for national liberation. Our unity of aims and methods of struggle are a rare instance of positive alignment between the forces of class struggle and national liberation”.

“From the earliest days communists have worked unstintingly to strengthen the ANC. The selfless work of communist and liberation giants such as JB Marks, Moses Kotane, Yusuf Dadoo and Bram Fischer will rank among the most outstanding contributions to the growth and defence of the liberation movement. We mention these names (and there are many others) because they symbolise the fact that our collaboration with the ANC is not a passing formality; it is an act of love for, and dedication to, the objectives of freedom and true liberation. You deservedly stand unchallenged today at the head of our liberation alliance. In this role, we are at your side. We are fellow freedom fighters sharing the same trench and will remain at your side until the flag of Black, Green and Gold is raised over the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

“We are confident that your Conference will be a major step in the direction of cementing the unity of all progressive forces and raising the level of struggle among all sections of the oppressed people of South Africa.

“The South African Communist Party, as the political vanguard of the working class, pledges to do its utmost to ensure that your decisions are carried on to the field of struggle and implemented.

“We pledge to strengthen the alliance between our two organisations in every possible way.

“Dear Comrades and Brothers: Your victories are our victories. Let us march forward side by side to freedom.

**“LONG LIVE THE ANC!
“LONG LIVE THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE ANC AND THE
SACP!
“FORWARD TO PEOPLE’S POWER!”**

“SOFT” AND “HARD” TARGETS

Almost without exception the South African and foreign press have discussed the decisions of the ANC’s consultative conference mainly in relation to the abolition of the distinction between “soft” and “hard” targets in operations by the people’s army Umkhonto we Sizwe. This has almost invariably been interpreted as a decision by the ANC to go for “soft” targets in future, to shoot down white civilians, pregnant women and children, to indulge in an orgy of slaughter, bloodshed and general mayhem in order to achieve its objectives. By concentrating attention only on this aspect of ANC policy, the scribes seek to justify their classification of the ANC as a “terrorist” organisation, and freely label our freedom fighters as “terrorists” who deserve no support or mercy from the civilised world.

The liberation movement must not fall into the enemy’s trap and allow itself or its activities to be pigeonholed in a manner that promotes the enemy’s objectives. The ANC’s consultative conference took no decision to mount an offensive against whites or civilians, to go for so-called “soft” targets (civilians) in preference to “hard” ones (presumably military and police personnel, government institutions and the like). Any such decision would have been contrary to the ANC’s principles and objectives, as well as counter-productive. The ANC is not out to alienate but to win friends and influence people amongst all sections of the population.

What the ANC conference did decide, most emphatically, was that the people had been the victims of state terrorism for far too long and were now determined not only to defend themselves but to raise the level of struggle against oppression until final victory was achieved. In his remarks at the opening of the conference, President Tambo declared:

“We meet two days after Pretoria’s assassination squads invaded the Republic of Botswana and murdered South Africans, among them members of the ANC, as well as citizens of Botswana and foreign nationals — men, women and children. Only last month the South African racists killed yet another comrade in Gaborone (Vernon Nkadimeng, son of John Nkadimeng, the general secretary of the South African Congress of trade unions, killed by a car bomb — Ed.)

"We have also just lost nine comrades in Angola, victims of an act of terror by our enemies. Our chief representative in Zimbabwe also died (Joe Gqabi, also killed by a car bomb — Ed.)

"Today is June 16, the 9th anniversary of the Soweto uprising. The bloody repression that the Pretoria regime unleashed on that day continues. Inside our country, patriots are killed every day.

"The moment has come when we should avenge these martyrs. The cause for which they perished will emerge victorious. The crime of apartheid which is responsible for their deaths must be suppressed.

"The darkness that has shrouded our country for so long is now lit by flames that are consuming the accumulated refuse of centuries of colonialism and racism. For us, these flames are like a beacon which draws us faster to our goal ... Our people want freedom now. They want to govern and determine the destiny of the country today and not tomorrow. They have lost patience with all ideas that liberation can be postponed for any reason whatsoever. They measure the purpose of life by no other standard than that it should have been spent in the struggle for liberation of our country. They have therefore shed all fear of death because the words *to live* have acquired the same meaning as the words *to be free*."

The activities of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe have in the past been marked by caution and restraint in the choice of targets and the means of attack. Care has been taken to avoid unnecessary casualties among civilians, and on occasion targets have been switched for this reason. But the enemy, far from respecting this restraint, has responded with ever-increasing ferocity and brutality. In the townships the police and military hunt down people like animals, shooting them dead, attacking them with dogs and whips. At night gangs of police and their agents, their faces concealed by balaclavas and some in civilian clothes, drag men, women and children from their beds or round them up in the streets and haul them away. Some simply disappear and are never seen again. Others are found dead miles away from where they were seized, their bodies mutilated or burnt beyond recognition.

The London *Times* reported on July 8, 1985:

"Policemen wearing balaclava helmets raided the black township of Duduza east of Johannesburg last Friday and killed between two and six people ... A police spokesman in Pretoria, Lt. J.C. Barnard, confirmed that a police unit had visited the township 'to root out criminal elements'. He said this was a routine function of the police."

The *Cape Times* reported on July 1, 1985:

"The bodies of two of four community leaders who went missing on Thursday night have been found near the burnt-out shell of their car outside PE (Port Elizabeth). The other two men are still missing. Mr Sicelo Mhlawuli, an Oudshoorn teacher, was found in the bush... He had been stabbed and set alight, and his right hand severed". The mutilated bodies of the other two were found later.

Mr Murphison Morobe, acting publicity secretary of the United Democratic Front, said on July 4 that acts of terror were perpetrated by the regime in areas where the people's resistance was strongest.

"He said the toll of terror thus far was 27 people missing in the Eastern Cape, Transval and the Free State — at least 20 activists in Duduza and Soweto being on the hit lists with one person dying as a result, and at the least 11 other 'political assassinations'. The state of terror and the occupation of black townships by the SADF and the SAP made it difficult to establish what had happened to the many people who had disappeared." (*The Sowetan* 5.7.1985)

Since Mr Morobe spoke the scale and ferocity of the regime's attacks on the people have increased. And there has been a new upsurge in state terrorism. On the night of August 1, 1985, Mrs Victoria Mxenge, one of the defence lawyers in the Maritzburg trial of 16 UDF leaders, was gunned down outside her home by police agents who were waiting for her in the shadows. Four years earlier, In November 1981, her husband Griffiths Mxenge, also a lawyer and people's leader, was lured from his home and hacked to death by the hired assassins of the regime. Nor is it only in the townships that the savagery of the regime is to be encountered. A young white serviceman, in court applying for classification as a religious objector because he was not willing to use weapons, testified:

"I was told a story about an incident at the border when a corporal ordered the young rifleman to shoot the baby on the back of a woman who was being questioned about the presence of terrorists. When she was unable to reply to the questions the baby was shot and then the mother". (*Star* 25.5.85)

On the very same day the *Star* was reporting the Minister of Constitutional Development, Chris Heunis, as having "told foreign and local newsmen that the government could not at this stage commit itself to a declaration of intent to negotiate power-sharing with blacks".

The exclusion of the black majority from power-sharing is in itself an act of terror by the white minority regime, which is forced in consequence to rule not by consensus but by the gun. That apartheid is the main source of racial friction and conflict in South Africa has now been admitted by none other than the Human Sciences Research Council, a government founded and funded body, which in a report on a four-year study by 200 researchers, 11 work committees and a main committee,

"singles out entrenched separation, population registration, a racially-bound legal system, unequal education, and economic and job restrictions as contributing to mistrust and resentment. It describes classical apartheid as a failure and ... calls for the sharing of political power and the broadening of democracy". (*Star* 2.7.1985.)

Not surprisingly the HSRC report has been attacked for giving aid and comfort to the "terrorists" — though it should be noted that it is the real terrorists, the racists and their allies, who complain loudest about it.

Weapon of Imperialism and Racism

We have long known that South African terrorism is not confined to South African territory. The atrocities of Kassinga, Matola, Maseru and Botswana, the book and car bombings, have resulted in the killing and maiming of thousands of defenceless men, women and children in recent years. In fact, South Africa's terrorism has fuelled the anti-apartheid campaign world-wide, forcing even the United States Congress to devise a sanctions bill in response to popular pressure, and in open contradiction of President Reagan's policy of "constructive engagement".

Yet constructive engagement, and the terrorism it encourages, remain as the policy of the Reagan Administration. While Reagan last July was calling for action against what he described as a "confederation of terrorist states" — Iran, Libya, North Korea, Cuba and Nicaragua — and highlighting their "close ties with Moscow", the United States itself in co-operation with South Africa was organising an international meeting of the world's real terrorists at the UNITA base of Jamba where representatives of the bandit gangs fighting against Angola, Nicaragua, Laos, Kampuchea, Afghanistan and Cuba discussed plans to create a permanent alliance to oppose the spread of "Soviet imperialism" and promote "democracy" throughout the world. According to press reports, Reagan sent a message of greetings to the meeting and an invitation was issued for the holding of a "first world congress of anti-communist rebels" in Washington.

Reagan and Botha, who fulminate against terrorism and terrorists, thus take to their bosoms the MNR and UNITA assassins in Mozambique and Angola, the contras who mutilate the bodies of their Nicaraguan victims, the Pol Pot mass murderers who wiped out half the population of Kampuchea, the anti-Castro Cuban exiles and the assorted bands of hired mercenaries who in the name of anti-Communism have perpetrated some of the most ghastly atrocities in modern history in order to hold back social advance by the peoples of the underdeveloped countries and make the world safer for capitalism.

The hypocrisy of Reagan and Botha has nowhere been exposed so clearly as in their relations with Angola. Both were parties of the Lusaka agreement of February 1984 which provided for the withdrawal of South African forces from Angolan territory as a step towards Namibian independence. Yet South African forces have remained on Angolan soil to this day, and South African commandos were involved last May in a vain attempt to blow up the American-owned oil installations in Cabinda which provide Angola with most of its foreign exchange. The adventure was to have been credited to

UNITA, like most other achievements of South Africa in destabilising the Angolan economy.

Had Reagan been truly opposed to "terrorism", he would have severed all relations with South Africa and UNITA as the authors of this terroristic enterprise. Instead, he called for the repeal of the Clark amendment passed in 1976 to prohibit US support for elements opposed to the Angolan government. In July both houses of the US Congress obliged, and the way was made clear for direct US intervention in the dirty war against Angola. Reagan, Botha and Savimbi are now unashamedly joined together in an international terroristic alliance under the tattered flag of anti-communism.

Anti-Communism Linked with Racism

There is another side to this anti-Communist conspiracy which deserves notice, and that is the link between anti-Communism and racism. We in South Africa know full well that the ferocity of the state's attack on the people is fuelled by racism. It is also almost invariable that the mercenaries who serve the interests of imperialism are whites ready at all times to shed the blood of blacks and capable of any barbarity even against women and children if their skin is of the wrong colour. Not only the mercenaries but their masters too are afflicted by this racism. The point was made on the floor of the United States Senate by Senator Alan Cranston, a Californian liberal. Replying to the argument of US Assistant Secretary of State Crocker and right-winger Senator Helms that sanctions against South Africa would only harm the Africans and would be vetoed by President Reagan, Cranston said:

"There seems to be, at the heart of the American ultra-right-wing movement, an undercurrent of racism ... I strongly suspect — and gravely fear — that that dirty current of racism is rising to the surface again in the tolerance of apartheid and the apparent lack of concern over the suffering of 23 million blacks".

Senator Cranston said some people would accept any evil, even the evil of apartheid, if it could be enlisted "in the unholy crusade of blind, uncritical anti-communism" which had put the US "in political, economic and sometimes military bondage to virtually every right-wing dictator and virtually every ultra-conservative reactionary movement that appears anywhere on the globe". (*Star* 9.7.1985.)

This is the reason why Western leaders make a bigger fuss over the imprisonment of a single dissident in Poland than over the slaughter of 30,000 Palestinian refugees by the Israelis and their agents in the Sabra and Chatila camps in Lebanon. This is the reason why so many white South

Africans remain indifferent to the daily slaughter of their black fellow citizens in the townships.

And this is the reason why black South Africans today are so angry. It is not the ANC but the regime which has abolished the distinction between “soft” and “hard” targets — abolished it from the very first days of conquest right up to the present day. Now the people have had enough and are gearing up for war. They have shed all fear of death because, in the words of President Tambo, they understand that to live they must be free. They are no longer prepared to submit to a regime which offers only hardship and deprivation, and tortures and murders those who resist oppression. Today the mass of our people demand peace and equality and are determined to achieve victory in their lifetime.

HELSINKI AGREEMENT — A PLUS FOR PEACE

Ten years ago, on August 1, 1975, the Helsinki Final Act was signed by the representatives of all the countries of Europe (except Albania) plus the United States and Canada, ushering in what came to be known as the era of detente between the capitalist and socialist states. Coming after a period when international tensions had frequently threatened to spill over into nuclear war, the Helsinki agreement was an important advance on the road to peace and security for all humankind. It laid down a number of principles for the conduct of international affairs — the sovereign equality of states, the renunciation of the use or threat of force, the inviolability of frontiers and respect for the territorial integrity of states, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for human rights and basic freedoms, equal rights for all peoples.

For the socialist world, and in particular the Soviet Union, the Helsinki Agreement was the culmination of years of effort to place the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems on a more secure foundation. It is only when the Helsinki Agreement is viewed in its historical context that its true importance can be grasped. Ever since the 1917 revolution, it had been the aim of the capitalist powers to wipe existing socialism from the face of the earth. They tried it by way of open intervention by 14 nations immediately after the revolution and support of the counter-revolutionary White Guards in the four-year civil war designed, in the words of Winston Churchill, to “strangle the Bolshevik baby in its cradle”. When that attempt was defeated, they tried it by way of financing and encouraging

anti-Communist elements within the Soviet Union and building up the Axis powers as a buffer against the spread of Communism and, it was hoped, an instrument which could be wielded to bring about the physical destruction of the Soviet Union.

That attempt was defeated by the courage and determination of the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party, displayed most tellingly during the second world war, the 40th anniversary of whose end was this year commemorated throughout the world. But the very strength and resilience of the socialist system, demonstrated not only on the field of battle but also in the speed of post-war reconstruction and recovery, alarmed the capitalist powers who quickly turned their backs on the wartime alliance which had defeated Hitler and initiated the so-called "cold war", another form of counter-revolution. This drive, too, was halted by the combined forces of socialism and national liberation together with the working-class and democratic movement in the capitalist countries. The imperialists were forced to the Helsinki negotiating table after they had suffered a series of defeats world-wide — Korea, Vietnam, Portugal, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, to name only the most momentous.

There is no doubt that the outstanding achievement of the 1975 Helsinki Agreement was the acceptance by the imperialists that the gains of the 1917 revolution and World War 2 could not be reversed by force. For a while humankind was able to breathe more freely as the threat of nuclear war receded. But the ceasefire was shortlived. In the recent period the military-industrial complex in the United States, particularly since the advent to office of President Reagan, appears to have swung round once more to the belief that it can achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union and impose its will on the world. The forces of revanchism have begun to revive in many countries, openly fascist and racist parties rear their heads again — for example, in France — and calls are heard for the abandonment of the wartime Potsdam and Yalta Agreements and the redrawing of the boundaries of East European states. Most sinister is the frantic programme of rearmament on which the US government is spending ever-increasing billions of dollars, raising the level of international tension and filling the minds of men, women and children throughout the world with apprehension.

If ever there was a time for reasserting the peace principles of the 1975 Helsinki Agreement, it is now. The Soviet Union has again and again come forward with concrete proposals for disarmament and curbing the spread of nuclear weapons, only to have them spurned by the militarists of the

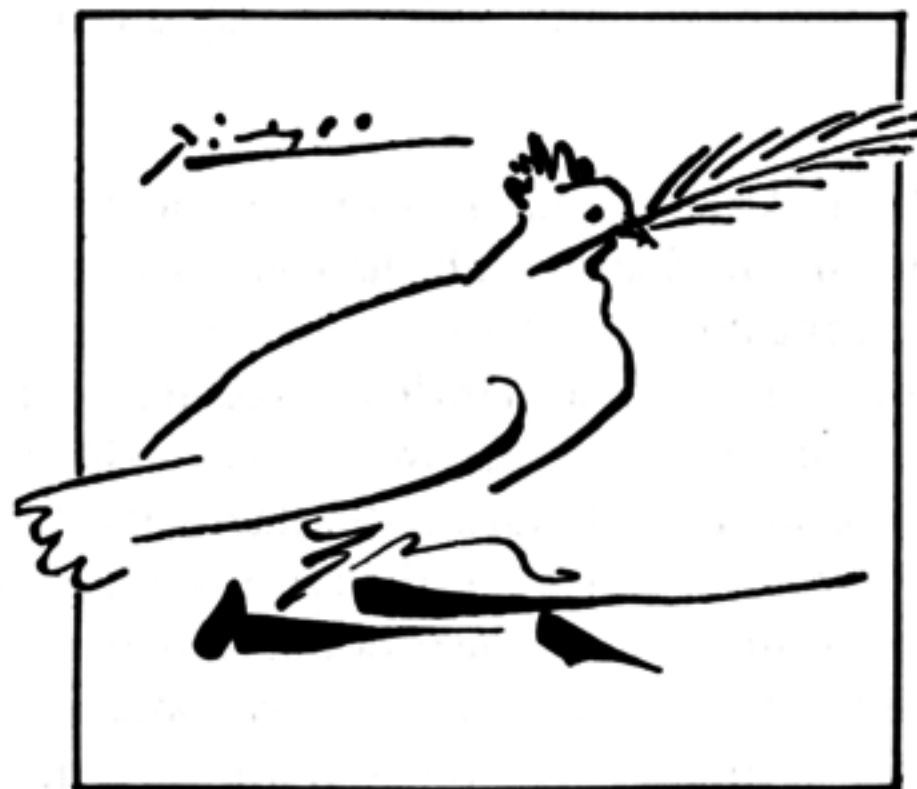
imperialist world. On the very eve of the tenth anniversary meeting of the 35 powers which began in Helsinki on August 1 this year, the Soviet Union announced that it was unilaterally suspending all underground nuclear tests until the end of the year and was ready to suspend them permanently if the United States was willing to follow suit. But the United States was not willing. On the contrary, it not only rejected the Soviet offer on the grounds that such a ban would be "difficult to verify" but added insult to injury by "inviting" the Soviet Union to send observers to monitor its next underground nuclear test in the Nevada desert. And of course the United States remains deaf to the repeated Soviet appeals for a moratorium on the deployment of medium-range nuclear missiles, a 25 per cent cut in the number of strategic nuclear weapons and the abandonment of all research on space weapons.

Once again, at this year's Helsinki conference, US Secretary of State Schultz, British Foreign Secretary Howe and their allies concentrated attention on alleged abuses of human rights in the socialist countries, but their conception of human rights is a strangely limited one. While they weep crocodile tears over the fate of "dissidents" like Sakharov and Shcharansky, pleading for their "human right" to undermine the socialist system, they ignore the fact that the most basic human right is the right to life, which is not only violated by the workings of the capitalist system, but threatened by preparations for nuclear war. Schultz is said to have cited the cases of 22 people whose rights had been interfered with in the Soviet Union, but he was totally silent about the rights of the 35 million people who live below the breadline in the United States — 8 million more than when Reagan came into office. According to recent calculations, Reagan's sacrifice of social services in the interests of tax cuts and the needs of "defence" will soon increase to 41 million the number of Americans who live in poverty. Schultz also ignores the fact that under Reagan unemployment amongst blacks has gone up from twice to three times the figure for whites. How come Schultz never acknowledges that in the Soviet Union there are no unemployed, no homeless people sleeping under bridges, no soup kitchens, no deprived communities, no ghettos, no class or colour bars?

It is not that Schultz or Reagan have not noticed that these rights are secured to the Soviet people by the socialist system under which they live. They have, and it is precisely for this reason that anti-communism is the main plank in the imperialist platform. The right to know the truth about developments in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is now gravely impaired throughout the capitalist world; in South Africa it does not exist at all. Neither Schultz, Reagan nor Thatcher has ever called for the

repeal of the Suppression of Communism Act in South Africa or anywhere else. After all, the suppression of communism is their main business, in which they are partners with Botha, Pinochet and Pol Pot.

However, the world in which the imperialists now operate is different from the one they grew up in. The 20th Century was once described as "The Century of the Common Man", and everywhere the common man is on the march, fighting for the right to life, for liberation and national independence, for democracy and peace. This year's Helsinki conference may not have been as fruitful as that of 1975, but it did not break down; the spirit of detente is not dead. Preparations were even announced for a November summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev. For Reagan, who once described the Soviet Union as "an empire of evil", merely to have to shake hands with Gorbachev must be quite a bitter pill to swallow. It is popular pressure which has once again forced the imperialists to the negotiating table. It is popular pressure which must keep them there until peace and social progress are secure.



“The Greatest Moment in my Life”

An MK Cadre reports on the ANC Conference

by Temba Hlanganani

From June 16 to 23 the African National Congress held its Second National Consultative Conference in Zambia. The first conference of this nature was held in Morogoro, Tanzania, in 1969.

I attended the conference as one of the elected delegates from the ranks of our people’s army, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Those eight days of hard but rewarding work were for me, alongside the day when I joined the ANC shortly after the 1976 Soweto upsurges, the greatest moment in my life. To have been part of that historic gathering of South African revolutionaries was a wonderful experience that will always serve as a source of inspiration.

It was the most representative conference of the ANC since it was banned in 1960. About 250 delegates came from all corners of the world where there are ANC members — determined veterans and dynamic youth; leaders and diplomatic functionaries; commanders and political commissars of our people’s army; political organisers and trade unionists; administration, production, health and cultural workers; propagandists and students.

The conference was honoured with a message from Nelson Mandela and other national leaders in Pollsmoor and Robben Island prisons. The message read in part:

“We were most delighted to hear that the ANC will soon have another conference. We sincerely hope that such an occasion will constitute yet another milestone in our history. It is most satisfying, especially in our present situation, to belong to a tested organisation which exercises so formidable an impact on the situation in our country, which has established itself firmly as a standard bearer of such a rich tradition, and which has brought us such coveted laurels...

“We feel sure that all those delegates who will attend will go there with one central issue uppermost in their minds: that out of the conference the ANC will emerge far stronger than ever before.

“Unity is the rock on which the African National Congress was founded, it is the principle which has guided us down the years as we feel our way forward.”

Messages of solidarity came from all corners of the world, from heads of state, diplomatic missions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, liberation movements, political parties, solidarity movements and other organisations. They included messages from the Presidents of Botswana, Algeria, the German Democratic Republic and Guinea Bissau, the Central Committees or the equivalent committees of the ZANU/PF of Zimbabwe, the Frelimo Party and MPLA, the British Labour Party, the Swedish Social Democratic Party, the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Romania, the United States and other countries, trade unions, students, women’s, youth, religious and solidarity organisations and the peace movement.

No Surrender

The conference was characterised by unity of purpose, firm resolve, optimism and a sense of urgency among the delegates. This fighting spirit found its clearest expression in the contributions made by delegate after delegate from the floor, contributions which contained pointers to new and exciting initiatives. The spirit of the delegates was also uplifted by the free and comradely discussions and the revolutionary songs, sung with inspiration, telling the story of our people’s tradition of “no-surrender” displayed in decades of fierce resistance.

Each day started with a news report compiled by D.I.P. personnel, concentrating on the Pretoria regime’s campaign of terror directed against our people and the frontline states, and our people’s mounting resistance spearheaded by the lightning attacks of MK combatants. These reports served to emphasise that the conference was both a People’s Parliament and a Council of War.

Another reflection of the fighting mood of the delegates was the tributes which the conference paid to the heroes and martyrs of our revolution. We remembered stalwarts like chief Albert Lutuli, Moses Kotane, J.B. Marks, Yusuf Dadoo, Bram Fischer, comrades who were murdered by Pretoria's death squads, assassins and hangmen in Matola and Maseru and most recently in Gaborone, Joe Gqabi, Griffiths Mxenge, Ruth First, Jabu and Petros Nyawose, Mini, Mahlangu and Mosolodi and many others. Also honoured were our leaders and other comrades who have continued to hold high the banner of our revolution in spite of many years of imprisonment. A special tribute was paid to the MK combatants of the Lutuli Detachment who had come out alive from Smith's dungeons and had rejoined our ranks to continue the freedom struggle.

Perhaps the best way to describe the spirit of the conference would simply be to say that the delegates were wholly in tune with our people who are locked in a life-and-death combat with the oppressors and exploiters.

With Flying Colours

The Second National Consultative Conference of the ANC was held quite a number of years after the historic Morogoro Conference of 1969. During the intervening years the ANC has gone through many a testing moment. It has survived numerous sinister schemes devised by the Pretoria regime and its imperialist backers aimed at destroying it as a genuine and consistent revolutionary mass political movement, the vanguard of our people in the struggle for national liberation.

In the years since 1969 there have been, inter alia, attempts to:

- *Divide the leadership of the ANC in prison from that which is outside.
- *Drive a wedge between the democratic mass movement inside the country and the section of our liberation movement which is outside.
- *Pressurise the ANC into abandoning the vital tactic of armed struggle.
- *Divorce the ANC from its battle-tested ally the South African Communist Party.
- *Isolate the ANC from the true friends of our liberation struggle, the Soviet Union and the rest of the Socialist Community, the Frontline States and other progressive forces the world over.

To achieve these aims the Pretoria regime has employed every means at its disposal, ranging from blatant lies and slander to so-called reforms and outright terrorism.

The ANC has not only survived but has actually emerged stronger and more determined to advance the struggle until final victory. It can be said,

therefore, that the past 15 years provided our movement with a necessary schooling for the future decisive battles. The ANC had to recover from the heavy blows suffered by the entire forces of liberation in our country since the early sixties. It had to learn to defend its unity in the face of an all-out offensive by the enemy. It had to draw ever closer to its allies, no matter what the price it had to pay. It had to learn to combine a variety of methods and tactics in an unfavourable situation to advance the people's struggle.

That the ANC has stood the test of time is clearly borne out by its great achievements which are honoured by the world progressive forces and even grudgingly acknowledged by the oppressors and exploiters in South Africa and in the citadels of imperialism. Today more than at any other time in our history our people see the ANC as their unchallenged leader and an alternative power to the tyrannical apartheid regime. More and more of our people are rallying around the Freedom Charter as their banner of true liberation and have accepted armed struggle as a vital component of the mass popular offensive for people's power.

Lessons Learned

The conference had to take stock of this period and draw lessons from its experiences to appreciate to the full the ANC's achievements, to consolidate them and, by pinpointing our shortcomings, to overcome them. In doing so the delegates were guided by the overriding need to ensure that the ANC emerged more united, better organised to lead our people to victory, and to become a stronger force in the struggle against imperialism.

It was crystal clear to the delegates — and in the intensive pre-conference discussions this had become the dominant idea — that as a movement and a people history is presenting us with a precious opportunity we cannot afford to miss. While the apartheid system is in the grip of a paralysing economic and political crisis, the oppressed and exploited masses for their part are increasingly realising that for them there is no middle road, that it is better to die fighting for freedom than to continue to lead the miserable life of a slave. At the same time the African National Congress has won its rightful place in the front ranks of this united and determined mass upsurge so that the situation we are confronted with is one which in the words of one delegate can be described as 'a crisis of achievement'.

Put simply it means that through our own actions involving many sacrifices on the actual battlefield and not just our revolutionary ideas, correct and vital as they are, we have set in motion an irresistible wave of mass

resistance in which different forms of struggle are used with great initiative and resoluteness. This in turn places even greater demands on our liberation alliance. While the capacity of the apartheid regime to rule our people is declining daily, the forces of change in our country are faced with the challenge of mustering enough strength to prepare the ground for the overthrow of the apartheid regime.

Our situation demands new and daring tactics and initiatives, and the delegates realised the responsibility that was placed on them by history to give an effective lead. The conference took bold decisions and “hammered out guidelines for the future progress”.

It was clear to all that the Botha regime is still determined to defend the apartheid system of white minority rule by force of arms. Accordingly conference agreed that there was no reason for us to change our broad strategy which pursues the aim of seizure of power by the people through a combination of mass political action and armed struggle.

Victory is Possible

It was agreed that the possibility of victory is greater now than at any other time in our history. This requires that we should step up our all-round political and military offensive sharply and without delay. The masses of our people have been and are engaged in a struggle of historic importance directed at making apartheid unworkable and the country ungovernable. The delegates agreed that it was vital that we take all necessary measures to strengthen the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe inside our country so as to be able to meet the demands of our people.

The conference also resolved that we cannot even consider the issue of a negotiated settlement while our leaders are in prison. It was agreed that we must continue with the campaign for the immediate and unconditional release of these leaders.

In the situation which obtains within the country, where the crisis of the apartheid system has become endemic, conference agreed that the Freedom Charter provides the basis for satisfying the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of our people. In this regard, the participants agreed that it was important that we should win as many whites as possible to our side. We should also adhere to our position to intensify our struggle against the bantustans as well as the apartheid tricameral parliament and related institutions. We must continue to pose the alternative of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Conference endorsed the view advanced by our imprisoned leaders that unity among the anti-apartheid forces is essential. In a call to our people inside the country, the leaders said:

“Those of us who are true liberators should not fight among ourselves. Let us not allow the enemy’s dirty tricks department to succeed in getting us to fight one another.”

Conference paid tribute to the contribution that the United Democratic Front has made towards strengthening the unity of the democratic forces of our country and condemned the arrest and prosecution of its leaders and activists.

The participants also agreed that this unity must find expression in the mass action of all our people against the apartheid regime. Consequently, delegates stressed that all our people should be organised and mobilised, in the towns and the countryside, including those in the bantustans. The Black workers are of special importance in this regard and are, as we have said before, the backbone and leading force in our struggle for national liberation.

Conference also assessed the international situation. It agreed that we should further expand our system of international relations and reach out even to regions, countries and governments with which we may not have had contact before. It urged the international community to “declare the apartheid white minority regime illegitimate”.

In a spirit of militant solidarity the Conference also addressed special greetings to each of the Frontline States, Lesotho, the OAU and Swapo among others.

New Structures

To ensure that the decisions adopted by the conference are fully implemented questions relating to the improvement of our structures were discussed. Steps are to be taken to firmly root the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe among all sections of our people and thus ensure the uninterrupted intensification of our people’s war until state power is in the hands of the oppressed and exploited masses. Constitutional guidelines were laid down to create a firm basis for improving the ANC’s style of work as a revolutionary vanguard organisation. It was decided that the movement must hold conferences once every five years and that the National Executive Committee should hold office for the same period. Conference also decided that membership of the ANC should be open to South Africans of all races who accept the policies of our movement, with equal rights and duties at all levels of the organisation.

Of the 22 members of the outgoing National Executive Committee 19 were re-elected. The three most senior officials of the ANC, the President, Secretary General and the Treasurer-General (Comrades O.R. Tambo, Alfred Nzo and Thomas Nkobi respectively) were unanimously re-elected.

The Conference also decided to increase the size of the National Executive Committee to thirty members and gave powers to the NEC to co-opt an additional five members should the need arise.

There can be no doubt that the conference did its work "in a manner befitting our movement, our revolution and our times." The high level of unity displayed will undoubtedly increase the capacity of the ANC to lead the people in the struggle for national liberation. But more than that, this unity demonstrated the further growth of the ANC ideologically and shows that the ANC has taken yet another step forward in developing its revolutionary nationalism. This becomes particularly clear when one considers that being a mass movement, the ANC embraces within its ranks patriots with different social backgrounds. The conference gave expression to the movement's unshakeable conviction that the masses of our people are the real makers of history, with the Black workers as the leading force. We are an inseparable part of the anti-imperialist forces which are changing the world irreversibly.

The conference further consolidated the revolutionary alliance between the ANC, the South African Communist Party and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. In a very striking manner a number of delegates, both senior and rank-and-file members of the movement, called for closer co-operation between these three frontline detachments of our national democratic revolution. The alliance has proved its worth in countless battles, in the prisons and even on the gallows. It has provided the framework within which all of us, both as component parts of the liberation alliance and as independent organisational formations, have been able to grow stronger through united action.

As the delegates declared to all our people: the old order in our country is coming to an end. The racist regime is losing ground. The white racists are splintered into hostile factions and parties and their morale is in decline. They can no longer sustain their old myths of baasskap, of a master race destined to rule over Black slaves forever. All they can do now is corrupt and kill ...

The Black giant is rising to his feet tall and strong. He is breaking the chains that have bound him for centuries. He is marching forward with strength and confidence to a new social order. He is determined to liberate

EDUCATION FOR REVOLUTION

The Role of A Qualified Cadre In Our Struggle

By Sisa Majola

“A negligent attitude to the problem of cadres is all the more impermissible as we are constantly losing some of our most valuable cadres in the struggle. For we are not a learned society but a militant movement which is constantly in the firing line. Our most energetic, most courageous and most class conscious elements are in the front ranks. It is precisely these frontline men that the enemy hunts down, murders, throws into jail and concentration camps and subjects to excruciating torture, particularly in fascist countries. This gives rise to the urgent necessity of constantly replenishing the ranks, cultivating and training new cadres as well as carefully preserving the existing cadres,” — *Georgi Dimitrov.*¹

“Cadre policy, if it is to be correct, must proceed fully from the requirements of the revolutionary tasks,” — *Le Duan,*

The debate on the “Function of Education in the Struggle for Liberation” (see article by Eric Stilton, *The African Communist*, First Quarter, 1983) continues within the ranks of our movement, which is a clear indication that as long as we are involved in a revolution, this subject can never be over and done with. In addition, this subject assumes great significance as batch after batch of students are completing their education from the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFSCO) and others qualifying from institutions of higher learning elsewhere in the world. What then is the role of qualified cadres in our struggle? What should be the correct cadre policy with regard to these completed students?

A concrete examination of our educational outlook should proceed, first and foremost, from an understanding of the South African society and the contradictions inherent in it. Two principal contradictions exist here — the

first and primary one is between private ownership of the means of production and the social character of labour and production due to the high level of the development of the productive forces. This society is divided into a class of capitalists and a class of proletarians. The second contradiction, which arises from the first and is interconnected with it, is between colonial rule by a racist minority and the political will of the black majority to liberation and self-determination. The oppressed people of South Africa in this instance occupy a colour-defined position in relation to the wealth of the country and the political as well as educational institutions.

When pursuing education (which basically is a process of equipping oneself with the standardised knowledge historically achieved by the society), South African students function inevitably as part of these contradictions, and they understand their role in life in general and in their community in particular from the framework of these social and political realities. Educational institutions in South Africa (all of them without exception) are designed to legitimise the system of exploitation of man by man, to sanctify the privileges of the rich and the poverty of the propertyless, to serve the interests of the rich. Black students in this set-up are taught how to service the social needs of the racist minority community that rules us.

It is no wonder that at every graduation ceremony on the Black campuses, it is not our parents, relatives and friends who take up seats in the halls where these ceremonies are conducted, but the local White men and women from Empangeni, Alice or Pietersburg (in the cases of the universities of Zululand, Fort Hare or Turfloop, respectively). This racist White community has come to see for itself how the “Black boerewors” has been fired in the stove of Bantu Education, an ever humble and smiling ‘Bantu’ who grins and rubs his hands every time he talks to some White man. This little “Kaffirtjie”, “Hotnot”, or “Coolie”, the racist regime hopes, will help convince the rest of his race that the only avenue to prosperity and social security is to get a certificate of competence from the racist and capitalist system.

Looking for Safety

Caught up in this kind of society, some students see themselves as passive victims of a mighty storm where the lifeboat on which they are sailing is ever in danger of sinking, and they reason that the best way to survive this stormy society is to learn how to stay afloat, thus saving oneself from drowning with the rest. The capitalist and racist institutions, in turn, inculcate in the students the mentality that they should master as best they can this “swimiology” thus promoting individual salvation. “You can’t please

everyone, so you've got to please yourself" goes the saying in these circles. Thus the capitalist system creates a stratum of aspiring capitalists, the petty-bourgeoisie, a group that sees itself as the survivor in a society where the working class is already counted as drowned.

Indeed, there are quite a number of students in South Africa as well as abroad who are motivated and inspired in their studies by selfish interests. They know, of course, that there is a struggle for liberation ... so what? A few of those with some measure of conscience often wear a 'Dashiki' Afro shirt and come to a mass meeting in June to raise a clenched fist in solidarity with us, leaving quickly before the Special Branch identifies them. Whether they are lawyers or doctors (as the case may be), they simply chose these professions because they were the best paying. With such a profession, they reason, one can never starve as long as the system continues to produce so many clients and patients.

Our revolution and cadre policy on education has the task of correcting this opportunist outlook, an outlook that sees the sole purpose of education to be the acquiring of a certificate. We need students who are educated in a revolutionary sense, and not just certificated buffoons! Our education policy, and that of a free South Africa equally, is not aimed at satisfying the distorted childhood desires of those who seek the good life irrespective of the conditions of the oppressed people and the exploited classes.

I have observed that a number of students even in the liberation movement have not yet assimilated a revolutionary outlook on education despite the advantages of being in a revolutionary movement; they have not bothered to inquire what is our revolution's attitude to education. Some of these students have deserted our movement on one pretext or another and have remained unknown in foreign countries where their certificates have become passports to social convenience. These qualified students, of course, hope to come to South Africa when it is free, believing that their task in the revolution will commence when they have to administrate and reconstruct South Africa after emerging from some kind of waiting-room. Can such an attitude be called revolutionary? Can it be termed dialectical — this one that creates a dichotomy between the liberation phase and the reconstruction phase of our single and continuous revolution?

"Cadre policy," said Le Duan, "if it is to be correct, must proceed fully from the requirements of the revolutionary tasks" (op. cit.). He maintained that the revolution needs a contingent of cadres who are equal to their political tasks, taking into account their number and quality as well as their composition, a contingent of cadres capable of fulfilling to the highest degree

the political tasks of each period. Such was the approach of the Vietnamese communists!

An abstract presentation of the cadre problem would therefore be of no use at all. The problem of cadres, their recruitment, training and deployment, can never be an isolated question, or purely a question of individuals wanting to be this or that, or imagining that their role in our liberation shall either be this or that. The problem of cadres should first of all be seen as a question of preparing people who are to accomplish tasks of our vanguard movement in each stage of struggle. The problem of cadres is posed on the premise that certain revolutionary solutions to the problems of the masses are to be found, and the development of cadres must be seen in the framework of this service to the revolution of the masses.

What are the concrete tasks posed by the revolution? Then let us have revolutionary cadres to fulfil those tasks. In other words, to link the problem of cadres with the requirements of the revolution is to proceed from the demands of our Strategy and Tactics in pursuit of the seizure of political power by the people. “Only in this way,” said Le Duan, “can we understand thoroughly and concretely the essence, content and requirements of the political tasks set in this stage, and hence examine and solve correctly the problem of cadres.”³

Our revolution, obviously, will not end on Freedom Day, and a far-sighted cadre policy must take into consideration problems that will be posed by a continuing revolution — but this does not in the least mean that some potential cadres should be shelved for the advent of a future reconstruction phase — this would surely be creating a Chinese Wall between the phases of our revolution.

Karl Marx’ View

On completion of his secondary schooling at Trier, the young Karl Marx wrote an essay (he was then seventeen years old) which was entitled: “Reflections of A Young Man on the Choice of A Profession” which illuminates even at this stage how he viewed the purpose of his educational preparation. He wrote:

“The choice of a profession is a great privilege of man over the rest of a creation, but at the same time it is an act which can destroy his whole life, frustrate all his plans, and make him unhappy. Serious consideration of this choice, therefore, is certainly the first duty of a young man who is beginning his career and does not want to leave his most important affairs to chance ...

“The chief guide which must direct us in the choice of a profession is the welfare of mankind and our own perfection. It should not be thought that these two interests could be in conflict, that one would have to destroy the other; on the

contrary, man's nature is so constituted that he can attain his own perfection only by working for the perfection, for the good, of his fellow man.

“... If he works only for himself, he may perhaps become a famous man of learning, a great sage, an excellent poet, but he can never be a perfect, truly great man.

“History calls those men the greatest who have ennobled themselves by working for the common good; experience acclaims as happiest the man who has made the greatest number of people happy ... If we have chosen this position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live on quietly but perpetually at work, and over our ashes will be shed the hot tears of noble people.”⁴

This perspective of life by the then young Karl Marx typically exemplifies the need for our learning youth to devote their lives and professions to the service of mankind in general, and to the cause of the oppressed people and exploited classes in South Africa. Thirty years ago (1955), the founding fathers of our democratic principles, as enshrined in the Freedom Charter, declared that the aim of education in a free South Africa “shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace”. The youth that loves the people of South Africa is one that is devoted to the cause of people's liberation and to the emancipation of the working class as led by the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party in alliance.

This means that we must have a contingent of cadres from the institutions of learning who subordinate their personal interests to the objectives of our democratic revolution. This contingent of cadres will raise up their hands to the leadership of our movement ready (in the words of Dimitrov) to replenish the ranks of our most energetic, most courageous and most class-conscious elements in the front ranks. It is precisely these frontline men that the enemy hunts down, murders, throws in jail and so forth. To the Vietnamese youth under these circumstances Ho Chi Minh said:

“Now that our nation is at the crossroads, to die or to live, to perish or to exist, each comrade and the whole organisation must devote all their heart and strength to turn the entire people in one direction aiming at one goal: to drive out the colonialists and bring unity and independence to our country. That is why each comrade and the whole organisation must be clear-sighted, clever, careful, resolute, industrious and single-minded.”⁵

When speaking of cadres, we mean the members of our movement — those who are inside the country organised into various underground units, those serving in mass democratic organisations, those providing military leadership and arming the masses in various pockets of resistance as well as the exile structures of our movement. Every member of our movement has a

duty to exercise political leadership in his or her field of work, and in this sense every member of our movement is by definition a cadre. A qualified student who operates outside our organisations does not qualify for the name of cadre. The organisation directs its cadres and obliges them to act one way instead of another, thus requiring their discipline. A cadre's strength derives from the organisation, while, inversely, only through revolutionary cadres can a liberation organisation be strong. Le Duan put it thus:

“Obviously there must be strong people if the organisation is to be strong, and there must be good people if the organisation is to be good. On the other hand, this fundamental point must be made clear: the strength of a person lies in organisation and organisation creates a new strength which differs completely in quality from the sum of the strength of separate persons. The dialectic in this case consists in the following: a strong organisation ensures the strength of each person and the strength of each person makes the strength of the organisation.”⁶

There is no other way to deal with the problem of cadres except on the basis of organisation, proceeding from the necessity to place a cadre in the most appropriate conditions which would enable him or her to give full play to his or her talents and initiative as required by the revolutionary task. Let us therefore be more explicit: a revolutionary cadre is one that struggles to realise the historic objectives of our revolution within the discipline of our vanguard movement. An individual who is detached from this vanguard movement is capable of nothing. Therefore when we speak of cadres we are speaking of organised revolutionaries.

A Conquering Force

What are these revolutionary tasks? The foremost task facing our liberation movement is to organise the masses of the South African people into a conquering force capable of seizing power from the white minority regime, and to create a people's democracy on the basis of the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter. Lenin once remarked:

“There are no people — yet there are enormous numbers of people. There are enormous numbers of people, because the working class and ever more diverse strata of society, year after year, throw up from their ranks an increasing number of discontented people who desire to protest ... At the same time we have no people, because we have ... no talented organisers capable of organising extensive and at the same time uniform and harmonious work that would give employment to all forces, even the most inconsiderable.”⁷

Yes, we can say even in our own liberation movement, that there are a lot of people, there are a lot of numbers, yet there are not enough people participating in the organisation of the masses inside South Africa (for this is where the real theatre of struggle is). We need to discover and

develop ... revolutionary cadres out of the entire membership of our movement — men and women who will be in constant readiness and capable of being dispatched to the various pockets of resistance among the workers, rural toilers, youth and students, and so forth, giving on-the-spot political as well as military leadership in preparation for the final armed insurrection. Of course, we do have these numerous people, but these numerous people must be made active factors in the equation of liberation.

While a few people will be capable of organising further international solidarity and to man some of the necessary structures abroad, the rest of the membership and leadership of our movement should be prepared for activity inside South Africa. This is the great call of our revolution. Cadres must be put in situations where they can be of direct use to the people's cause, as revolutionary organisers and leaders of the masses. Our membership cannot wait for the great day of freedom, they cannot keep abreast of developments in South Africa only by reading newspapers. They must be prepared for active work among the masses to ensure the great day of freedom. Now that a new period of revolution has come in our country, we must place more emphasis on the practical development of our entire membership into revolutionary cadres ready to meet this new strategic challenge. In this way we shall indeed place our entire movement on a war footing in correspondence with the daily developments inside the country.

Talkers or Doers?

In his address to the 7th World Congress of the Communist International (op. cit.), Georgi Dimitrov complained that in the criteria for selection and deployment of cadres, some communist parties (in practice) often give preference to a comrade who, for example, is able to write well and is a good speaker, but is not a man or woman of action, and is not as suited for the struggle as some other comrade who perhaps may not be able to write or speak so well, but is a staunch comrade, possessing initiative and contact with the masses, capable of going into battle and leading others into battle. Such mistakes must be corrected. Our revolution has no practical use for cadres who are merely good at showing book knowledge. Our fighting people are not going to be impressed by phrase mongering and the beating of tables in meetings where we use abstract and intellectualist formulae. Georgi Dimitrov gave a stern warning that

“whoever really wishes to rid our work of deadening, cut-and-dried schemes, of pernicious scholasticism, must burn them out with a red-hot iron, both by practical, active struggle waged together with and at the head of the masses, and by

untiring effort to master the mighty, fertile, all-powerful teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin.”

Ours is a practical struggle against the inhuman policies of a racist and fascist regime, and it is precisely this practical task that obliges revolutionary cadres to equip themselves with Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary theory that explains the society we live in and the ways of changing it. The Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory (which can be studied by Communists and non-Communists alike) opposes all dogma and is itself a guide to action. It is such a theory that our cadres need as they take up the role of active leadership of the South African revolution. Marx, Engels and Lenin were not only leaders of the working class but of all the oppressed peoples, and this is why Lenin substituted the great slogan of Marx and Engels by saying: “Workers of All Countries And Oppressed People, Unite!”

Cadres receive their best training in the process of struggle, in meeting practical social problems and withstanding difficulties and tribulations. These cadres put full meaning to the often used phrase (which at times is used as a cliché): “tried and tested leaders.” It is these practical front-rank fighters in the struggle of the people that should be considered first for promotion into leading organs of our vanguard movement, people who not only know better than others the correct path that leads to liberation but who are also bold and ready to sacrifice.

The promotion of cadres should not be something casual but should be a properly ordered function of a revolutionary organisation. We therefore need a systematic study and promotion of cadres in our organisation, and in this way we shall discover and develop cadres who had previously remained unnoticed. This will also help purge the leadership ranks of opportunists and phrasemongers. With a correct cadre policy we cannot use generalities to assess the qualities and capabilities of a cadre and end up promoting an “impressionist” to a position of leadership. Lenin provided a correct rule for us when he said:

“We shall go our way and try as carefully and as patiently as possible to test and discover real organisers, people with sober and practical minds only such people, after they have been tested a dozen times, by being transferred from the simplest to the more difficult tasks, should be promoted to the responsible posts of leaders of the people’s labour, leaders of administration. We have not yet learned to do this, but we shall learn.”⁸

Defence of Our Revolution

It is common knowledge that a revolution can be successful only when it is able to defend itself. And this brings us to the long-term aspects of our

education policy in cadre building. Our education policy is also preparing scientific and technical cadres who on the liberation of our country will continue their revolutionary task to the stage of reconstruction. South Africa is an industrialised country. Let us have no illusions; thousands upon thousands of scientists and technicians at present working in South Africa will withdraw their skills after the victory of our revolution. In addition, imperialist counter-revolution will stop at nothing in an attempt to destabilise our economy and our revolutionary government — who can predict that by comparison, the activities of UNITA and RENAMO in Angola and Mozambique respectively will not look like a Sunday school picnic? Who can predict that we shall not have a hundred Grenada-type invasions, a hundred Bay of Pigs attacks, and former members of the racist right-wing organisations waging guerrilla warfare, bombing our factories, mining our roads, flooding our mines and killing our children in the creches. We must expect such counter-revolutionary method to be used against us.

That is why a very heavy task on our shoulders is to prepare hundreds of able scientific and technical cadres in the ranks of the revolutionaries, cadres who will combine the latest knowledge in science with complete loyalty and dedication to the revolutionary cause, cadres who will not take into consideration on what side life is most enjoyable, but rather on what side duty calls. The realities of our revolution may necessitate that we do without Kentucky Fried Chicken and Polaroid sunglasses. We too may have to do with queueing for bread or toothpaste while our economy struggles to stand on its feet on a new foundation.

All these trials and tribulations will provide the real test of the revolutionary and ideological commitment of our qualified cadres. Will they join new groups of Boer commandoes as they sow banditry in our country or will they rally to the defence of our revolutionary government? Will our qualified personnel brandish their certificates in our eyes and desert us for green pastures elsewhere? Or will they instead be prepared to build anew, build our own even if it means starting from scratch?

It is these issues that pose the question of the class stand and the ideological position of our qualified cadres. A victorious revolution in South Africa will be led by the working class in alliance with other exploited people. Some people nurse the illusion that our revolution will come to an end on the morrow of the national democratic revolution. Our revolution, however, will not grind to a halt, but will continue uninterruptedly to socialism. It is towards this end that the Communist Party leads the working class in this democratic revolution. And for this reason, we also need a qualified cadre

who is not hostile to the ideals of scientific socialism as expounded by Marxism-Leninism.

Footnotes

1. Georgi Dimitrov, Speech delivered before the 7th World Congress of the Comintern, August 13, 1935.
2. Le Duan, *Selected Writings*, Hanoi 1977, p.411.
3. Ibid., p. 412
4. Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp.3-4.
5. Ho Chi Minh, *Letter to Comrades in North Vietnam*, March 1, 1947.
6. Op. cit., p. 435.
7. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p.490
8. Ibid., Vol. 27, pp. 262, 263.



APARTHEID = GENOCIDE

The proof in facts and figures

by Dr. E. Reed

One of the ways in which the make-up of a society can be analysed is by measuring the distribution of the population by age groups. For example, let us consider the distribution of the population of India by age group, as indicated in figure 1:

The axis on the right marked 'age group' divides the population into those under 15 years of age, who make up the bottom block, while each block above that marks off the next ten years, with the exception of the top block which covers everybody over the age of 65. The line along the bottom of the graph gives the percentage of the population who are male (to the left of the central axis) and female (to the right).

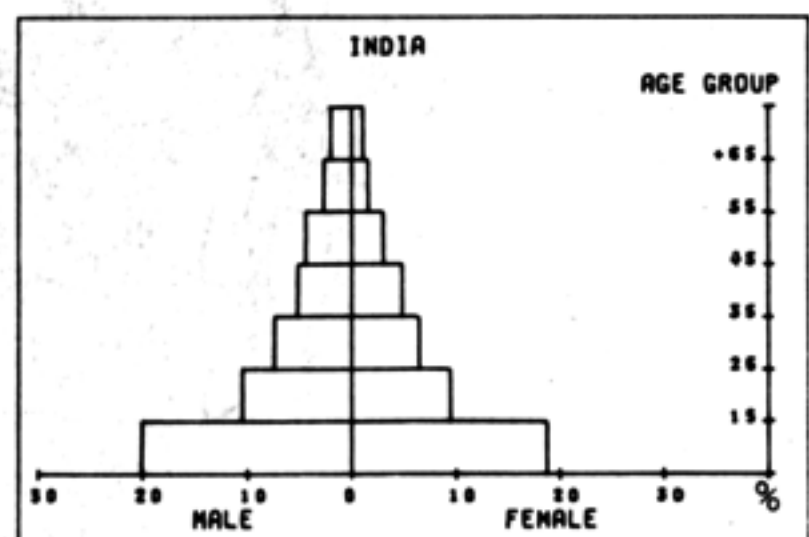


Fig.1

The graph thus shows that 20% of the population of India are males under the age of 15 years, while a further 19% are females under 15. The next block shows the percentage of the population between 15 and 25

years of age — about 11% males and 9% females. Each block shows that there are more males than females, with the disparity most marked in the over-65 group.

This shape of population distribution is typical of a developing country and depends on a number of factors connected with underdevelopment and a predominantly peasant mode of production in which the majority of the population are engaged. Countries with a small percentage of industrial workers usually show this distribution pattern. Note in particular the wide base of the graph, indicating a large number of children; the rapid narrowing of the distribution, indicating early deaths and a low life expectancy; and the very narrow peak, showing that few live to a ripe old age.

Contrast the distribution of India with that of the United States and the United Kingdom, as shown in figures 2 and 3.

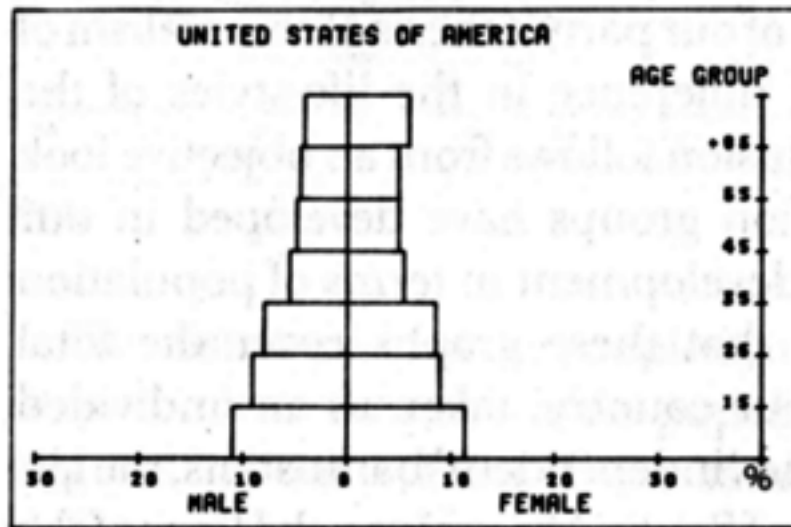


Fig.2

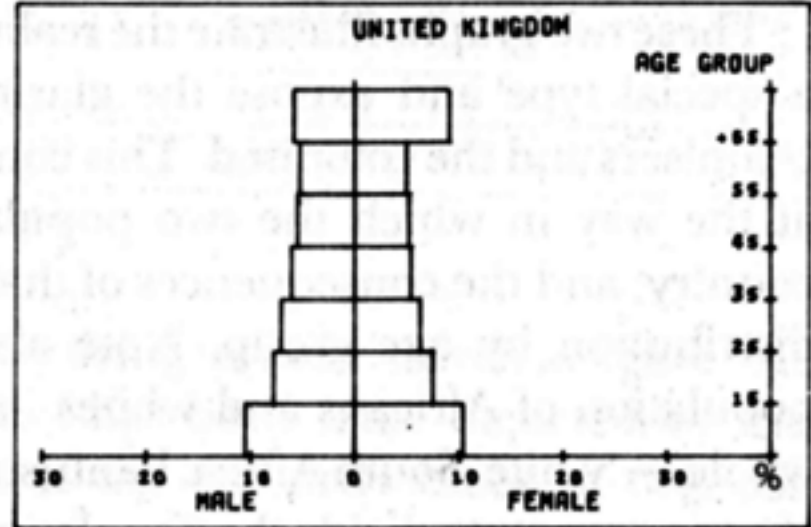


Fig.3

The pattern is far less triangular. There is a far lower proportion of children, far fewer die early in life and a large number live beyond 65 years of age (especially the women). This pattern of age distribution is typical of a developed industrial country.

In broad terms imperialist countries (and countries which have developed beyond imperialism into developed socialism) have distributions of the UK type. Colonial and recently ex-colonial countries have the India type.

South Africa

Figures 4 and 5 respectively show the distribution for the African and white populations of South Africa (as defined and listed by apartheid).

Firstly note that the distribution for Africans is similar to that of India. (The distribution for the Coloured and Indian people in South Africa is practically the same as for Africans.) The distribution for white South

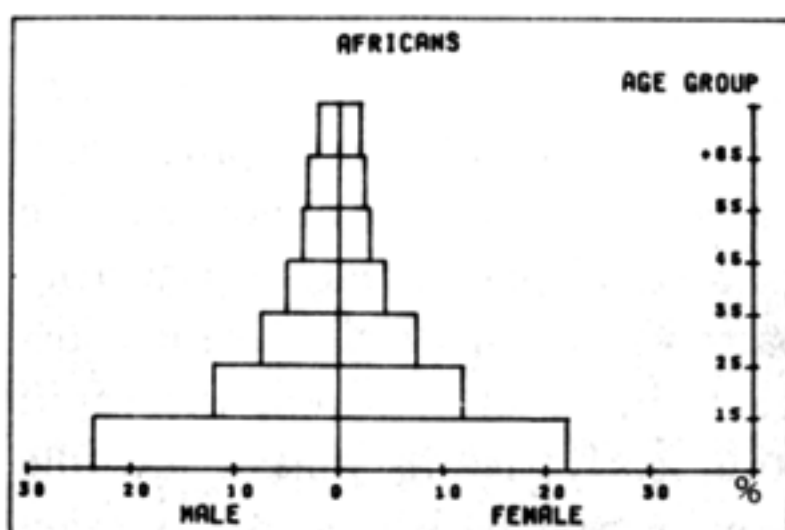


Fig.4

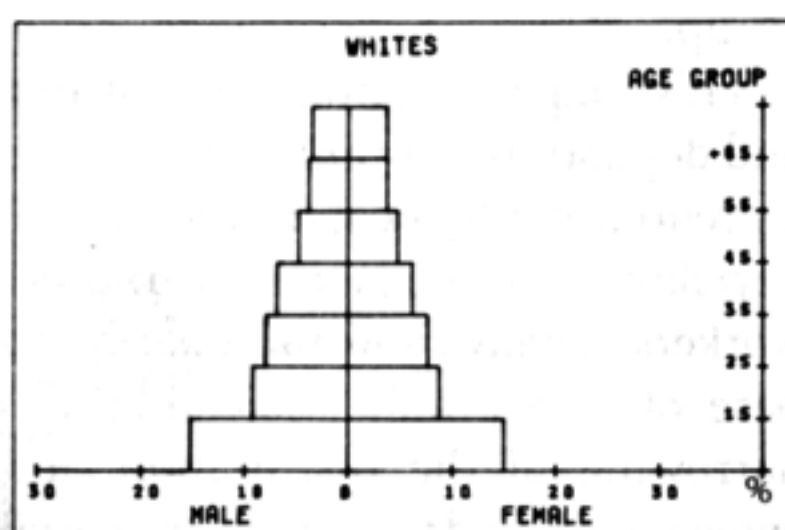


Fig.5

Africans, however, is distinctly different and closer to that of the UK (though without the UK's preponderance of women in the over-65 group).

These two graphs illustrate the reality of our party's thesis of colonialism of a special type and expose the glaring difference in the life-styles of the colonisers and the colonised. This conclusion follows from an objective look at the way in which the two population groups have developed in our country, and the consequences of that development in terms of population distribution by age group. Note also that these graphs cover the total population of Africans and whites in our country, taken as an undivided whole — 'white' South Africa, bantustans, 'independent' bantustans, the lot. If one attempts to divide the population of South Africa along the lines of the apartheid laws, with separate figures for the bantustan and urban populations, then gross distortions occur in the population graph. For example if instead of the total African population as shown in figure 4 we look at the bantustan population we get the picture as shown in figure 6:

Two peculiarities are apparent — firstly, the very sharp drop between the first block and the second, between the number aged under 15 and those aged between 15 and 25; and secondly, the smaller number of males between the ages of 25 and 65, with a slight increase over 65. The first distortion is due to the high death rate for children — an infant mortality of over 200 per 1,000 in

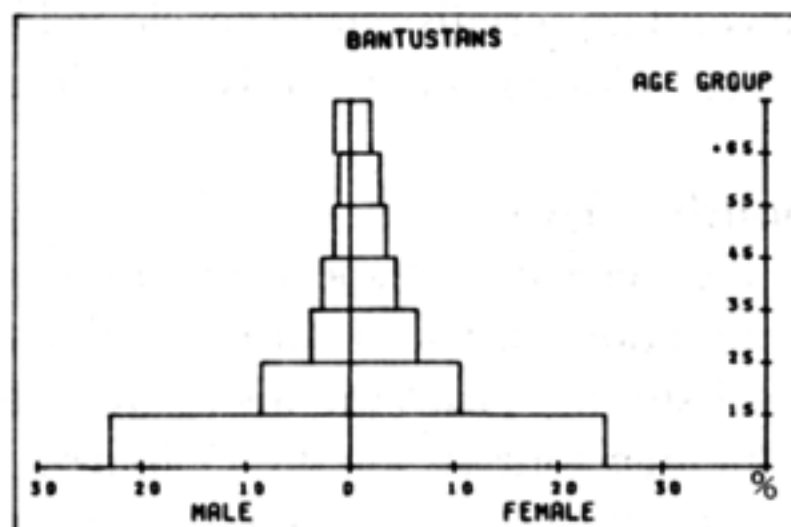


Fig.6

some areas (compared with an infant mortality rate of 13 per 1,000 for whites). The second distortion — the absence of males — is due to the migrant labour system, which syphons off the African males into the mines, factories and farms of 'white' South Africa.

Let us take a closer look at the particular bantustan 'resettlement' area, Sada — the squalid township where whole communities evicted from 'white' South Africa have been dumped.

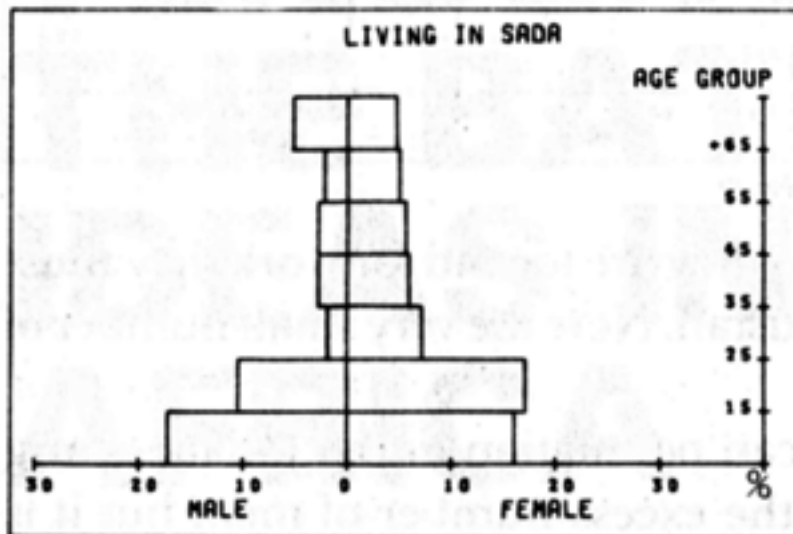


Fig.7

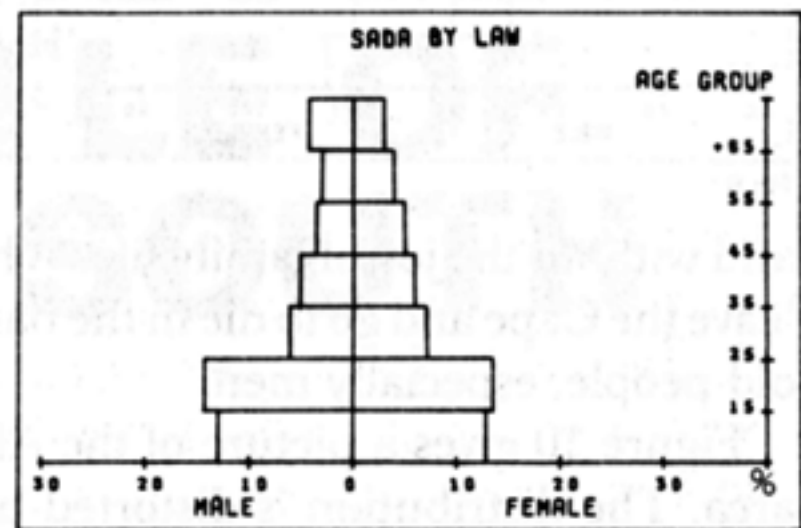


Fig.8

The distribution of the people actually living in Sada is given in figure 7. It is quite clear that the male population has been sadly depleted by the migrant labour system. Even sadder is the top male block of over-65s indicating the number of workers returning to Sada to die when they are no longer required by the capitalist machine. But most horrifying is the number in age group below 15 years.

The significance of all this becomes clearer if we look at figure 8, which gives the apartheid regime's figures of those who, according to law, should be living in Sada (i.e. the total number of Africans registered as living at Sada including the migrant labourers actually working in 'white' South Africa). The number of children under 15 years of age is less than the number aged between 15 and 25. This means that as the years pass fewer will pass from the under-15 group to the 15-25 group. The next under-15 group will be still smaller. The logical result is that in time the whole population will disappear. **THIS IS GENOCIDE!**

The graphs of two further population distributions provide instructive evidence of the barbarity of the apartheid system.

Figure 9 shows the African population in the Cape Peninsula. Note the gross bulge in the male population figures between the ages of 25 and 65. Men are herded together for work purposes, generally housed in barracks

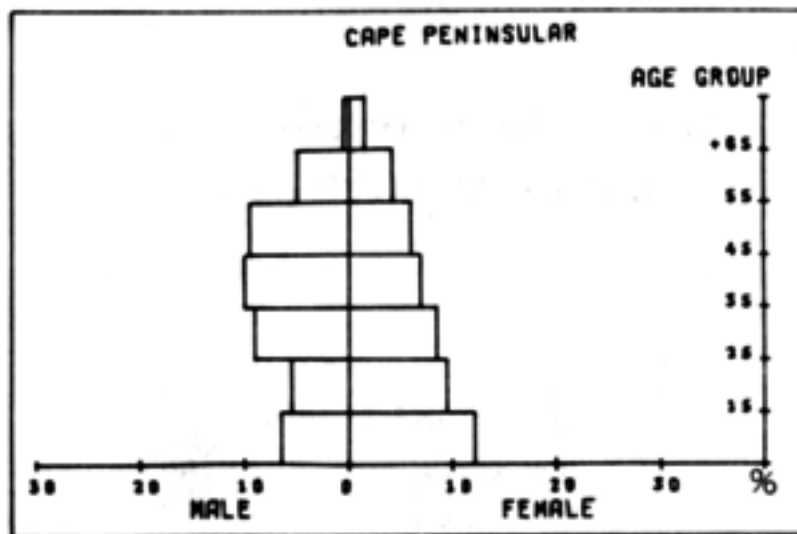


Fig.9

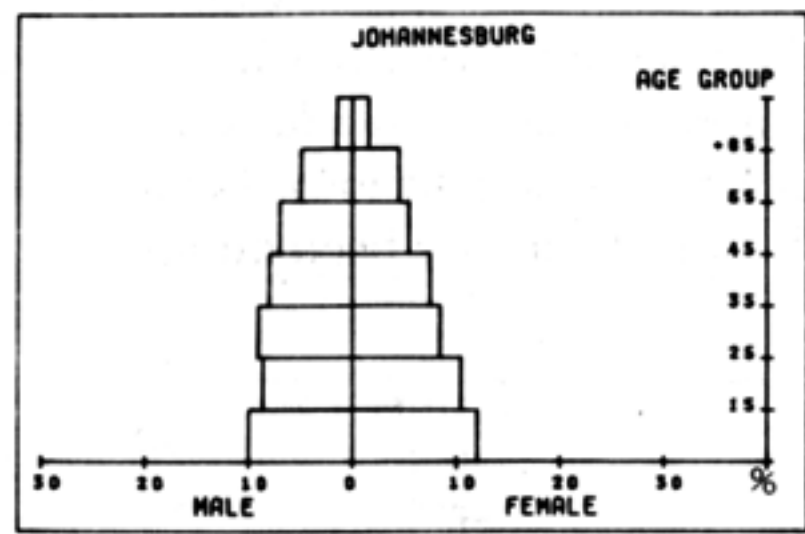


Fig.10

and without the joy of family life. When they are too old for work they must leave the Cape and go to die in the bantustan. Note the very small number of old people, especially men.

Figure 10 gives a picture of the African population in the Johannesburg area. The distribution is distorted by the excess number of men, but it is interesting to note that otherwise the distribution pattern is similar to that of the UK (figure 2), an advanced industrialised society. The one important difference is the abnormally small number of old people.

A country divided

South Africa is a single country but divided into two peoples with two totally different life-styles — the colonisers and the colonised. The apartheid philosophy that seeks to divide our country into 'independent black states' and 'white South Africa' leads to ever more serious distortions and aberrations in the natural development of our population, and ever-increasing deprivation and suffering for the black majority.

For the natural laws of the development of society to operate in South Africa it is necessary that our country be re-established as a single undivided political and economic whole, preferably on the path to developed socialism.

(The data for this analysis has been derived from South African Government sources and more particularly from Forced Removals in South Africa, the S.P.P. reports, University Press, Cape Town.)

NEW "MARXIST" TENDENCIES AND THE BATTLE OF IDEAS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Nyawuza

The ANC consultative conference held last June expelled a group which styled itself a "Marxist tendency within the ANC". They gave the impression that they were ANC members and yet they were suspended from ANC membership as far back as 1979.

When the ANC conference expelled this group it was not mincing words. It was stating quite clearly that if we cannot achieve a unity of ideas, let us achieve a demarcation of differences. This is all the more necessary because inside South Africa the battle of ideas is very sharp and becoming sharper.

In this article we shall examine some of the theories propounded inside and outside the country.

The Programme of the South African Communist Party adopted in 1962 advances the thesis of "Colonialism of a Special Type" and the two-stage revolution. In 1969 the Morogoro conference of the ANC adopted the *Strategy and Tactics* document which took some of the concepts of the Communist Party programme a stage further.

In the 1970s new "Marxist" ideas emerged in South Africa. These ideas originated mainly in the white student community and white intellectual circles. What were the reasons for this?

The banning of the Communist Party in 1950 and especially of the ANC in 1960 caused what Raymond Suttner calls a “rupture in the tradition of non-racial, democratic resistance to apartheid”.¹ He goes on to say that the period immediately after the Extension of University Education Act (in 1959), the enforcement of apartheid at universities, led to an “artificial prominence” of white liberals, especially students, in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid:

“This was a period when (mainly white) liberal and university political activities achieved considerable prominence, more or less in isolation from blacks, but also, in a sense as surrogates for black opposition.”²

At the same time there emerged the black-consciousness movement which was violently “anti-white liberal”³. This black consciousness was “unfortunately ... a one-sided, partial recovery of the tradition (of the ANC and CP). Blackness tended to be asserted in a romantic manner, to the exclusion of the other components of the tradition. Alliance with white democrats, far from being considered politically necessary or important, was regarded as a dilution of what was now viewed as the struggle of the blacks alone. In addition, the oppression of blacks was treated primarily on the psychological, cultural and ideological levels. This in turn was linked to an organisational emphasis on consciousness-raising, mainly amongst intellectuals, rather than mass activity”⁴.

What was the impact of this approach on the white radicals at the time? Graeme Bloch from Cape Town tells us:

“We could find no home, of course, within the black consciousness movement, and against B(lack) and C(onsciousness) our class analysis provided easy answers (they were intellectuals cut off from the working class). Outside of B(lack) C(onsciousness), the trade unions presented the only real force amongst the people — we could neither conceive of other forms of struggle, nor did they seem necessary. All these factors underlined our narrow understanding of where and how change could occur. Cape Town’s Unity Movement tradition and its purist approach, added to this intellectual approach”⁵.

If one takes into consideration that “by 1970 the 10 years of boom were over, South Africa was entering into a serious recession. By 1976 South Africa’s economy was in total decline”⁶, it becomes obvious that these different problems and political tensions had economic and social roots.

This was the period of the 1973 Durban strikes and the Wages Commission excited some special interest and appeal amongst some white radicals. The re-emergence and rise of black, especially African, trade unionism on a scale hitherto unknown in South Africa seemed to vindicate the theories of these new “Marxists”. The Soweto uprising of 1976 needs special mention in this regard — amongst the whites it led to some soul-

searching, to say the least.

What about the “external factors”? One of them is the growing influence, impact and attractiveness of the achievements of the socialist countries — although these new “Marxists” would disagree on this point. But this to me seems to be a decisive objective factor — despite the subjective feelings of these new “Marxists”. The independence of Angola and Mozambique had an electric effect on our people. The invasion of Angola by the racists in 1975/76 strengthened the conviction in our people of the correctness of the policy of the MPLA! I once asked some young Soweto students why they came to support the MPLA. They told me “we knew nothing about MPLA, nothing about Angola. But when we saw that the racists are supporting UNITA, we became convinced that the MPLA is the right organisation”. *Sechaba* commented that:

“The revolutions in Angola and Mozambique teach us the simple lesson that in Africa there is a need to differentiate between formal independence and genuine independence.”⁷

It should be remembered that Angola and Mozambique (before Nkomati) had a special appeal to those radicals as countries — in Africa and specifically in Southern Africa — which sought to combine Marxism-Leninism with African liberation.

The situation in Zimbabwe was a bit difficult for our people to assess. But it had its impact. Commenting on the Zimbabwe elections of 1980, *Sechaba* stated:

“The present campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela was initially a reaction to a call for a convention by two ‘influential’ Afrikaans newspapers following the overwhelming victory in the recent Zimbabwe elections of the Patriotic Front alliance. But these Afrikaans papers blundered. They misread the mood of the people.

“This is exactly what the Zimbabwean whites did. They misread black attitudes. And not only that. The Zimbabwean elections, against most white expectations, have shown that black leaders who are picked out by whites as suitable people to lead, will be politically destroyed by precisely that recognition and replaced by a people’s choice. Zimbabwe has also shown the folly of believing that a white minority can enjoy power and privilege indefinitely at the cost of a black majority.

“These reasons perhaps explain why recently in the South African press there has been a consistent use of terms like true leaders or real leaders, recognised black leaders, right leaders or even authentic black leaders. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela is one. This is the unique leadership role accorded him by our people.”⁸

In other words, the military and political defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Africa, the rise to power of socialist-oriented states in Angola and Mozambique were a source of inspiration not only to the oppressed and exploited masses but also to the white radicals. The economic independence

of these countries would enable them to give assistance to liberatory movements in Southern Africa — ANC and SWAPO. The fall of the Smith regime in Zimbabwe and the escalating conflict in Namibia and South Africa inspired both the “Marxist” tendency and black consciousness. These are some of the factors (not forgetting the polarisation within the white community and “world” recession) which lie behind the emergence of these new “Marxist” theories in South Africa.

These forces — in their own way — were giving expression to the national and class struggle. It was all distorted and confused — and confusing.

Sources of Inspiration

Antonio Gramsci is the most often cited authority — Bloch says Gramsci is “someone who has become a bit of a craze in this part of Africa”⁹. Althusser, Poulantzas and “also the West German State-derivation theorists”⁹ also feature in this list of sources of inspiration. Belinda Bozzoli complains of the “strong hold over radical scholarship in this country of an Althusserian and/or a structuralist method of analysis, at least until recently”.¹¹ There were also influences from South African academics in Britain. Bloch tells us the whole story, not without self-criticism:

“Legassick and Wolpe had been mounting a successful attack on the liberal school of South African analysis and challenged the notion that race could provide explanations for South Africa’s historical development. Against this, they posed an analysis that stressed class, and the use of race by capitalism as a divisive and mystifying tool against the exploited workers. This view came through in our SSD¹² programme — we didn’t mind struggles against racial discrimination, but what we actually wanted was real change. Behind South Africa’s apartheid system lurked *simply and unproblematically* the real struggle over the country’s resources. *Most of our theoretical training was developed using the abstract concepts of Western Marxism unquestioningly imposed on to South Africa’s reality.* If capitalism was the problem, the answer followed naturally: the workers, the proletarian struggle”.¹³ (Emphasis added.)

The question arises: why should “Marxist” theories today be “popular” or “widespread” amongst the affluent, white academic and student circles in South Africa? To explain this phenomenon we shall take Belinda Bozzoli as an example. She is one of these new “Marxists”. Recently I glanced through her book, *The Political Nature of a Ruling Class: Capital and Ideology in South Africa 1890-1933*. This was her Ph.D. thesis at Sussex University.

In her preface she thanks more than 20 people who helped her in her research, “Marxist” orientation, understanding and outlook. She praises “Martin Legassick’s wide-ranging understanding of both Marxist studies and Southern African history (which) were always something of an

inspiration”, and says “Stanley Trapido taught me a great deal about historical materialism, perhaps often without realising it.”

She also thanks two African women, Lizzie Mthembu and Florence Zikabla, “for their generous help with caring for Gareth and Jessica”!

This is not to suggest that the “example” of Belinda Bozzoli is a prototype of these new “Marxists” but it tells us a lot about the role assigned to African women. These “Marxists” talk “on behalf” of the black working class; but their relationship to the black workers is suspect. Recently one of them in Britain was talking to an ANC activist, a former black consciousness leader. This “Marxist” started telling the ANC activist about how much contact he had with black consciousness leaders in Durban. He mentioned a long list. Little did he know that he was talking to one of the people he mentioned who was now using a different name!

These examples reflect the attitudes of the new “Marxists” towards the conventional ruling-class ideology and outlook, and also their insensitivity towards the national question about which in their writings “there is a deafening silence”¹⁵. This insensitivity was one of the reasons which made the black consciousness people wary of the whites — whoever they were and irrespective of their political persuasions. The situation has changed now — some of the architects and propounders of black consciousness are with the United Democratic Front (UDF) advocating non-racial policies while others have gone in the opposite direction: during the recent Kennedy visit to South Africa, it was difficult to differentiate between the apartheid propaganda and the propaganda of AZAPO, a prominent if not predominant “affiliate” of the National Forum.

National Forum

The National Forum is a conglomeration of people with various and at times divergent politics: what unites them is their opposition to the Freedom Charter and the UDF.¹⁶ One of the “shining stars” in the National Forum is Neville Alexander, who did his Ph.D. in West Germany in 1958-61¹⁷ and became involved in the student politics of that country, especially in the SDS in Tübingen and Frankfurt. This was the period of the Algerian revolution, the banning of the ANC and the formation of its military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe. Note that Alexander was not involved at that time in the politics of South Africa, though we do not hold that against him.

In July 1961 he returned to South Africa where he became a member of the National Liberation Front, “the continuation of the Yu Chi Chan Club”¹⁸. He was imprisoned for ten years on Robben Island, released in 1974 and re-

stricted — the ban expired in 1979. He still has very “good contacts” in West Germany which he visits often.

This record in itself is not a bad one. What puzzles us is that the “Marxist” Neville Alexander does not seem to have much contact with the workers and workers’ organisations in West Germany, though he enjoys the support of the ruling circles. The West German government — through its ambassador in South Africa — intervened on his behalf when South Africa refused him a passport to go to West Germany. He got it!

The theories of the new “Marxists” are not always derived from the study of Marxist-Leninist texts or documents of the Comintern and the international communist and workers’ movement on the national and colonial question and national liberation movements. In South Africa it may be difficult to come across these. The new “Marxists” seem to depend much more on “Marxist” literature published in the West.

When it comes to theories of the new “Marxists” it becomes clear that we are not dealing with a clearly worked-out “school of thought” or ideology. The new “Marxists” are not unanimous even in their criticism of the thesis of colonialism of a special type. They talk about “racial capitalism”, a term which has been used in a variety of ways. Some people say “racial capitalism” has been developed in opposition to the “crude versions” of Black Consciousness which insist that class exploitation is irrelevant in South Africa and also in opposition to sectarian ultra-left positions which regard racial oppression as equally irrelevant.¹⁹

The problem seems to be broader and more serious than that: there is an attempt to pose “racial capitalism” as an alternative if not antidote to the Freedom Charter and the thesis of colonialism of a special type (CST). Stephen Gelb is quite open about this:

“Having derived the above critique of CST in relation to both its analytical approach and its strategic implications, it seems incumbent on me to ... offer an alternative conception which might be able to avoid the different problems I have argued characterise CST ...

“It seems to me that ‘racial capitalism’ ... might be able to serve as such an alternative conception”.²⁰

If one considers that the programme of the National Forum uses the term “racial capitalism” to characterise South Africa and goes further to state that the Forum is fighting for the “establishment of a democratic anti-racist worker Republic in Azania” and that the black workers “alone can end the system as it stands today because they alone have nothing at all to lose”²¹ then the implications become more serious.

In his book *One Azania, One Nation*²², No Sizwe goes so far as to oppose the use of the term “race” altogether preferring the term “colour caste”. He accuses the Communist Party programme of “pluralism”. No Sizwe draws a parallel between our movement’s position and the policy of apartheid. No

Sizwe maintains that the ANC and CP, by adopting a position of recognising various national groups, reflect a class position other than that of the working class.

No Sizwe's accusation that the movement has produced a theory similar to that of the "pluralists" is false. The charge that the recognition of different national groups, each characterised by conditions specific to it at economic, political and ideological levels amounts to "pluralism" and by implication liberalism, shows how far removed No Sizwe is from South African reality. His rejection of the concept of race and by implication racism is indicative of the world he lives in — far from South African reality.

Colonialism of a Special Type

The real (that is, the objective as distinct from the subjective) aim of these new "Marxists" is to reject the *two-stage* theory of our revolution. To do this successfully, they have to question the validity of the thesis of "colonialism of a special type" and then proceed to demolish the national-democratic stage thesis and question the role and genuineness of the non-proletarian forces in the struggle. They want to change the orientation and language of our movement and all that we stand for.

Several years ago four of these new "Marxists" — Martin Legassick, Rob Peterson, David Hemson and Paula Ensor — joined the ANC and SACTU in London. They became more active in SACTU and usurped SACTU's official organ *Worker's Unity* which overnight became their mouthpiece. Some of these people left the country years ago and after studying in the US became "heavy intellectuals" in Britain. Others were involved in the formation of black trade unions in 1973 — in the Wages Commission and the Durban strikes.

Because they began to advocate policies which were in conflict with those of the liberation movement employing them, the movement took steps to stop their undermining activities. They were removed from SACTU and the ANC, but constituted themselves into a "faction" *outside our ranks* and published a quarterly called *Inqaba yaba Sebenzi* (Workers' Fortress) with the misleading sub-title: "Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress".

Their ideas were conceptualised in programmatic form: "South Africa's Impending Socialist Revolution" again with the misleading sub-title: "Perspective of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress"²³. It is obvious that they joined the ANC for no other reason than to gain "acceptability" and/or "respectability" for their ideas which have

nothing to do with the ANC. That is why they continued to use the ANC “tag” even when they had been suspended from the ANC.

Their programme is full of flaws, innuendos, lies and distortions. But for the purposes of our discussion I shall deal with only a few of these:

On the ANC they have this to say:

“A careful consideration of the policies put forward by the ANC leadership indicates that they have not adequately come to grips with the objective character of the South African revolution and do not put forward the tasks of overthrowing the bourgeoisie.²⁴”

And on the SACP, they say:

“A major influence in this regard has been the erroneous approach of the leadership of the SACP. The programme of the Communist party, adopted in 1962 and still its programme today, shows how deeply rooted the CP leadership has remained in the ideas of two stages, despite all experience”.

Then they give advice to the “rank and filers” within the CP:

“Comrades in the SACP ought to draw these questions to the attention of their fellows and insist on clarification from the Party leadership. So far the leadership has shown itself completely unwilling to break with the two-stage theory and all its implications, because they have remained cemented within the international tradition of Stalinism. This is a problem which the rank and file of the SACP will find themselves increasingly having to confront”.

And then they lecture, of all people, Nelson Mandela who should be lecturing to them:

“It will be vital for him, as it is vital for all ANC leaders, to *openly proclaim a programme of proletarian revolution as the only basis on which the demands in the Freedom Charter can be carried through*”. (Emphasis added)

The arrogance and ignorance revealed in these few quotations are beyond description. The programme and policies of our movement were discussed, debated and adopted by thousands of our people — and are being followed by them. Some of our people have been arrested and hanged for their activities in implementing these policies and programmes. Yet these policies and programmes, tried and tested by history, are now reduced to “problems of the leadership” of the ANC and SACP. The “rank and filers” are charged with the task of “forcing” our leadership to change its policies — and not to fight the regime so that we can liberate ourselves.

The recent ANC conference expelled this “Marxist” tendency. Let us hope that they will now stop their parasitic and dishonest attempt to exploit the reputation and prestige of the ANC to further their own aims.

National and Class Struggle

These people who are against the two-stage theory seem to see national and class struggle taking place “co-terminously” and by implication so

interlinked that it is difficult to differentiate the one from the other. There are also those who see national liberation as an “aspect” of the socialist revolution — the socialist revolution will “sort out” the national question. In fact, some of these new “Marxists” see the socialist revolution as the “opposite” of the national struggle; while some see national oppression as only one of the many evils such as sexism, Bantu Education, housing, mass media etc. This “equality”, “parity”, or “equation” of these evils is misleading because the national question therefore becomes “marginalised”, that is as opposed to the “real oppression” which is regarded as “class exploitation”. The national liberation movement becomes trivialised.

This brings me to the question of what we understand by colonialism of a special type and the two-stage theory.

It was Lenin who said at the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920 that “The cardinal idea underlying our theses” was “the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International, we emphasise this distinction”²⁵.

And this is exactly what the 1962 Communist Party Programme did. In the context of South African reality this means in South Africa there are two major contenders, two major social poles: the forces of oppression and the forces of revolution. The situation in our country resembles that in a colonised country with the difference/distinction that the coloniser and the colonised are located within the same territory and participate in the same economy.

There is (and always will be) a need to emphasise the *colonial aspect* of our situation. This is all the more so because since 1652 “when the colonialists first invaded our country, South Africa has never been decolonised”. Botha and others are “the direct descendants of their colonial predecessors”²⁶.

But we stress that the white minority and the black majority are not two classes. There are class differences and struggles within both camps. Within the white society these classes struggle around the issue of how best to preserve the status quo — how best to maintain the colonial oppression of the black majority.

Black Class Divisions

Within the black community there are also classes and class struggles, but all these classes are affected by colonial oppression — true, in different degrees, some more severely than others. But all of them have a real interest in putting an end to colonial oppression. This explains our insistence on the unity of the oppressed and on the national democratic revolution as the immediate goal

and necessary stage. To do otherwise would be to split our forces. But we are not vague about this. We insist that the *black working class or the black workers are the most consistent class in this struggle for a national democratic state — hence their leading role in this struggle for national liberation.*

Having said this, we should not forget that although “we have divided” South Africa into coloniser and colonised, there are people — individuals and not classes — who cross over to join the other camp. (Their numbers are dependent on the strength, impact and future prospects for winning of the contending forces). We have in mind the white democrats and revolutionaries who, by joining hands with the Blacks, have made the cause of the Blacks their own and have contributed tremendously to the struggle. Although their numbers are not large, they are increasing. There are also Blacks, the sell-outs, who identify with the white rulers. In some cases these black sell-outs outshine the racists in their brutality: the Ciskei is a case in point. But it is clear that the stronger we are on the ground, the closer we come to the seizure of power, the more we intensify the struggle against the “real enemy”, the better shall we be able to deal with these “lost souls” — including the new “Marxists”.

This concept of the coloniser and the colonised also helps us to explain the historical development and nature of our national oppression in South Africa. This is connected with another equally important question of the need to emphasise the *unbroken record* and militant tradition of resistance to colonialism — a struggle which began with colonialism itself and was fought at different times, *by all the African people.* We must encourage a sense of pride in the militant, centuries-old traditions of anti-colonial resistance among our people: a tradition which finds expression today in the ANC, CP, SACTU and Umkhonto we Sizwe. *So as not to be misunderstood, we are not suggesting that we must live by the glories of the past: we live by our daily achievements. To put this differently, the future of our revolution and movement does not depend on abstract hopes and wishes — our ideals and aspirations will become a reality as a result of our actions and thinking today and here. But part of that is the inspiration and lessons we draw from our predecessors.*

The emphasis on national oppression also helps to explain and clarify the political character of our struggle which is a national liberation struggle and not a civil rights struggle.

Capitalism and National Oppression

The discovery of diamonds and gold in the last third of the 19th century introduced capitalism in our country. This was “deformed” and “distorted”

capitalism — hence the “deformed” and “distorted” class structure. Capitalism in South Africa — like in all colonies — was not a result of internal developments or a bourgeois revolution against feudalism, as was the case in Europe. Capitalism was “imposed” on South Africa during the *era of imperialism*. Hence the *deformity* and *distortion*. This explains the emergence in 1910 of colonialism of a special type; this explains why South Africa has a *two-faced* state structure: a “democratic” face for the Whites and a neo-fascist one for the Blacks. The “two faces” operate within the same country and territory. In a different context Bloch makes the point:

“Matanzima and Sebe may make the fact of oppression by blacks more visible — they have not made whites carry passes”.²⁷

In South Africa we are involved in a national liberation struggle because the black majority — that is African, Coloured and Indian — have yet to gain national independence or self-determination, that is democratic control over their own lives. Our struggle is not a civil rights struggle; it is not a struggle for gradual assimilation of the black majority into the white society. It is a struggle for the transformation of the whole society: *the struggle for national liberation remains at the centre of our agenda*.

By *national* liberation struggle we mean a struggle that incorporates *all* our people, *all over the country*. In the light of the regime’s attempt to divide the country into so-called bantustans, “nations” or “group areas”, this aspect is particularly important. It is connected with the demand for a single and unfragmented South Africa.

The new state we are struggling to build will encompass and unite with a single loyalty all our people but at the same time be predominantly African. We hope by then we will all call ourselves Africans, not just South Africans. But even if we all call ourselves Africans, that will not mean that the different cultures and languages will disappear. We shall develop them all in the letter and spirit of the Freedom Charter.

What is the role of the national liberation movement in this process? If at the beginning of this century the central issue was to transcend “tribal” divisions amongst Africans, the 1920’s saw the emergence of the African working-class as an independent force, organised in the ICU and other trade unions.

The question of national and class struggle became clearer than before. It is not surprising that the Comintern suggested the slogan of an “independent Native South African Republic as a stage towards a workers’ and peasants’ republic, with full equal rights for all races” — the two stage theory.

In the Communist Party there were stormy debates on the interpretation

of this slogan.²⁸ In a sense today we are reliving that period, with the difference that *then* the debate was “within” the Party, more structured and disciplined — *discussing the interpretation of the slogan*. But these new “Marxists” are not only outside the CP, they are challenging the two stage theory with the aim of “imposing” their adventurist ideas on the movement.

The ANC and the Party progressed and developed and in the 1950s the Congress Alliance introduced a new element and dimension in our thinking, namely *inter-racial* unity. Today we are all united under the umbrella of the ANC. This process, this unity in all its dimensions and implications is still being advanced in numerous discussions and debates.

The decision of the recent ANC conference to open ranks to all South African revolutionaries irrespective of race at all levels — a decision which was long overdue if one considers that Umkhonto we Sizwe since its inception was open to all South Africans — raised this question of *unity in action* and *interracial unity* to a higher level.

This achievement of our unity has been a remarkable success. It has changed the ANC and CP in both their social composition, leadership and outlook. But the strategic goal — the liberation of the African people and other nationally oppressed Blacks — remains the same.

But these successes and achievements should be no reason for complacency. The enemy is trying to split this unity: by co-opting sections of the black community, the Coloured, Indians and sections of the African population in the urban areas and the Bantustans. By the way, the bantustans which are meant for Africans, affect the whites as well. David Webster makes the point that the inflated salary of Matanzima — the most highly paid politician in South Africa — is not unconnected with the fact that 75 per cent of the Transkei budget consists of a grant from South Africa.

“So taxpayers like myself end up paying Matanzima’s salary”.²⁹ This is one instance which shows the validity of Marx’s comment that a nation that oppresses others forges its own chains.

All this and much more poses a challenge to us to strengthen and articulate our inter-class unity. Does this not negate the concept of working-class leadership?

Working-Class Leadership

A discussion on the leading role of the working class would be incomplete if we did not say a word or two about the “workerists”³⁰. These are people who advocate “workers’ control” over production as the main objective of working-class organisation and maintain that the hope of achieving this

objective raises working-class consciousness. For the “workerists” capitalist society is characterised by a basic contradiction between capital and labour based on the fact that the wealth produced by the class of non-owners of the means of production is appropriated by the class of owners. This places these two classes in an antagonistic relationship in which the class interests of the one can only be realised at the expense of the other. “Workerists” see this contradiction as the primary one in a capitalist society and locate it most explicitly at the point of production. It is there that an “undiluted” relationship of exchange exists, yielding a surplus which accrues to the capitalists by virtue of their ownership of the means of production.

There are problems with this position, but let us hear what other workers have to say about it. Sisa Njikelana, Secretary-General of SAAWU, replies:

“It seems that there is a tendency to conflate the definition of the working class as a class with that of trade union membership and hence to see trade unions as the only true form of a working class organisation. This tendency emphasises the distinction between the trade unions which are characterised as single class organisations and other organisations and hence not working-class organisations ... This implied claim by certain trade union leadership to special status within multi-class organisation needs to be carefully examined.

“It is questionable whether trade unions, with their accepted ambiguities, will represent the interests of the working class any better or more thoroughly than community organisations based within the residential areas of the same workers who are members of the trade unions. To conflate the working class with union membership is to confine the membership of the working class to union membership only, to the exclusion of dependants (husbands, wives, elderly parents and children) of those union members. Non-unionised workers and the unemployed constitute a vast portion of the working class. The community, women’s, student, youth and other organisations based within class communities, are also in a position to express the views of the working class and are also legitimate organisations of the working class.

“The distinction between trade union struggles and struggles engaged in by other mass-based organisations has tended to be exaggerated in an attempt to show that the economic struggles waged by the unions are far more real and working class in nature than other mass based struggles”.³¹

On this question of “workerism” it is important to note Lenin’s remark: “Whoever expects a pure social revolution will never live to see it”.

We need to clarify our minds on some of the concepts we use perhaps unwittingly. This refers to concepts such as “internal colonialism”. The concept of “colonialism of a special type” has different premises from “internal” or “domestic” colonialism. Whereas the latter refers to the relationship between “white South Africa” and the reserves, “colonialism of a special type” has implications for the whole of South Africa including the bantustans. This is not juggling with words: we have to establish a

demarcation line between ourselves and the Gwendolyn Carters — even in the field of terminology.

Danger of Sectarianism

The problem with people advocating “socialism now” is that they expect those Blacks who cannot read or write to run socialist industries and mines. The danger here is that we can easily find ourselves depending on the expertise of the very forces we want to defeat: people who are against our socialist principles. The result would be an economic crisis. And the people will not only be against the new government but against “socialism” in general because they will see their problems as caused by the socialism we have declared.

Lenin says:

“Not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and the backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants’ Soviets and strive to adapt them to the pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate grounding that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries backward countries can go over to the soviet system and through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.”³²

It is important to examine the theory of “colonialism of a special type” in the light of Lenin’s advice. But before we do that let us remark that Lenin was talking of “backward countries” by which he meant “colonial countries” which would be what we today call “former colonial countries”, “developing countries” or “underdeveloped countries”. Yet the Party Programme characterises South Africa as a country which has both “all the features of a colony” and “all the features of an advanced capitalist state in its final stage of imperialism”. It could be argued that Lenin was referring to countries with “pre-capitalist conditions”, countries that “can go over to the the soviet system and through certain stages of development, to Communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage” and this problem does not confront us in South Africa since capitalism exists there.

The Communist Party Programme is unambiguous on this question since it envisages the national democratic stage *as a stage towards socialism*. Starting from the correct premise of identifying the main contradiction as that between the interests of the racist and colonial forces on the one hand and those of the Black masses on the other, it takes the reality of South Africa into account. We are not “excited” by the economic and industrial development at the expense of subjective factors and we determine our strategy

accordingly. Our struggle is for the seizure of political power precisely because we want to solve the class and national question. This presupposes the destruction of the present system and that lays a basis for the implementation of our ideals.

But we should move away from such superficial and not well-thought-out formulations as that the national democratic stage will be a “short phase”, a “formality” or an “unnecessary bother”. We need to grapple with the implications of this process — the national democratic revolution — more so that the revolutions in Africa, Zimbabwe lately, do indicate that this process has a momentum of its own, perhaps even stages one has to go through before it is possible to talk of transition to socialism. Perhaps we need a re-look at the suggestion of the Comintern about “An independent Native Republic as a stage towards a workers’ and peasants’ republic with full and equal rights for all races”. Incidentally, a workers’ and peasants’ republic is not the same thing as a “socialist republic” — it is a stage towards socialism and therefore the Comintern seems to have had in mind a number of stages in the revolution. This is not to suggest that our theories of a two-stage revolution are wrong — even the first stage might have to be divided into phases. We need to guard against the simplification of complicated processes.

Even the question of the essence of the democratic and revolutionary content of African nationalism and its relations with the ethno-cultural groups to one or other of which South Africans of all nationalities belong needs to be clarified. This problem never faced the revolutionary movements in Kenya, Tanzania or even Zimbabwe for the simple reason that the Indian or Coloured communities in those countries never participated in a meaningful way in the African struggle for independence, though individuals of all minority groups did so. In South Africa, however, the situation is different — the contribution of the minority national groups to the liberation struggle of the African majority has been significant.

This question becomes more urgent now that the ANC has assumed the responsibility of being the leader not only of the Africans but also of all the oppressed and democratic forces. The ANC has truly become a *national* organisation, that is, an organisation of like-minded people, united by their hatred of colonialism, racism, exploitation and national degradation, sharing a common goal — and whose activities consist in propagating its ideas amongst the people and fighting in *a constituency which it itself defines*.

If there are any contradictions in the Freedom Charter (as some people suggest) this is a reflection of the simple fact that our struggle is complex and this should be all the more reason why we should work for it. We are involving

the working class in its implementation because we want to strengthen the working-class forces and their positions in the national democratic revolution: and this is what we understand by working-class leadership (as opposed to working-class leadership exercised from university libraries).

The black working class cannot afford the luxury of standing aloof from or outside the on-going struggles of the people, making demands about a future, “glorious” socialist revolution when everybody including the petty bourgeoisie is fighting for national liberation. Who can doubt that Bishop Tutu — with all his inconsistency — is *fighting for national liberation*? Ironically the outcome, the direction of our national liberation struggle, will depend on the extent of the participation of the working class — a fact which testifies to the *dangers of sectarianism*. It is important to remind these super-revolutionaries that our people are more concerned with the question of class domination rather than their pet subjects such as the “state apparatus”. This is because the class struggle reinforces the national liberation struggle and the national liberation struggle weakens class domination. The national question cannot be equated with the class question and therefore class struggle is not identical with the national liberation struggle. True, the two are interlinked and overlap but they are not identical.

Lenin and the Freedom Charter

The Freedom Charter talks about complicated concepts such as “equality”. How do we achieve equality between Blacks and Whites — Blacks, especially Africans, who have been disadvantaged for more than three centuries?

Lenin has advised us that internationalism, that is from the point of view of the oppressor nations or “great nations” which are great only in their violence and as bullies (these are all Lenin’s words and can be applied to the whites in South Africa):

“must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice.”

Some people call this “positive discrimination”. What this means is that during the implementation of the Freedom Charter we shall have to “arrest” — I might be using a wrong word — the development of the whites in favour of the development of the Blacks. This is nothing new. It was done in the Soviet Union. It worked. And the Russian people are very proud to have contributed to the development of the Asian Republics in the Soviet Union. The essence of Leninism here is the question of “aid” from the proletariat of the “advanced nations” to the “weaker nations”. If we maintain — as we do —

that "Black South Africa" is a colony of "White South Africa" surely one of these "advanced countries" Lenin is talking about is "White South Africa". And since the white workers are not aware of their role — even on this question — our national liberation movement must assume responsibility. And the opening of ranks within the ANC will show the white workers that they have a role to play in this mammoth task.

The Battle Will Not Be Won In Libraries

The problem with these new "Marxists" is that they are afraid of the *nationalism of the oppressed* which seems to be "obscure" to them — they just do not understand it. And yet this nationalism of the oppressed is nothing but an ideology reflecting an unsolved national question. These new "Marxists" who have read much about the suffering of the people are reluctant to learn from the very people they are theorising about: people who have not read all those books in the libraries but know oppression and exploitation from personal experience. The new "Marxists" seem to have a distaste for the hard-slogging day-to-day explanation and mobilisation of the people on bread and butter issues. There is a lot that is assumed without being worked for, for example working-class leadership. This is a refusal to move from abstract theory or abstract intellectualism to concrete and living reality.

One thing is clear. If these new "Marxists" do not want to learn that the national liberation struggle is a priority at this stage, they should understand that the struggle against colonialism, national oppression and capitalism in our country will not be won in libraries. True, libraries are important but not decisive battlegrounds; safer and not dangerous; but this is definitely not where the struggle for the seizure of political power will be won.

Notes

1. Suttner, R. — *The Freedom Charter — The People's Charter in the Nineteen-Eighties*, The Twenty-sixth T.B. Davie Memorial Lecture, delivered in the University of Cape Town on September 26th 1984, University of Cape Town, 1984, p.2.

2. Ibid.

3. Cf.: Biko, S. — *I Write What I Like*. A selection of his writings edited with a personal memoir by Aelred Stubbs, C.R., London 1978. A critique of Steve Biko's theories has been made by Toussaint in *The African Communist*, London, No 78 Third Quarter 1978.

4. Suttner, R. — op. cit. p.3.

5. Bloch, G. — *Ideology and National Democratic Struggle*, in *Beyond Reform — The Challenge of Change*, Speeches presented at the NUSAS July Festival held at the University of Cape Town, July 1983, p.48.

6. Webster, D. — *Nature of the Crisis in South Africa*, in *Beyond Reform ...* Ibid. p.9.
7. *Sechaba*, London, Third Quarter, Volume 12, 1976.
8. *Sechaba*, July issue, 1980, p.3.
9. Bloch, G — op. cit. p.48.
10. *Colonialism of a Special Kind and the South African State: A consideration of recent articles in Africa Perspective*, Johannesburg. No 23, 1983, p.76.
11. Bozzoli, *History Workshop 2 — Town and Countryside in the Transvaal — Capitalist Production and Popular Response*, Johannesburg, 1983, p.2.
12. The SSD (Students for Social Democracy) was a student movement formed by white radical students who feared that NUSAS, a white student body, was becoming more right wing.
13. Bloch, G. — op. cit.
14. Bozzoli, B. — *The Political Nature of a Ruling Class — Capital and Ideology in South Africa 1890-1933*, London, 1981.
15. *Colonialism of a Special Kind ...* op. cit. p. 76.
16. Cf. Nyawuza — *The National Question and Ethnicity — the Case of the United Democratic Front and the National Forum*, in *The African Communist*, No 98, Third Quarter 1984.
17. Alexander, N. — Unpublished interview with ISSA, Bonn, August 1984 (in German).
18. Nyawuza — op. cit.
19. *National Democratic Struggle — A Struggle Against Colonialism*, in *Social Review*, Cape Town, April 1984, p.9.
20. Gelb, S. — *Some Sociological Perspectives on Race, Class and Democracy in South Africa* (unpublished) p.15.
21. Cf *National Forum*, published by the National Forum committee, Johannesburg, 1983.
22. No Sizwe — *One Azania, One Nation*, London, 1979.
23. *South Africa's Impending Socialist Revolution — Perspective of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress*. An Inqaba Publication, London, 1982.
24. Ibid p.150.
25. Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Moscow 1966 p.240.
26. *Sechaba* Third Quarter 1978 p.4.
27. Bloch, G., op. cit. p.50.
28. For details see Bunting, B., *Moses Kotane — South African Revolutionary*, London, 1975, especially Chapter 2, *The National Question*. See also Lerumo, A., *Fifty Fighting Years*, London, 1981, and Ginyibhulu Xha kalegusha, *National Question and Ethnic Processes*, in *African Communist*, Fourth Quarter, 1979.
29. Webster, D., op. cit. p.12.
30. Toussaint analyses this trend in his article, *A Trade Union is not a Political Party*, in *The African Communist*, No 93, Second Quarter, 1983.
31. Interview with Sisa Njikelana, in: *Work in Progress*, Braamfontein, No. 32 July 1984 p.32.
32. Lenin, V.I., op. cit., p. 244.
33. Lenin, V.I., *The National Liberation Movement in the East*, Moscow 1976 p.324.

STATE OF EMERGENCY LEADS TO RAND COLLAPSE

S.A.'s Economic Crisis Deepens

by Phineas Malinga

When chairmen of companies address the annual meetings of their shareholders, they usually try to look on the bright side. Stories of achievements and progress are what the shareholders want to hear. It can be safely assumed, therefore, that if a company chairman's address says that things are bad, they are very bad.

When Mr Gavin Relly, chairman of Anglo American Corporation, addressed his 1985 Annual General Meeting in July, he said this:

"No one should be in any doubt that the next few years will be painful for all of us, if a secure foundation for future prosperity is to be laid. The escalation of political unrest since late last year and the changes that have taken place in the international economic environment have been so far-reaching as to require fundamental adjustments in the way we handle and shape the South African economy. World markets do not offer the same opportunities for our traditional exports and for rising commodity and gold prices, as they did in the sixties and seventies. The rate of inflation in South Africa, and therefore its competitive position, is dangerously out of line with that of our main trading partners. The relationship between consumption and investment, and the willingness to save, deteriorated last year as never before. The net reserves are severely depleted and the external value of the rand is historically low. As if this were not trouble enough, we also have to take serious note of the disinvestment campaign being waged by those who sincerely think that it will improve our society and by those who are indifferent to its destruction."¹

Several aspects of this statement are worth analysis, but it has three striking features. Firstly, it leaves no doubt about the seriousness of the economic crisis. Secondly, it admits the connection between the economic and political crises of South African capitalism. Thirdly, it comes from a source which for the past thirty years has been trying to propagandise a very different connection between economics and politics. The doctrine of the Anglo-American bosses has been that South Africa's political problems would solve themselves eventually, thanks to the benign influence of increasing economic welfare. Mr Relly's statement amounts to an admission that that doctrine is dead. Far from being able to hope that prosperity will damp down the fires of revolution, the South African bourgeoisie now has to face the fact that increasing poverty and deprivation are pouring fuel on to those fires.

World Capitalist Crisis

Mr Relly correctly diagnoses the main cause of the present economic debacle. South Africa has been caught up in the crisis of world capitalism. Since the late seventies, the entire capitalist world has been going through the worst depression since the thirties. For South Africa, this has produced, in certain respects, a re-run of the thirties. Commodity markets have crashed throughout the world and South Africa's mining and agricultural exports have suffered accordingly. The resulting shock waves have hit industries which in many cases had been built up on shaky foundations during the boom years.

The motor industry is a classic example. Manufacturers from all over the capitalist world scrambled for shares of the South African market during the quarter century to 1975. The Government compelled them to set up local assembly plants instead of importing complete vehicles, as had been the pre-war practice. The result appeared to be a flourishing local industry. It was, however, not rationally planned. The number of competing manufacturers was larger than the size of the market could justify. When the down-turn came, the motor industry emerged as a disaster area. In the six-month period up to the end of June 1985 car sales declined by 60% compared with the equivalent period last year and commercial vehicle sales declined proportionately. Among the consequences was the merger of Ford's South African operation with Amcor (the Anglo-American subsidiary which handles several European models), with the loss of more than 2,000 jobs in Port Elizabeth.

Though this is one of the biggest job losses caused by a single event, it represents only a fraction of the total damage to the motor industry. In

January 1985, it was estimated that 20,000 jobs had already been lost in motor manufacturing and allied industries, and that another 11,000 were likely to go in the course of the year.² The contraction of the motor industry has been a major cause of unemployment in the Eastern Cape and there is an obvious connection with the high level of militancy displayed by the people of that region.

Collapse of the Rand

In another respect, also mentioned by Mr Relly, the present crisis displays a sharp contrast with that of the thirties. In the past, a depression under the capitalist system was characterised by a fall in prices across the board. This was true of the thirties depression in most capitalist countries, including South Africa. Subsequently, however, the eminent bourgeois economist, John Maynard Keynes, discussed what he hoped would be a cure for depression. Temporarily, his cure worked and it enabled capitalism to postpone the depression to a date some twenty years later than the history of economic cycles up till World War 2 indicated was likely.

The basic tool of Keynesianism is inflation. According to Keynes's theory, the capitalist government should bring about a carefully controlled increase in the money supply when it sees signs that the economy is slowing down. This stimulates demand and prevents depression. As soon as this desired effect has been achieved, the money supply is again reduced, keeping the system in equilibrium.

The actual practice of Keynesian governments has been rather different. They have continually debased their currencies, at first by small amounts and later at an accelerating pace. Applied to a country with a history of currency stability, this policy enables two confidence tricks to be brought off during a certain period of time. The first is a confidence trick against the workers, who can be given paper wage increases without any real increase in purchasing power. The illusion of prosperity causes them to spend freely, which stimulates demand, but there is no real transfer of resources away from the bourgeoisie. The second is a confidence trick by the sharper, more vigorous elements of the bourgeoisie against its sleepier and more stagnant elements. The sharp bourgeois borrows money from the sleepy bourgeois at the sort of interest rate (say four or five per cent) which was traditional in the days of currency stability. Meanwhile, the currency is losing value at, say, ten per cent per annum. Ten years later, the sharp bourgeois repays the sleepy bourgeois an amount which can only buy half as much as the amount originally lent. The interest paid on the loan does not compensate for the

erosion of the capital. The sleepy bourgeois has been taken for a ride.

The effect on the economy is, at first, beneficial. Savings which would be idle in the hands of the sleepy bourgeois are put to active use by the sharp bourgeois. The bourgeoisie as a whole runs down its savings and uses part of them for current consumption. The level of economic activity is kept up.

The trouble is, however, that after a time, the victims of both confidence tricks find out what is going on. In countries with powerful trade union movements, indexation of wages becomes the rule. This accelerates the pace of inflation and deprives the capitalist of one of its benefits. Meanwhile, the sleepy bourgeois wakes up and starts demanding interest rates which adequately compensate him for inflation. Once this happens, the Keynesian game is over. Sky-high interest rates stifle enterprise and become the trigger which sets off the postponed depression.

This happened throughout the capitalist world from the late seventies onwards. Baffled bourgeois economists coined the term "stagflation" to describe the new phenomenon — depression and inflation combined. It is an extremely dangerous phenomenon for capitalism. The new-style depression has all the evil features of the old — mass unemployment, closure of whole industries, epidemic bankruptcy — together with the additional scourge of a collapsing currency. Only one major industrial country underwent this combination of misfortunes in the thirties. That country was Germany. The shattering effect upon the morale of the petty bourgeoisie and the malign influences to which they then became subject are too well known to require description.

Alarmed by these dangers, many capitalist governments have in recent years taken drastic measures to reduce inflation. In this they have had some success, although at considerable cost to their economies and their peoples. The South African government, however, has been denied even this facade of success. During the first half of 1985, the words "hyperinflation" and "collapse of the rand" were heard more and more frequently in economic discussion. In the course of 1984, the rand lost 40% of its value against the US dollar, which led to dramatic increases in the price of petrol and oil — a key factor in inflation. The first half of 1985 saw a decline in the dollar, so that the relative decline of the rand was less spectacular. By mid-1985, however, the indicators were all negative. Inflation was running at just over 16% per annum. The value of the rand against an average of world currencies (most of which, be it remembered, are themselves losing value at various rates) was down to 62% of its 1983 level.

The remedy of high interest rates, which has been used with some effect in countries such as Britain and the USA, appears ineffective in South Africa. Interest rates have been around the 16% to 22% level for a considerable time, a fact which itself aggravates the difficulties of industry and agriculture. Yet inflation gets worse. This suggests that confidence in the currency has reached a low ebb. Those South Africans who still have liquid resources do not wish to keep them in rands at any price. No matter what interest rates are offered, it seems safer to get resources into foreign currencies or into real assets. One report on the South African economy in the wake of the declaration of a state of emergency stated:

“How increased strikes and workers’ sabotage will look to outside investors anxious at the strength of the disinvestment campaign, is fairly obvious. Already it has been reported that South Africa is seeking a rescheduling of its debt — about 60 per cent of a total of 23,000m. US dollars is due for repayment this year. And it is reliably learnt that a major UK bank with holdings in South Africa has approached the British Foreign Office to express concern at the unrest.

“‘Funk money’ — investors running scared — is leaving South Africa at an alarming rate; R2,800m in the quarter to March alone. According to one South African economist, ‘the economy is so bombed out nobody wants to borrow’”.³

In July another report stated:

“The capital market is on the shelf. Trading is at a standstill and stocks are moving in tediously narrow ranges... The present trend is likely to carry on indefinitely... As a gilt dealer at the JSE (Johannesburg Stock Exchange) says; ‘We’re in a straitjacket at the moment’”.⁴

Once such a mood grips the bourgeoisie, the currency goes into a downward spiral which is almost impossible to stop. The most unscrupulous elements of the bourgeoisie emerge from the debacle with profit, but many of the middle strata find their savings wiped out. The chief sufferers, however, are those who depend entirely on a cash wage for their survival. From them, the fruits of years of toil and struggle can be snatched away overnight. The effective protection of the working class in a severe inflationary situation is a task within the capabilities of only the strongest trade union movements. In spite of all its achievements in recent years, the South African trade union movement is nowhere near that stage yet. For South African workers in the immediate future it is inevitable that those who escape the scourge of unemployment will suffer the lash of inflation.

Unemployment will nevertheless remain, for the working class, the most immediate consequence of the depression. The precise number of unemployed is unknown. The regime keeps statistics only of what it is pleased to call "non-black" unemployment. This figure stood at 55,194 in April 1985 — an increase of 87.9% over the figure a year earlier! Much despondency and alarm have resulted among the white population, leading the *Sunday Star*, for example, to say that

"In platteland villages, industrial towns and cities a growing swarm of retrenched, hungry and homeless whites are taking their plight to churches and welfare agencies who have no help to give them."⁵

Yet the whole South African system is designed to ensure that the brunt of unemployment falls not on the whites but on the blacks. Of their plight, no overall picture is available, no totals are known. One can only try to put together disconnected pieces of evidence. One newspaper correspondent has estimated black unemployment as 25% of the population of the urban black townships.⁶ That may be right. Of course, any estimate confined to the population of the urban townships must understate the full scale of the problem, since one of the basic rules of the apartheid system is that unemployment is, as far as possible, exported from the urban areas to the reserves. Nobody knows the total number of Africans formerly employed in the urban areas who are now struggling to survive, jobless and landless, in the reserves.

Worse in South Africa

We see, then, that South Africa has not only been caught in the worldwide crisis of the capitalist economy, but is suffering more severely in that crisis than the majority of capitalist countries. Unemployment levels exceed those of Western Europe and North America. The currency is declining relative to other currencies. The manoeuvres by which such leaders as Reagan and Thatcher keep their heads above water do not work in the case of South Africa. The leaders of South African capitalism are forced to admit their need for "fundamental adjustments".

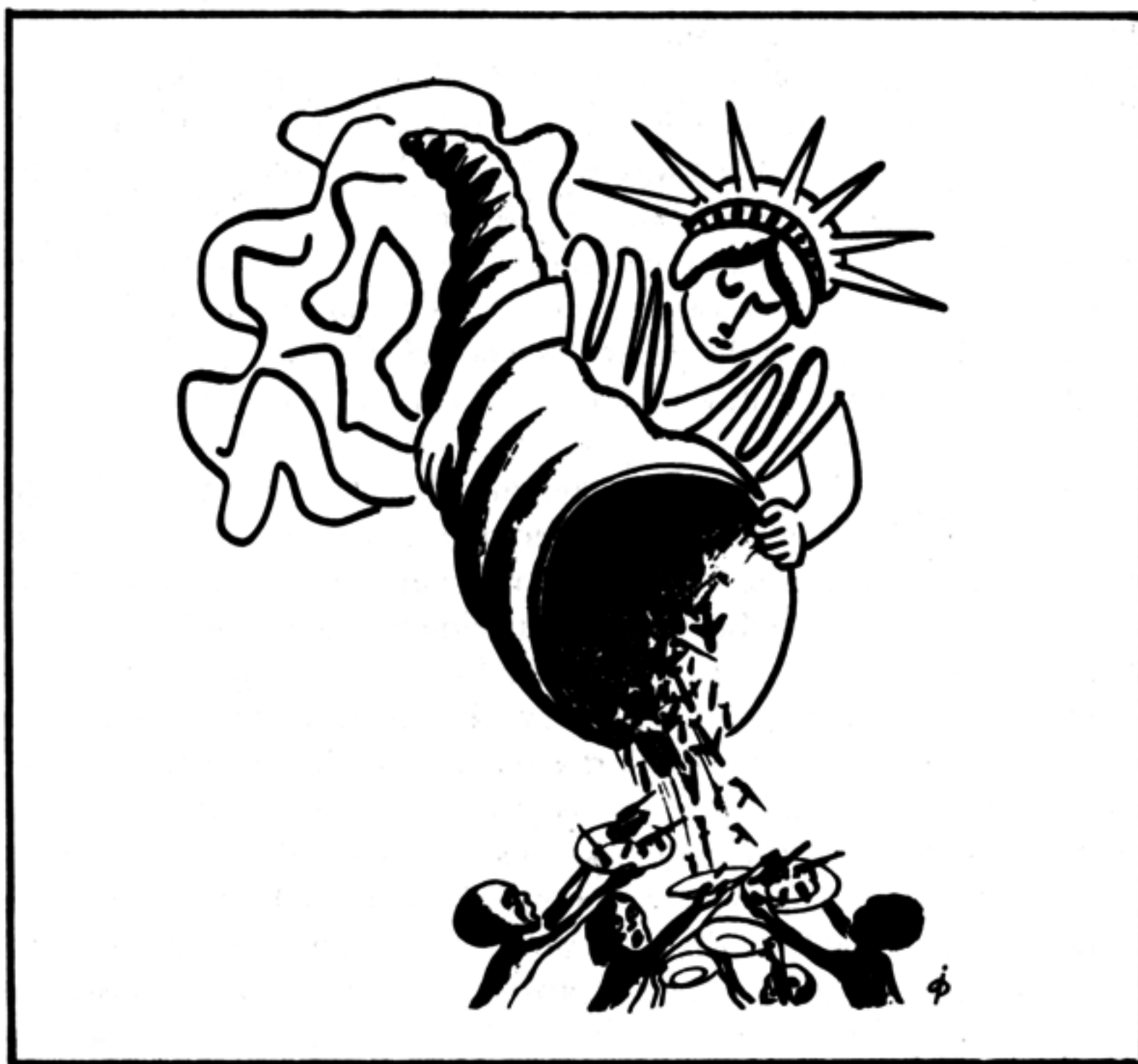
The reasons are no mystery. The economic disadvantages of the apartheid system have been pointed out over and over again, not least in recent years by the bourgeoisie themselves who had hoped to be its beneficiaries. Apartheid is now universally condemned as a rigid, artificial outdated system, imposed in the interests of the most reactionary and backward elements in the country. It is incapable of delivering the goods of the earth to the people.

These propositions are no longer a matter of debate. They are daily demonstrated by the notorious facts of South African life. They are known beyond doubt to the masses, who are not prepared to tolerate the system any longer. They are also known to the ruling class, whose confidence in their ability to sustain the system is ebbing away with every passing day.

The present agony of the South African people will appear in the fullness of time to be that darkest hour which comes before the dawn.

Notes

1. *Standard Bank Review*, July 1985.
2. *Johannesburg Star*, January 31, 1985.
3. *West Africa*, July 29.
4. *Financial Mail*, July 26, 1985.
5. *Sunday Star*, January 27, 1985.
6. *London Times*, July 23, 1985.



SUDAN'S COMMUNISTS PLAN THEIR STRATEGY

“We Believe in the Democratic Process”

By Observer

In Issue No 102 of *The African Communist* the causes underlying the overthrow of the reactionary Nimeiry regime in the Sudan were dealt with. There has been much speculation that it was simply a palace coup signalling very little change except for the faces at the top. However, the political process in Sudan before and after the military is complex. The assertion that it was simply a palace coup ignores the mass struggles, mass demonstrations and general strikes which dominated the political scene prior to the coup, and ignores also the role of army privates and junior officers who played an active part in the uprising.

The new military transitional regime dissolved the hated security apparatus, re-established political freedom, allowed political parties and trade unions to operate legally and partially changed the direction of foreign policy. In the latter case there are tentative moves to pursue a policy more akin to non-alignment and to improve relations with Ethiopia, Libya and the socialist countries. On the other hand the changes brought about in the last few months have not been as deep-going as the objective situation demanded. For example, the “constitution” of September 1983 which “legitimised” Nimeiry’s dictatorship was suspended but not cancelled; laws restricting freedom of expression and movement, though not implemented, are not yet expunged from the statute book; the Supreme Command of the Army was not arrested — in large measure the old state apparatus remained intact.

A fundamental weakness of the coup was that the soldiers and officers involved did not co-ordinate their activities with the masses and their popular organisations. This was mainly due to the fact that the civilian opposition forces were not united. The Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) had consistently called for a broad united front around a minimum programme. But some important elements within the non-communist opposition were afraid that if they agreed to a common charter with the communists, the USA and Egypt would intervene and Nimeiry would be replaced by someone more acceptable to the imperialists. This failure to form a cohesive alliance had a negative influence on the army. Nevertheless the army, in particular the privates and junior officers, have the potential to play an important progressive role in the future. Moreover, except for the communists, the other civilian opposition forces kept their distance from the Sudan's People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in the South, led by John Garang. The SPLA had conducted an armed revolutionary struggle with considerable success and its policies are progressive. Garang never called for the secession of the South and for the first time in contemporary history the South became an adjunct and help to the revolutionary and democratic forces. Previously the justified grievances and aspirations of the people in the South had been exploited for reactionary purposes.

In the Balance

The future of Sudan hangs in the balance. There is a danger that the process of democratisation may be halted if not reversed. US imperialism, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, together with the local top echelons of the state bureaucracy, the parasitic capitalist strata and the fascist-like Muslim Brotherhood, are all seeking to cobble together an anti-communist, anti-democratic platform. They are working overtime attempting to eliminate the Communists from active political life. However, they will fail. Sudanese communists are battle-hardened with immense experience of working under conditions of illegality and semi-legality. The forces of reaction, local and foreign, will not stop short of using sabotage, terrorism and conspiracies to halt the onward march of the working people of Sudan.

At the same time there are a number of positive features. The civilian opposition forces are more united, the SCP now operates legally and a vast mass movement has been set in motion.

At its Central Committee meeting on April 20, 1985 the SCP emphasised that the Party had to make maximum use of the changes to build the Party and to develop inner-Party life and work. The Central Committee defined

under the new conditions the form, tasks and objectives of the grass-roots units; stressed the necessity to preserve semi-legal forms of Party structures; called for the consolidation and strengthening of the Party's position and influence amongst the working class, peasants and other social forces who participated in the uprising. The membership was urged to place even higher demands on the leadership. Decisions were also taken to begin preparations for a daily newspaper and for an improvement in the production and dissemination of propaganda material.

The SCP's endeavours to unite the opposition forces are now bearing fruit. A "Charter of the Allied National Forces for National Salvation" has been adopted by the three main political parties, the Umma Party, the Democratic Unionist Party and the SCP, and more than 50 general trade unions including those which played a central role in the uprising. The signatories excluded the Muslim Brotherhood which is a reactionary chauvinist organisation. The Charter declared that a transitional government should:

- a) Assure the basic democratic rights of the people such as freedom of movement, work and expression.
- b) "Solve the issue of the Southern Sudan within a framework of regional self-government based on democratic principles that will be well defined, in order to achieve the genuine participation of all political forces representing the Southern Sudan."
- c) "Free the country from its dependence on world imperialism ... (to develop) its natural wealth and resources and by mobilising them to combat the problems of drought, famine, high prices and shortages of essential commodities."
- d) "Adopt a policy of non-alignment with a strong commitment to Sudan's Arab and African identity, and a policy of good neighbourliness."
- e) "Affirm the principle of decentralised government and effect it on a sound democratic basis".
- f) Abolish the institutions of the Nimeiry regime and purge the public service "of the parasitic class which this regime created."

The SCP is optimistic and confident about the future, but it emphasises that daily vigilance, unity in action of the allied national forces and the highest form of Party discipline and unity are necessary to help thwart the nefarious schemes and activities of the external and internal forces of reaction. The Party's confidence is bolstered by the victorious revolutions in South Yemen and Ethiopia, by the steady growth of influence of the revolutionary and democratic forces in the Afro-Arab region and the active

role of the Soviet Union in defending peace and the freedom of the people throughout the world.

General Secretary's Analysis

The role and policies of the Sudanese Communist Party were explained by the general secretary of the Central Committee, Muhammed Ibrahim Noqoud, in an interview with the French Communist Party newspaper *l'Humanité* (20.4.1985). The following is an extract:

Question: What does Nimeiry's overthrow mean?

Answer: It is a great and very important victory of the Sudanese people. The potential of this movement should not be underestimated even though the military hierarchy is standing in its way. If our people have been able to bring down Nimeiry, they will be able to overthrow his subordinates. This process will not be the cause of any single party but of all democratic forces of left and right, which we must respect. We are not at all sectarian.

Question: What role did the army play?

Answer: Its intervention was expected to impede radical transformations. But the military leadership is being very strongly pressured by young officers and rank-and-file soldiers, and also by the social movement, which is able to influence its stance. Parallels with what happened in Portugal or Ethiopia need to be avoided.

Question: What is the strength of the Communist Party?

Answer: It has survived 16 years of illegality, the state of siege, mass arrests, and long prison terms served by many of its members. Our party has stood the test of the repression of Nimeiry, the CIA and the security bodies, which was co-ordinated in an attempt to remove the party from the Sudanese political life. The Communist Party is now legal, its leaders participating in all meetings with the Military Council and with other parties and trade union organisations. We are currently reorganising our forces since we need to focus on how we are going to conduct the return of legality. We must not give any pretext to those who would like to effect a reversal.

Question: What is the policy of the Sudanese Communist Party?

Answer: We believe in the democratic process. We intend to use all the political rights and mobilise the working people to exercise those rights and take their place in the process. But this needs time.

We want to bring together and unite all democratic forces of left and right, to defend the freedoms and the rights regained by our people, get all anti-democratic laws, in particular the sharia (the Islamic law), abolished, and

fight against all those who want the army to remain in power. In 28 years of independence the Sudan has known only six years of civilian rule.

It is our view that the transitional Military Council has excessive powers which should be divided between itself, the government, the parties and the trade unions. At the present stage the parties and trade unions are partially playing the role of a parliament. After one has been elected they should preserve the right to control the military hierarchy and the government.

We are struggling to ensure that the 12-month transitional period goes well. We are not opposed to the creation of a government of "independent" figures, even while knowing that the "technocrats" have a bad reputation. The main thing is to mobilise the people to defend the democratic rights. The army has tried to pour cold water on the people's movement.

It is not a question of optimism or pessimism but of a great democratic battle to liquidate all vestiges of the dictatorship, to bring all Nimeiry's collaborators to justice, to bring back the capital and curb US interference.

In foreign policy we primarily advocate good relations with all our neighbours but state that the Egyptian government wants to interfere in the Sudan's affairs. Saudi Arabia is attempting to influence the government and the bourgeoisie by giving them money.

Question: And the other political forces?

Answer: In the South the people's movement for the liberation of the Sudan plays a decisive role. No change is possible without its agreement. Colonel John Garang is a serious political leader, a good economist and a good officer. He is for unity of the Sudan and for social changes in the North and the South. He is the first political leader of the South to act in this way.

Parties like the Umma (offshoot of the Ansars movement) and the Democratic Union (offshoot of the Muslim organisation Khatmias, to which General Sewar Al Dahab belongs) are bourgeois parties that in another context could be called reactionary. But at the moment they are advocating the democratic freedoms. And that is the essential thing.

Almost 25 other new small political parties have declared themselves. This is normal after 16 years of only one party. Many people are trying to find their way. We have good relations with all these parties and organisations.

Question: Where does the main danger lie?

Answer: With the Muslim Brothers, which is a fascist organisation; with Nimeiry's people, with the 45,000 employees of the disbanded security bodies, of whom only 3,000 have been arrested.

All these forces are manipulated by the CIA. In the first ten years the Sudan became the CIA's regional centre for Central and Eastern Africa.

It literally swarmed with US agents, and many of them are still working in food aid and development aid organisations, and in many firms.

Question: What is your attitude to Islam?

Answer: While we are categorically opposed to the sharia, we are not against Islam but against the elaboration and application of undemocratic laws in the name of Islam.

Islam is our heritage. It can even be used to develop dialectical materialism. We must study it as we study Islamic philosophers. Islam, too, originated in a certain social situation from a need for a profound transformation.

It helped to spread the ideas of equality, assistance to the poor, cooperation, struggle against the unjust rulers. These good ideas are deeply rooted in our people. We should convince them that socialism, communism are the modern rebirth of those ideas.

Our party does not carry out any atheistic propaganda. Many Muslim believers are members, as are Christians. But we are for a secular state, for separation of the church from the state. The people of the South, the intellectuals and advanced sections of the public share this point of view.

Question: The Sudan's economic situation is very grave. What are the consequences? How can they be remedied?

Answer: It is a desperate situation, a real disaster. The drought has been continuing for several years. The famine has been having a negative impact on the democratic movement, for starving people cannot fight.

The aid given by the United States and Saudi Arabia is a temporary sedative. The Sudan is a classic example of the consequences of the policy of the IMF and the World Bank. Liquidation of the security services has shown the people that it is also possible to reduce the plunder of material values. This is the first step towards greater consciousness.

The only possible way is to refuse to submit to the IMF directives, to reform the tax system, bring back to the country the capital that has been exported, and confiscate the funds of the strata of parasitic capitalists created by Nimeiry. This factor has not only an economic aspect but also very important moral overtones.

The Sudan's dependence on food imports has grown from year to year. US wheat is a means of pressure for Washington. Efforts need to be concentrated on raising grain production in order to lessen this dependence.

But that will be difficult. Even with a democratic government it will take 4-5 years to surmount the crisis, for our economic backwardness must be taken into account. And without a democratic government it will be quite impossible. We have proof of that.

AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENT

by Ahmed Azad

French Policy in South and Tropical Africa: A Gap Between Words and Deeds.

In early 1981, following the victory of Mitterand in the presidential election, the First Secretary of the French Socialist Party, Lionel Jospin, categorically stated that France would initiate steps to halt investments in South Africa, observe the UN arms embargo — unfortunately with the reservation that all previous contracts would be observed — and make a contribution to the independence of Namibia. In May 1985 the socialist French Prime Minister Laurent Fabius warned Pretoria that French investments in the apartheid economy would be prohibited if definite steps were not taken to dismantle apartheid within two years. He also reiterated his government's position that the ANC and SWAPO would continue to receive facilities to conduct international solidarity work in France. But until July 24, 1985, the deeds of the French government did not match their words.

However, following Botha's declaration of a state of emergency, the increased repression and massacres of our people and the intensification of the revolutionary struggle led by the ANC and its allies, the French government barred all new investments in South Africa and recalled its ambassador from Pretoria. At the same time the French government signalled its intention to play an active role in the international campaign to impose sanctions on South Africa. By-passing their imperialist allies who were dragging their feet and making excuses to justify their prevarication, France raised the matter in the Security Council and on July 26 a French-inspired resolution censuring South Africa for the imposition of a state of emergency and urging a voluntary application of sanctions against the Pretoria regime was adopted by 13 votes to nil. Britain and the United States abstained on this resolution, and earlier had vetoed an amendment submitted by the non-aligned members of the Council calling for the imposition of mandatory sanctions.

The adopted resolution suggested specific sanctions such as the suspension of all new investment in South Africa, prohibition of the sale of Krugerrands, restriction in the field of sports and cultural relations, suspension of guaranteed export loans, and the prohibition of all sales of computer equipment that may be used by the South African military and police.

The French government deserves credit for taking the first step, but the situation demands more. This point was emphasised in an editorial in *l'Humanite*, the French Communist Party newspaper, which called for a halt to South African imports and the freezing of all current contracts with South Africa involving French public companies. The paper also pointed out:

“In the medium term, other efficient means of pressure exist, whether this means a re-examination of sea and air links, an embargo on deliveries of arms or oil, monetary restrictions or the breaking of all cultural and sporting relations in all disciplines.”

Pressures should be applied to convince the international community that more concrete action must be taken to extend these first steps, which from the outset had an impact on the other imperialist countries and the Pretoria regime. The limited French action breached the seemingly impenetrable barrier constructed by the imperialist powers to shield the regime from the imposition of political and military sanctions. Coming at a time when the US Senate and House of Representatives have decided to impose some form of limited sanctions on South Africa, it is clear that the time is ripe for an all-out international campaign to compel the Security Council to impose mandatory sanctions. World opinion must be mobilised to compel the US and Britain to desist from using their veto. Precisely because it enjoys the support of world imperialism, apartheid, this Crime Against Humanity, has persisted for too long. It must be brought to a speedy end.

Whilst in relation to South Africa the French government has at last given teeth to their declarations, there exists still a discrepancy between words and deeds with regard to Tropical Africa. A few years after coming to power the French Socialist Party made public a document entitled “The Socialist Party and Africa South of the Sahara.” This document called on the French government to jettison the old neo-colonialist policies towards tropical Africa; seek a new relationship based on mutual respect and equality; and help settle disputes in Africa peacefully.

President Mitterand himself made a number of tours in Africa. In May 1982 he visited Niger, the Ivory Coast and Senegal; in October 1982 Burundi, Ruanda, Zaire and the Congo; and in January 1983 Togo, Benin and Gabon.

In all his visits he tried to give the impression that the French government was pursuing progressive anti-colonialist policies. But the reality is very different.

At the present time France has nearly 15,000 troops based in Senegal, the Ivory Coast, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Gabon and Chad. This excludes its colonial occupation of the island of Reunion. At the same time French interventionist capacity was strengthened by the setting up of a military force akin to the US imperialists' rapid deployment force. This French force has 47,000 officers and men, including elements such as the 31st Service Brigade which operated with such ruthlessness in Gabon, Chad, Mauritania, Zaire and the Central African Republic.

French military intervention under Mitterand pursues the same aims and objectives as previous French governments. It is to 'preserve' the Francophone countries as appendages and suppliers of raw materials; keep in power — and if necessary install by military force — those classes and strata which are ready to allow their territories to be used in the interests of French imperialism's military and strategic goals and are not interested in economic independence. Spokespersons of the French government justify their intervention in African affairs in terms of France's strategic interests, the need to defend French citizens resident in these African countries, and the pretence that French troops are stationed in Africa at the request of the governments concerned. Obviously anti-democratic, anti-communist regimes which are incapable of staying in power under their own steam need the assistance of France to thwart the aspirations of the people. Mitterand and his ministers enter the ideological arena on the basis of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, all the time claiming that they stand for "democratic socialism".

Thus we see that in relation to Tropical Africa, French foreign policy since 1981 has not altered in substance. The rhetoric and form have changed but the deeds of the French government do not match their words.

Angola: Carte Blanche for the CIA

During the first six months of this year the Angolan army and security forces killed more than 2,486 Unita counter-revolutionary bandits and took 416 prisoners. In addition a large haul of weaponry made in South Africa and the other imperialist countries was seized and more than 5,000 civilians held in captivity were freed. During this period 111 senior Unita members voluntarily surrendered to the authorities. This was due not only to the increased military activities of FAPLA but also to the tribalism, regionalism and racism which permeates every aspect of Unita's political and ideological

work. Furthermore hundreds of former members of the defunct FNLA/COMIRA, including former commanders, have taken up the Angolan government's offer of clemency.

The South African regime continues its barbaric acts of aggression against Angola. South African forces still occupy parts of Angolan territory and, in the first half of 1985, committed 17 violations of Angolan airspace. An estimated 20,000 soldiers organised in four motorised brigades and fifteen battalions are stationed on the Angolan-Namibian border. In May this year the Angolan defence and security forces thwarted an attempt by the Pretoria terrorists to sabotage the Malongo oil complex in Cabinda. If that nefarious operation had succeeded, US citizens working on the oil complex could have been killed and Angola would have suffered material damage of about US\$1 billion. South Africa's continuous aggression against neighbouring states proves over and over again that there can be no peace in our region as long as the apartheid regime exists.

Whilst racist South Africa uses different methods to destabilise Angola, Lesotho and the other front-line states, US imperialism is also busy trying to undermine the political and economic independence of Namibia. At the request of the Reagan administration the US Congress has repealed the Clark Amendment, passed in 1976, which had forbidden the CIA to give covert aid to Angolan counter-revolutionaries without the approval of Congress. Now once more the CIA has been given open permission and the cash to provide direct assistance to Unita and any other counter-revolutionary elements in Angola.

The CIA is busy meddling in the internal affairs of all African countries. It is a vicious and dangerous instrument of US imperialism. Recently its activities in Ghana were exposed by the bizarre arrest of a CIA employee Sharon Scranage and a Ghanaian citizen Michael Soussoudis by the American FBI on a charge of conspiracy to commit espionage. 29-year-old Sharon Scranage was a CIA operative in Ghana from December 1983 to May 1985. It is alleged that she passed on to Soussoudis the names of CIA agents in Ghana as well as their spying activities and communications system. Over the years the CIA has given money, arms and other assistance to reactionary elements in Ghana. It was involved in the plot to overthrow Nkrumah in 1961 and has made various attempts to destabilise the Rawlings government.

The Angolan Foreign Ministry issued a statement on June 14 which pointed out that the announced vote to repeal the Clark Amendment came at the very moment when the forces of the racist Pretoria regime and its Unita puppets were desperately seeking to destabilise the economy of the People's

Republic of Angola. This was proved moreover by the abortive attempt by a nine-man commando unit of South African special forces to sabotage the Malongo oil complex in Cabinda Province by the parachute dropping into Malanje Province of dozens of tonnes of sophisticated war material destined for Unita, and by the holding of a meeting organised by the CIA between the Unita puppets and counter-revolutionaries from Afghanistan, Laos and Nicaragua. This combination of events led the government of Angola “to question the sincerity of claims by the US government that it wishes to contribute to a just and lasting peaceful settlement in Southern Africa.

“How can one reconcile the avowed peace initiatives of Reagan administration envoys, who have on several occasions met with high-ranking Angolan government leaders, both in Angola and abroad, or the US government’s stated disapproval of the abortive attempt to sabotage the Malongo oil complex — where important US interests were at stake — with the attempt to repeal the Clark Amendment and the CIA-sponsored meeting between the Unita puppets and the said counter-revolutionaries?

“Under these circumstances Angola vehemently condemns this further flagrant interference in its internal affairs and alerts the international community to the fact that if this latest move were to succeed, it would undoubtedly jeopardise efforts already made to seek solutions to safeguard peace and respect for the self-determination, independence and sovereignty of the peoples of the region.” (ANGOP, June 24, 1985).

As an expression of its condemnation and disgust, the Angolan government suspended all negotiations with the US.

OAU SUMMIT A SUCCESS

Those hired scribes of the bourgeois mass media who never stop speculating about the impotence and demise of the OAU have once more been disappointed. Both the recent OAU summit and the meeting of the African Foreign Ministers which preceded it discussed in a serious and mature way the main economic and political problems confronting the continent. Important decisions were taken with regard to the continent’s economies and the revolutionary struggle in racist South Africa and occupied Namibia.

At the Foreign Ministers’ meeting Peter Onu, the former acting Secretary-General of the OAU, criticised the imperialist powers for “an arrogant display of power” in sabotaging the UN plan for Namibian independence. In his speech he declared:

“The racist Pretoria regime and its fellow travellers will not dare play jokes with the destiny of our people if the armed struggle is intensified and sustained.” (*African Times*, July 19-25, 1985).

The Foreign Ministers called for the convening of a world conference on sanctions against South Africa together with the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations. They felt that the conference should be held in 1986 to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising. In a wide-ranging declaration the Foreign Ministers condemned Reagan’s policy of “constructive engagement”, demanded the release of all political prisoners and detainees, called for the total isolation of racist South Africa and urged all governments to ratify the UN “convention on the suppression of the crime of apartheid.”

The leaders of the ANC and SWAPO, Oliver Tambo and Sam Nujoma, condemned US imperialist policy in the region, denounced the Senate decision to repeal the Clark Amendment and emphasised that the armed revolutionary struggle in South Africa and Namibia would be intensified. The new chairman of the OAU, President Abdou Diouf of Senegal, attacked the Washington-Pretoria manoeuvre of linking Namibian independence with the presence of the Cuban internationalist forces in Angola and called on the world community to provide material and financial support to the liberation fighters in South Africa and Namibia.

At the present time about 150 million people face death from starvation in Africa. Not surprisingly a great deal of conference time was spent discussing the awesome economic problems facing the continent, the disastrous consequences of the drought and famine and the need for a common systematic approach to find the necessary solutions. In a declaration on the economic situation the summit decided on a priority programme to deal with the food situation and agricultural development in Africa, alleviating Africa’s external debt burden, measures for a common platform of action at sub-regional, regional, continental and international levels and for measures to counter the effects of South Africa’s destabilisation policies on the economies of Southern Africa. In the declaration which is composed of 27 paragraphs the Heads of State said:

“We wish to stress that the current battle to save lives and to reduce the impact of hunger and famine should not be the only focus of international support and co-operation. Otherwise, the international community will be unwittingly contributing to making the emergency a permanent phenomenon. On our part, we are determined not only to cope more efficiently with current and future emergencies but also to go beyond emergency and get to the root of Africa’s food and agriculture crisis ... In this regard, we commit our countries to the gradual increase in the share of agriculture in national total public investment of between 20 and 25 per cent by 1989.”

The Summit called for an international conference on Africa's external indebtedness to be convened as a matter of urgency and declared it was imperative for the member states of the OAU to strengthen cooperation among themselves in order to speed up economic integration and enhance Africa's negotiating ability in international fora.

It is clear that the Heads of State recognise that the grave problems confronting our continent must be addressed urgently and effectively. But this should not be left to the governments alone. The progressive, democratic and revolutionary forces have to help mobilise the working people of Africa in order to give flesh and blood to the declaration.

The Summit also dealt with other vital international questions. In his speech Mengistu Haile Mariam said:

“At a time when imperialism — as part of its mission of destruction — is planning to escalate the nuclear arms race into space, another priority issue (for us) is to make Africa a nuclear free zone today.”

The Summit elected a new Secretary General. He is Ide Oumarou, Niger's Foreign Minister. Aged 48, Oumarou, a Muslim, is an economist trained in Paris and Dakar. He worked in the communications and mass media fields before becoming Foreign Minister in February 1983. He is also a prolific writer of novels, some of which are best-sellers in West Africa. The new Secretary-General takes over at a time when our continent faces enormous problems, is a target for CIA machinations and imperialist plunder and super-exploitation. But it is also a time when the revolutionary struggle in racist South Africa and occupied Namibia is reaching new and greater heights. Now is the time for a qualitative increase in material assistance to SWAPO and the ANC.

Socialist Support

Whilst the imperialist powers are doing everything to weaken and split the OAU, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have remained firm and consistent allies of the OAU, working for the unity of Africa and the right of the African countries to exercise their independence and freely choose their road of development.

In a message to the 21st Session of the OAU the President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Council of Ministers said:

“The Soviet Union is convinced that the current international situation urgently demands that all peace-loving forces become still more active and step up their interaction in the common struggle against imperialism, in which the Soviet Union and the newly-free African peoples are friends and partners.

“We have always been on the side of the Frontline States repulsing the aggressive and subversive forays of South African racists. Our support for the patriots of Namibia and South Africa, who are selflessly standing for national liberation under the guidance of SWAPO and the African National Congress, is invariable.

“Expanding and deepening equitable friendly cooperation with African states, our country helps them overcome their economic difficulties and establish advanced national economies; it backs their demands to democratize international economic relations and the African states’ legitimate right to manage their bountiful natural resources in the interests of social and economic progress.”

Africa is not insensible of the nature and extent of Soviet aid to our continent and peoples. In Gaborone last July, the President of Botswana, Dr Quett Masire, responding to the accreditation speech of Mr Victor Krivda, the new Soviet Ambassador to Botswana, commended the support given by the Soviet Union at the meeting of the UN Security Council which adopted a resolution condemning South Africa’s murderous raid on Gaborone on June 14.

Botswana appreciated the role of the Soviet Union in the struggles taking place in Southern Africa, said Dr Masire. The Soviet contribution to the struggles for freedom and independence in Africa and elsewhere stemmed from its historical opposition to colonialism and neo-colonialism, he said.

Botswana, like the Soviet Union, believed in the concept of peaceful coexistence and good neighbourliness and this was why he encouraged the Soviet Union’s efforts to achieve worldwide disarmament, said Dr Masire.

WHITE POWER BEGINS TO CRUMBLE

Shifting patterns in the apartheid alliance

by T. Halloran

Like a recurrent nightmare, the cycle of racist violence and repression which, a quarter-century ago, helped convince the leaders of the national liberation movement of the need to take up arms, seems to be repeating itself. Thus the bannings and mass arrests of Communists and Congressites of the 1960's find their echo today in mass arrests and the trials of the leadership of the United Democratic Front. The murderous volleys fired at Sharpeville on March 21, 1960, rang out again at Langa on March 21, 1985, followed by another state of emergency.

This phenomenon of the apparent self-repetition of historical events is, of course, one which Marx took note of in the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

"The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language."¹

Marx's aim in this passage is not simply to affirm or deny the recurrence of historical events. He is making the far more subtle point that, in all events of genuinely revolutionary significance, there is a deep blending of old and new elements; that it is the task of an historical materialist analysis to discover what has really changed and why. It is in this spirit that the current state of affairs in the White South African class alliance, and its complex relations with international capitalism, require to be understood.

The truth that, at a fundamental and infrastructural level, nothing has changed, must not be allowed to obscure another truth, namely, that at a more superficial and superstructural level there has been a significant transformation in the pattern or surface-structure of the class-alliance administering apartheid in the interests of White South Africans in general and large-scale capital in particular.

As a system apartheid — colonialism of a special type as analysed in our Party programme — predates the political party which gave it its name, and has undergone various modifications before and since the 1948 election which put the Nationalists in power. It has, however, always served and still serves the interests of White capitalism. Its chief function was and is to guarantee White-owned industry and commerce the flow of cheap Black labour on which profits mainly depend while denying the Black majority access to the power-structures on whose strength the system depends. The massive repression needed to achieve this made the White class alliance necessary. But the arrangement of class forces has not remained constant, varying in response to economic and political pressures, themselves the result of the development of basic productive forces. Thus the dominance of the English-speaking minority over the Afrikaner majority among the Whites in the spheres of finance and industry has been diminished in recent decades by the intrusion of Afrikaner interests. Volkskas now competes, though still unequally, with Barclays and Standard Bank, as Nasionale Mynbou does with Anglo-American and De Beers.

With the migration of rural Afrikaners to the cities in the 1930's the composition of the White working class was significantly altered. Malan's accession to power in 1948 ushered in a period when Afrikaner farmers and workers gained a dominant voice (in Parliament at least) over the political representatives of English-owned capital. Until the close of the 60's, the hegemony of the White alliance seemed to depend on two factors which were really changeable features of its altering structure. The first of these factors was the continuity of the Westminster-style Parliament, chief political instrument of overall White domination. The other was the culturo-political

unity of the Afrikaner "volk", main guarantee of the National Party's dominance within the parliamentary system. The effective operation of the parliamentary system depended on a set of unwritten understandings between Government and Opposition which would survive public displays of hostility in the Assembly, Senate and on election platforms. This was the way the British system had worked, and Afrikaners, having themselves been victims of British imperialism, understood it well.

Roughly speaking, the "gentlemen's agreement" was that, differ as they might on issues of *policy*, neither side would deviate from the *principle* of White domination, whether it chose to call this "baasskap", "apartheid", "separate development", "White leadership" or the "preservation of Western civilisation". In the economic sphere the informal understanding was that both sides would defend the capitalist mode of production. As to Afrikaner unity, this depended on the cohesive effect of a more or less publicly expressed ideology binding together the National party, the Afrikaner churches and such cultural and political organisations as the Broederbond, Die Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuurvereniging and Die Vroue Federasie.

New Forces

As far back as the Verwoerd era, however, forces were operative which would bring these two factors — parliamentary cohesion and Afrikaner unity — into contradiction. Verwoerdian "volkist" ideology spawned policies which made the economic plank of the unwritten contract difficult to maintain. The increasing isolation of South Africa, legislative curbs on the flow of migrant labour, the ban on the flow of capital investment into the so-called "homelands" were all perceived by the parliamentary representatives of finance and industry as inimical to their interest.

It was to offset these tensions that Verwoerd's more pragmatic successor, Vorster, embarked on his "outward" foreign policy, set about wooing the middle strata of the English-speaking bourgeoisie, and began tinkering with aspects of so-called "petty" apartheid. In fact it was precisely Vorster's anxiety to redress the international isolation of the apartheid regime which led to the information scandal that eventually toppled him, even from the protective heights of the State Presidency. Vorster's efforts to appease the English-speaking bourgeoisie had a dramatic counter-effect on Afrikaner unity and led, in 1969, to a split in the National Party when Vorster's former acolyte, Jaap Marais, and his Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Hertzog, led a small group of Verwoerdian fanatics out of the party to form the Herstigte Nasionale Party.

These historical events are noted here for three reasons: firstly because they explain the situation in the White power structure which faces us at present and were, in fact, the harbingers of that situation. Secondly, because the challenge to authority presented by the activities of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party made an important contribution to the undercurrent of events which brought that situation about. Finally, because the national liberation movement, owing to the repression it experienced in the 1960's and early 70's, had to expend the main stock of its physical and intellectual energies on the vital task of reorganisation and was not always able to give developments in the enemy's camp the attention they merited. It should be remembered that it was during the period of Vorster's leadership that the campaign of destabilisation which preceded Nkomati was planned, or at least considered as an option.

The Split Deepens

Although the HNP's share of the poll decreased in every general election for a decade after its formation, it was not eradicated from political life. Moreover, factionalism continued to haunt the National Party in the form of a large group of Verwordian MPs, led by Andries Treurnicht, whose aspirations to seize the premiership were scarcely concealed. Both the HNP and the Treurnichtites were able to appeal to the racist phobias and economic discontents of the Afrikaner working class, small farmers, as well as some bureaucrats and intellectuals. The rightists also tried to siphon off support from the right wing of the United Party, whose collapse further complicated the functioning of the White Parliament. It was, however, pre-eminently the mass "Soweto usurge" of 1976 which, by forcing the Nationalists to seek a new constitutional mode of enforcing apartheid, intensified the contradictions within the White class alliance in general, and within Afrikanerdom in particular.

First evidences of the latter phenomenon were the results of the 1979 by-elections in the predominantly working class constituencies of Germiston, Rustenburg and Koedoespoort, in which the HNP polled some 40% of the votes cast. It was this resurgence of rightism which provoked P.W. Botha into calling an early general election in 1981. That decision proved mistaken. For, although the Nationalists won 131 of 165 contested seats and the HNP none, the latter increased its share of the total vote from 3.2% to 14.1% and attracted nearly double the 100,000 votes which it had itself predicted. By contrast, the Progressive Federal Party, although its parliamentary representation increased from 17 to 26 seats, increased its slice of the vote by only 2.3%, from

17.1% to 19.4%. These results signalled to the Treurnichites that the time was ripe for open revolt.

The split came on February 24, 1982, when 22 MPs refused to support a motion of confidence in Botha, then still Prime Minister, at a National Party parliamentary caucus. Six of these subsequently retracted, but the other 16 were expelled, and on March 2 Treurnicht announced the formation of the Conservative Party, which is now the third largest party in the White Assembly.

The relatively small number of Conservative Party MPs by no means reflects the importance of this event. It represented nothing less than the sundering of Afrikaner unity, a rent in a fabric of intimately interwoven cultural, religious, financial and political strands which Nationalist leaders from Gen. Hertzog to Verwoerd had laboured to produce. Evidence that this claim is not exaggerated was provided last year by the defection of Treurnicht and his followers from the Broederbond and the formation of the rival Afrikaner Volkswag. There have also been bitter battles within the FAK for control of this cultural umbrella body's executive.

Botha and his backers themselves recognised the enormity of what had happened and set about frantically wooing the English-speaking bourgeoisie. This bore fruit in the White referendum of November 2, 1983, which gave Botha a "yes"-vote of 66.3% in favour of his new constitution. Analysis of these results shows clearly that, despite the Progressive Federal Party's opposition to the new constitution, English-speaking voters had given what was, perhaps, the largest endorsement ever of a Nationalist policy. In Durban and the Natal coastal region 123,783 or 73.6% of the voters said "yes". In Cape Town and the South-West Cape, 221,511 or 75.6% did the same, while in the Johannesburg-Vereeniging complex, the constitution was endorsed by 194,396 or 69.4% of the voters. The one region where a decisive "no"-vote was recorded was in the CP and HNP stronghold of the Northern Transvaal.²

What all this tends to show is that, in the face of the destruction of that Afrikaner unity on which the National Party was founded, the Government has been forced to shift its power base, seeking legitimisation and active support for a new style of apartheid from the English bourgeois element in the White class alliance.

That sector of the bourgeois class — English and Afrikaans-speaking — who are now the Government's mainstay can be expected to use their influence to try to obtain the conditions of political stability which their business interests require and which they have long been demanding. The

present climate of mass resistance which threatens in the long term to erupt into outright civil war, the fact that the ANC's armed actions have not diminished as a result of the Nkomati pact, the threat of an intensification of these attacks — all these things are, quite simply, extremely bad for profits. The South African economy has not seen worse days since the 1930's. This year opened with the rand trading at an all-time low of 49.52 United States cents, and a Barclays Bank economist predicts that it may sink far lower before climbing up again — if it ever does. It is this climate which constitutes the real reason for the increasingly frequent signals from the enemy camp that talks with the ANC and the prospect of legalising it are on the agenda.

On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that the total percentage poll in the referendum was only 75.6% and that 700,000 Whites voted against Botha's constitution. The bulk of these were supporters of the CP and HNP versions of apartheid, although of course many voted "no" from more progressive motives. After the referendum, Treurnicht announced that he regarded the size of the negative vote as a good basis from which to work against the new constitution. Events have proved him correct. In the recent Primrose by-election, the Nationalist majority was slashed to under 1,000 votes — a swing of 22% in the Treurnichites' favour. On some analyses of the result this would yield the Conservative Party about 40 Transvaal seats if a general election were to be held now.

In the face of such a threat, President Botha will consider and reconsider every concession he makes to his new constituents. It is wrong to think that the undoubtedly extraordinary, almost dictatorial, powers the constitution has given the President and his security advisers make it safe for him to ignore altogether the wishes of the White electorate. To do so would be to invite a White civil war and Botha is not about to risk that. The fact that the new constitution is in force may well restrict the activities of the CP and its allies, but it by no means renders them impotent.

This crush of opposing influences explains both the hesitations and the attempts at innovation contained in Botha's opening speech to the allegedly tricameral "Parliament" on January 25, 1985. Of course the speech gave no indication of a preparedness to abandon apartheid, and in fact nothing has been said or done which basically undermines white domination. Nonetheless, seen from the perspective of the White class alliance, Botha's announcement that he would negotiate property ownership, instead of merely leasehold rights, for those living in the townships who can afford such things, does represent a further step away from the Verwoerdian model of apartheid which has infuriated the Treurnichites and delighted the White

“liberals”. But even the latter feel some frustration at the hyper-caution of Botha’s proposal to set up a non-statutory advisory “forum” to discuss an accommodation whereby Blacks living outside the “homelands” can be co-opted into the new version of the apartheid. The government will in no way be bound by the recommendations of this forum. Who will participate in such a forum? What credibility will it enjoy especially after the atrocities perpetrated during the emergency?

International Links

The class alliance through which Botha must now try to govern a population which is becoming increasingly ungovernable is itself subject to external pressures. Its chief component, the White bourgeoisie has, and has always had, interests which are inextricably bound up with those of international capitalism. It is a fact, too, that apartheid, in some or other guise, has always favoured the interests of the great financial conglomerates. The African sub-continent’s vast mineral resources, to say nothing of the as yet unrealised potential of its agriculture and secondary industry, combined with the cheap labour apartheid ensures, made that inevitable. This is why the Reagan Administration and the Thatcher Government have connived at the South African regime’s acts of banditry and terrorism on the sub-continent and its illegal occupation of Namibia. But this does not gainsay the fact that foreign capitalists have tended to prefer some versions of special colonialism to others, although their preferences have often been as variable as the instability of the markets they operate and they have not always agreed among themselves as to which form of racism to prefer. But all of them are terrified of the spectre of revolution.

For some years now the national liberation movement has experienced the negative effects of international capitalism’s desperate attempts to retrieve the positions it lost to the forces of socialism and anti-imperialism during the 1960’s and ’70’s and to resolve the contradictions flowing from its mode of production. Reagan’s policy of “constructive engagement” with the apartheid regime and British Prime Minister Thatcher’s reception of Botha last year are manifestations of this. More recently, however, there have been developments which may well indicate that a shift of attitude towards the apartheid regime is taking place, and that the capitalist component in the White South African class alliance is now coming under pressure from its international associates to produce a version of apartheid which would be not only better for business but also easier to defend in international forums. The clearest indications of this are the campaign for disinvestment in the United

States, the US Congress vote for sanctions, the UN call for voluntary sanctions, the anti-apartheid moves of France, Holland, New Zealand etc.

With billions of dollars at stake, leading figures among the White bourgeoisie in South Africa realise that they cannot rely on other foreign investors or on South African companies to fill the vacuum a widespread pull-out would create. They are aware too that the anti-South African campaign is snowballing out of control. These anxieties are being transmitted to White politicians in Government and Opposition. The degree of change they will generate in a new system, deeply (and with reason) uncertain of itself, is difficult to estimate. What is certain is that they will bring about some movement, if not away from the essentials of apartheid and special colonialism, at least towards modifications in the mode of its economic and political application. The billions of dollars which foreign corporations have in fixed investments in South Africa, not to mention what they offer in terms of technological and managerial skills, make the prospect of economic disengagement the most serious foreign policy issue immediately facing the apartheid regime.

It is the combination of all these factors which has led the regime, at the prompting of the White class alliance, to develop a two-pronged strategy towards the opposition at home and abroad. It is the old strategy of the carrot and the stick. The carrot is "reform", by which the regime hopes not only to disarm its critics abroad but also to win over to its side certain elements from the resistance at home. Centrepiece of this strategy is the bid to destroy the ANC. This again takes two forms. One is the intensification of persecution, with a multiplication of township massacres, treason trials and the branding of the most vociferous and active opponents as "communists" and "terrorists". The other side of the coin is the offer to talk to, and possibly even legalise, the ANC if it abjures violence; to release all political prisoners if they are prepared to sign on the dotted line.

Clearly a legal ANC, forswearing violence and revolution, would suit the White class alliance far better than an illegal one. Even the purblind politicians of the White establishment must realise that the banning of the ANC in 1960 has failed, as has the banning of the South African Communist Party in 1950. Despite a quarter-century of illegality and a repression of Hitlerite dimensions, the ANC is today more alive and influential among all communities than in the days of the Defiance Campaign. The question facing the White Establishment and its foreign allies is not whether the ANC should be legalised and negotiated with, but how and when this should happen, and how best to weaken, divide and strip the ANC of its principles in

the interim. Realising that the illegality of the ANC is a relic of the Verwoerdian past, the more sophisticated of the enemy's agents in the intelligence bureaucracy have already set about planning means of neutralising it, ways of trying to segregate "communists" from "Africanists", Black from White, Coloured from Indian, ways of trying to foment discontent and mutiny among the combatants of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Resistance Grows

The answer to the regime was given by the ANC's consultative conference in June, reflecting the growing unity among the forces of resistance throughout the country. The escalating confrontation and violence in South Africa was not of our seeking but has been forced on us by the intensification of repression. The ANC and the SACP adopted the methods of armed struggle as part of their revolutionary strategy, not because they were hypnotised by slogans about revolutions coming from the barrel of a gun, but because they wanted peace, non-racialism and an equal share for all in the country's prosperity, and because the illegality thrust upon them left them no other way of mobilising the masses to bring about the changes which were essential to achieve these objectives. To lay down weapons too soon and for the wrong reasons can be as dangerous to the cause of peace and liberation as taking them up too early or holding on to them too long. The winning of legality now and the release of our leaders would constitute a tremendous, unprecedented victory — but if it were bought at the cost of our unity or our principles it would be a victory transformed into defeat.

What we have to hang on to now is the realisation that it is our resistance, our initiative and strength which have reduced the ranks of our enemy to disunity and confusion. The offers he is making, as well as the ferocity of his attacks, flow from his weakness and the disunity in the ranks of the White class alliance for which Botha speaks and acts. Never has the pessimism amongst White racists been so profound.

In devising a strategy to meet the situation we need to keep in mind two of Lenin's best known utterances. The first is his dictum in *What is to be Done* that "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."³ The second is his warning in the third of the *Letters From Afar*: "We would be committing a great mistake if we attempted to force the complex, urgent, rapidly developing practical tasks of the revolution into the Procrustean bed of narrowly conceived 'theory' instead of regarding theory primarily as a *guide to action*."⁴

REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONISM AND THE TASKS OF THE PARTY

By Vuk'ayibambe

Since the beginning of the seventies the working class of South Africa has been engaging the capitalists and the racist state in heroic combat battles. The wave of strikes that swept the country in the beginning of the 1970s heralded a new era of rapid growth and development of the trade union movement. Many trade unions emerged and the militancy of the newly-formed and the already existing unions grew.

This growing militancy is reflected in the ever-spreading strike movement and the combination of the immediate demands of the workers with demands related to the question of seizure of power. The Communist Party is faced with the tremendous task of developing revolutionary trade unionism to ensure that the militancy of the working class is channeled in a direction that will ensure the inevitable success of the national democratic revolution and the struggle for socialism.

Lenin emphasised time and again in his works that without the participation of trade unions no revolution can take place. Marx, Engels and Lenin showed that the trade unions are the biggest autonomous mass organisations of the working class. They unite the workers in the struggle for immediate demands — better wages, better working and living conditions. But the founders of Marxism-Leninism rejected outright the theory of those who wanted to confine the struggle of the workers to economics.

Karl Marx in *Value, Price and Profit* stated that the workers, instead of advancing the conservative motto "A fair day's wage for a day's work" should inscribe on their banner the revolutionary slogan "abolition of the wages' system". Here Karl Marx was not dismissing the struggle for the immediate aims of the workers but was emphasising the need for the development of a revolutionary outlook in the workers' struggle. He was emphasising the fact that the struggle for immediate demands should be seen as part and parcel of the revolutionary struggle for destruction of the capitalist system and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This idea was further developed by Lenin in his basic work *What is to be done?* Lenin proved that the economic struggle of the workers can only develop trade union consciousness, i.e. the need to unite in trade unions and fight the capitalists for immediate demands. This struggle takes place within the confines of the capitalist social system. Class consciousness cannot develop spontaneously from within the trade union movement. The Communist Party, armed with the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism, has the task of infusing political and class consciousness into the trade union movement. Only the Party can fulfil this function. The Communist Party is the link between socialism and the masses. In carrying out this function the Party uses the workers' own experience — the struggle for immediate demands and strikes.

The struggle for immediate demands educates the workers about the nature of the enemy — the capitalists and the state — about the strength of the employers and the strength of the workers themselves. Gradually, through these battles fought on the factory premises and under the leadership and guidance of the party, the workers come to realise that their ultimate interests cannot be achieved through reforms but only through the total overthrow of the capitalist system.

There is an urgent need in South Africa to develop revolutionary trade unionism in order to make the trade unions a militant core of the revolutionary process in the country. To combat reformism and opportunism a consistent ideological struggle must be waged by the Party.

Attack on Two Fronts

Monopoly capitalists in South Africa as elsewhere are using two methods of attacking the trade unions. These are brutal force and reforms. In this new era of black trade union militancy we have seen physical assaults by the police, detentions and trials, bannings of trade unions and trade union leaders, shootings and killings. On the other hand the regime has embarked

on a campaign of reform as a means of controlling and restricting the trade unions. Both methods, force and reforms, are aimed at integrating the trade unions to the capitalist system.

In the conditions of South Africa, the existence of a web of laws that impose labour and political restrictions and controls on the workers, and the brutal enforcement of these laws by the army and the police, make it objectively easier for the workers to realise the need to combine the economic and political struggles. But this should not lead us to complacency. Leadership and guidance by the Party are an absolute duty. The Party must draw ever closer to the workers, be involved in every manifestation of the struggle between the workers and the employers. It must develop every stage of the workers' struggle to new and higher levels. Above all the Party's leadership and guidance are vital for the combatting of reformism and opportunism.

The bourgeoisie is assiduously spreading the idea that the reforms being implemented will gradually meet the vital interests of the workers. The bourgeoisie is not alone in this campaign. It has recruited its own agents from the ranks of the working class. Today, threatened with the ever-growing militancy of the workers, the bourgeoisie is doubling its efforts to produce puppet trade union leaders of the Lucy Mvubelo type.

What is often forgotten by those who want to use the reforms to lull the workers is that the present reforms have not come about as a result of change of heart by the capitalist class. Whatever reforms have been introduced have been won in the heat of struggle waged by the workers. The workers have forced the capitalists and the state (always at the risk of arrests, detentions, torture and murder) to yield ground. Thus, instead of the reforms being used to enslave the workers, they should be treated and used in a revolutionary way. It is true that the workers are interested in reforms. A trade union fights first and foremost for the immediate interests of the workers and, as Karl Marx pointed out, this struggle is justified and necessary to prevent the workers from sinking into poverty and wretched slavery. But reforms must be subordinated to the long-term goals of the revolution.

The black trade union movement in South Africa is also coming under the increasing reactionary influence of foreign trade unions. In recent years such trade union organisations as AFL-CIO and AALC have increased their influence in South and Southern Africa. The activities of these organisations have shown that they are nothing but labour lieutenants and agents of US imperialism and the CIA. They are the advocates of anti-communism. Through their so-called "aid" they bribe trade union leaders and activists. The aim of these trade unions is to divert the black trade unions from the path

of revolutionary struggle and thus save the capitalist system from destruction.

The development of capitalism breeds the proliferation of rightist and ultra-left trends. Our country has been no exception in this regard. Ultra-left or "new left" trends are on the increase. From the ultra-left flank of the struggle against capital there have been claims that the Communist Party is not militant and that it is trailing behind the African National Congress. There are claims that the Party wastes too much time and energy on the struggle for national liberation for which the ultra-leftists see no need. Some university intellectuals have been most vocal in these claims. Impatience and hop-skip-and-jumping over vital and objectively necessary stages of the revolution are characteristic features of ultra-leftism. Our Party, guided by the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, has no problem in understanding national democracy as a stage on the path to a socialist South Africa. The Party programme gives a true Marxist-Leninist analysis of the South African situation and elaborates the immediate and long-term goals.

Danger of the Ultra-Left

In the trade union movement ultra-leftism reflects itself in attempts to undermine the role and contribution the Communist Party has made in the development of revolutionary trade unionism. It reflects itself in attempts to wean the trade unions from the influence of the Party. In the 1970s the Gang of Four of Martin Legassick and Co. accused the Party of being reformist, petty bourgeois and bureaucratic. They advocated the formation within the ANC of what they called a "Marxist Workers' Tendency". The most recent demand for yet another "creation" was made by the General Secretary of FOSATU, Joe Foster, in his speech to the 2nd Congress of this federation in April, 1982. It was no mistake that Joe Foster throughout his speech made no mention of the Communist Party. Indeed he (and the promoters of this idea, behind him) had to be silent about the contribution of the Party in order to arrive at the conclusion that there was a need for the formation of a workers' party.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism have shown how the ultra-left serves the interests of the ultra-right. The common factor in so far as South Africa is concerned is the attempt to deprive the trade unions of the leadership of the Communist Party. What should never be forgotten is that both the Communist Party and the trade unions emerged and developed as working-class organisations, but, as Lenin showed clearly, trade unions can function properly *only* under the leadership and guidance of the Party. Attempts to

reduce the leadership role of the Party can only serve the interests of the enemies of the working class.

What then are the tasks facing the Party in the trade union movement?

1. By far the most important task is that of unity and the formation of one trade union centre. There are positive and encouraging developments in this field. The many talks that have taken place so far have yielded positive results. Naturally the formation of the federation is an organic process which is not going to develop without problems. It is the task of the Communist Party together with other members of the liberation alliance to assist and reinforce the process of unification. Particular attention should be paid to preventing ideas from reformist and opportunist quarters from infiltrating and diverting this process along reactionary lines.

2. The workers must be organised according to the industrial principle rather than the many general workers' unions that we have, since this makes it easier to co-ordinate their activities, to develop and maintain cohesion and the necessary discipline and to collect subscriptions. The work of converting the present general workers' unions into industrial unions is a task that demands great tact.

3. Any attempt to promote economism in the trade unions must be fought vehemently. At this stage of mass upsurge we cannot afford this luxury. Trade unions in South Africa have a long tradition of participation in political struggles. SACTU, which is an embodiment of revolutionary trade unionism in our country, joined the Congress Alliance immediately after its formation and has since then participated in political struggle alongside other members of the Alliance. Trade unions must be guided to follow this heroic example and tradition.

4. Workers and their unions must have an internationalist outlook. The training of the workers in an internationalist spirit broadens their understanding that capital is an international force.

The labour movement in South Africa has reached a very critical period. In the conditions of the developing national crisis and the mass upsurge that has reached new and unprecedented levels the Communist Party is called upon to double its efforts in giving political leadership and guidance to the mass struggles and in particular to the working class. The Party must build a revolutionary trade union movement that will form the core of the political army of the revolution. This means first and foremost waging an offensive ideological struggle for the spreading of the liberating ideas of Marxism-Leninism and the combatting of all that seeks to make the workers perpetual appendages of the capitalist exploiters.

MOZAMBIQUE: THE LONG HAUL TO SOCIALISM

By Scorpio

Books

Joseph Hanlon: **Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire** (Zed Press, London. 1984.) Allan & Barbara Isaacman: **Mozambique — From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900-1982.** (Westview Press (U.S.)/Gower (U.K.) 1983.)

Essays & Articles

Horace Campbell: **War, Reconstruction & Dependence in Mozambique** (Third World Quarterly, Vol. 6 No. 4, Oct. 1984. The same article, with different title and introduction, and small verbal changes, appeared also in **Journal of African Marxists**, No. 6, Oct 1984.)

Eduardo da Souza: **Mozambican Socialism and the Nkomati Accord.** (Work in Progress, Johannesburg, July 1984.)

Robert Davies and Dan O'Meara: **Total Strategy in Southern Africa: An analysis of South African Regional Policy since 1978 — paper presented to the 1984 Review of African Political Economy Conference, University of Keele, September 1984.**

David Wield: **Mozambique — Late Colonialism and Early Problems of Transition** in G. White, R. Murray and C. White (eds): **Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World**, Wheatsheaf Books, Brighton 1983.

Bertil Egero: **Socialist Democracy & Development — Notes on Cuba and Mozambique**, paper presented to workshop on 'Democracy & economic development' at VII Nordic Political Science Congress, Lund, August 1984.

“In the heady days of 1974 and 1975 it was the heroic — and the adjective is not an exaggeration — achievements of Mozambican revolutionaries, and of their comrades in Angola and Guinea-Bissau, that seized our attention. ... Now, ten years later, the Mozambican economy lies in ruins, tens of thousands of Mozambican peasants have starved to death in a largely human-made famine, and the Frelimo government has signed a non-aggression pact with South Africa. Clearly it is time for a cool, unsentimental assessment. What went wrong? Or was it all inevitable? Was the path followed by Mozambique dictated by the catastrophic colonial heritage, and by the sheer brute strength of neighbouring South Africa?”¹

The author of these lines who confesses to having written “quite uncritical adulations of Frelimo’s victory” in earlier years, expresses a widely held feeling on the left. Admirers of the Mozambican revolution were first shocked by the bizarre spectacle of the signing of the Nkomati Accord in March 1984, then scandalised by the drastic measures taken against the ANC that followed soon after, then dismayed by the international benefits reaped from the Accord by the Pretoria regime, by the eagerness of South African capital to move into Mozambique, and the failure of the Accord to yield any tangible benefit to Mozambique on the security front.

Within South Africa, across the range of forces aligned against the racist regime, the Nkomati Accord was recognised as a setback in the struggle for national liberation, and received with sorrow. Dr Alan Boesak spoke for many when he punctured the euphoria generated around Nkomati by the ruling class and pointed out that the Accord was devoid of justice, the essential element of all peace. And he articulated the fighting mood of the people when he said that the people of South Africa would not give up “the struggle for democracy, freedom and human dignity. No matter how many times they (the Botha regime) deal with Mozambique, in the final analysis they will still have to deal with us.”

What, then, has happened to the socialist revolution in Mozambique? Did Nkomati represent the humiliating public burial of the proudest revolutionary aspirations thrown up by the Mozambican people’s long, hard struggle for national independence? Was it a temporary reverse, a change of gear to help Mozambique both reduce and accommodate the ruthless pressures from imperialism, spearheaded by the apartheid regime? In what sense can socialists understand the Frelimo Party’s claim that this was a “victory for our socialist policy of peace?”

This article does not seek to re-open the debate about the Nkomati Accord as such. Suffice it for the moment to remind readers of two key points made editorially by *The African Communist* in a long and careful assessment of the Nkomati Accord (No. 98). The South African regime’s aims and purposes

in attacking and destabilizing Mozambique were “never to counter the ANC’s revolutionary efforts against apartheid, but always to undermine the Frelimo government and its efforts to reconstruct and develop Mozambique. Only the most naive will believe that because the ANC presence in Mozambique is now severely reduced the South African policy of undermining the Frelimo government’s policy and future has been cancelled.” (p. 7) Everything that has happened since March 1984 bears out the correctness of this analysis, and of the warning that the Nkomati Accord is “the fore-runner of worse pressures, worse aggressions to come, for all the frontline states”.(p.11)

Secondly, looking at the wider context of independent people’s struggles against imperialism, for economic independence, social reconstruction, development, justice and peace, this journal pointed out that the setbacks and tribulations to be observed in every corner of the globe do not mean that such struggles are doomed to defeat.

“The future is not fore-ordained. It depends finally on the perspectives and courage of peoples, on their ideology, strategy and tactics, on the strengthening of the bonds between all the anti-imperialist forces everywhere, and perhaps above all, on strengthening the links between the forces of national liberation and national independence and the mighty bloc of the socialist countries with the Soviet Union as its heartland.”
(*The African Communist* No. 98 — p.14)

The present article cannot explore all the implications of these ideas for the future of Mozambique. Its aim is much more modest, to review the main body of current analyses of Mozambique to see how far it helps one to understand the prospects for Mozambique not just to survive the continuing pressures from imperialism, but to lay the basis for a socialist-orientated advance that will consolidate the gains of the early years of the revolution and open up new vistas of progress.

Not included here is a not inconsiderable body of writing about Mozambique and other socialist-oriented countries in Africa, which starts from a premise of anti-communism, situates the anti-imperialist movement in the ‘Third World’ in the framework of the global battle against communism, and applies the methods of ‘Kremlinology’ developed in the analysis of the socialist countries of Europe to countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, and of course Mozambique. This writing, which proliferates in the United States in particular, is perhaps only useful as revealing the ideological presuppositions of certain Western policy-makers. About the realities it deals with, it has little to offer.

The Current Situation

How far, then, does the existing range of recent writing on Mozambique, or at least that part of it which is accessible (albeit with difficulty) and in English, help

the reader to understand either the current situation or recent trends in Mozambique? The short answer is: not very far. The elaboration of a class analysis of the Mozambican revolution has not advanced to a point where any serious observer can rest satisfied. Indeed, as some readers of this journal might anticipate, it has in some respects been carried furthest by the Frelimo Party itself, most notably in the Report of the Central Committee to the Fourth Congress of the Party in April 1983.

The outsiders, free of the internal restraints which militate against if not the making, certainly the publication of an in-depth, pointed class analysis from inside the ruling party, by and large fail to get to grips with the complexities of the situation, although in some cases they throw up challenging questions (Hanlon, Wield) and provide a good deal of carefully researched information (Hanlon, the Isaacmans) — useful building blocks, but inadequate by themselves.

The Isaacmans, operating admittedly in the most hostile of environments, the U.S.A., display a persistent nervousness about Mozambique's relations with the socialist bloc, and with the Soviet Union in particular, which reveals an essentially social democratic conception of socialist revolution. They seldom move beyond description, but when they do their analysis ignores issues of class formation in the domestic political process, and on the international plane flounders in the interstices of forging a "coherent, nonaligned, socialist alternative"². But for sheer information, their work is good value.

Saving Mozambique from the allegedly fatal embrace of Soviet-style socialism, with its perceived deadweight of bureaucracy, its deficient democracy, and its numerous other shortcomings, if not betrayals, has of course also been a favourite ideological preoccupation of certain Marxists in the advanced capitalist countries who saw in the early Frelimo a non-statist, popular, socialist and revolutionary movement which fitted their personal vision of the millenium. At least for many of these, theirs was a real and active commitment to Frelimo and the struggle for first independence, and then socialism. But with Horace Campbell, who identifies himself with this end of the ideological spectrum, one gets little sense of such commitment, judging from his strong critique, of which the following extracts are a sample. Referring to both Grenada and Mozambique, he says:

"For too long leaderism, statism, a fetishised concept of the development of the productive forces and commandism of the working poor stifled the creativity of the proletarianised masses in the name of Marxism-Leninism and/or socialism."
(p. 865)

Amongst the questions he poses for discussion are “whether Frelimo is a tool in the hands of the government or a tool in the hands of the people,” (p. 841), and “To what extent has the response of Frelimo (to South African destabilisation) contributed to the destabilisation of the workers and peasants? Have their policies inspired an attitude of fear and apathy within the society?” (p. 842) The numerous misconceptions contained within these questions and their peculiar, if not downright hostile, formulation, are consistent with advice offered later.

“The task of the Marxist is to penetrate the nationalist/racial expressions (of cultural values) to appreciate their class content. Otherwise the attempt to liberate the minds of the oppressed majority can only lead to other forms of alienation and complexes. Slogans of Marxism-Leninism should not be made into a fetish reinforcing the other forms of alienation within society; the alienation based on national oppression, ... on the sexual division of labour, ... on ethnic/ regional disparities and ... on racial inferiority.” (p.866)

Moving on to prescribe what is needed by the liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia (by implication, to avoid the fate of the Mozambican movement), Campbell argues that to transcend the nationalism “conceptualised in the seizure of state power” requires “a social movement which will be able to harness the concrete experiences of the working poor away from the social despotism of the present forms of industrialisation. It requires the harnessing of the racial consciousness of the black majority into an ideology consistent with racial tolerance ...” (p. 867) He concludes: “One fact remains clear, that the major war and reconstruction is still ahead in Mozambique and South Africa.”

This reckless mixing up of the stages of revolution in Mozambique and South Africa suggests that Campbell would find himself at home in the ranks of those who analyse South Africa in terms of ‘racial capitalism’ and advocate a straight-through march by black workers from today’s apartheid to tomorrow’s socialism.

There is a different political/ideological trend in South Africa, often called ‘workerist’ in the short-hand of debate within the movement, which has some points of convergence with the ‘racial capitalism’ current. From it comes a much more serious, better informed analysis of Mozambique than Campbell’s in the shape of Edward de Souza’s essay in *Work in Progress*. This piece makes a mistake which has been widely repeated in recent months, and is worth pin-pointing before looking into the analytical heart of the matter:

“By mid-1973 the Mozambican government concluded that in order to survive, it had no option other than to sue for peace. To do so it turned to the western powers, launching a diplomatic offensive which sought to persuade them that it was prepared to loosen its ties with socialist countries.” (p.18)

In reality, Mozambique has not sought to loosen its ties with what are described in the Programme of the Frelimo Party as 'our natural allies'. On the contrary, since Nkomati by a whole series of meetings and visits, Mozambique has worked effectively to strengthen these links. The push to the West, first decided upon a year if not more before mid-1983, was intended to persuade Western governments which took a simplistic, bi-polar, cold war view of Mozambique, that the Frelimo government wished to broaden (not redirect) its pattern of international relations, and was prepared to take actions in support of its own sovereignty and independence in the light of its own perceptions of its national interests — as indeed it did at Nkomati.

The Working Class

De Souza argues that although Frelimo came to power in 1975 "committed to socialist transformation," it has not yet succeeded in translating the "overwhelming popular support" it enjoyed in the urban areas "into an organised working class base in the cities." This is essentially true, even if it probably overstates the support for Frelimo in urban areas, where sympathy for the nationalist cause, hatred of Portuguese colonialism, and joy at independence were in certain strata of urban society constrained from developing into real support for Frelimo by reservations about Frelimo's radical political and social policies and the implications these might have for those with petit bourgeois class interests or attitudes.

What De Souza fails to ask is how it was that pro-socialist forces won out within Frelimo in the internal battles before independence. To pose this question is to confront the crucial role of revolutionary democrats, especially revolutionary intellectuals, in a revolutionary process where the working class has not yet developed as a social or political force sufficient to stamp its imprint on the broad movement for national liberation. In this issue — in the question of the strengths and weaknesses of such forces, their degree of clarity, skills in advancing socialist goals within a framework of evolving national unity, capacity for mass mobilisation and for promoting the political role of the working class — lies the key to the dynamic of socialism in a country left backward and distorted by colonial-capitalism.

Looking for the working class, and not finding it, De Souza indicts Frelimo in the early years after independence for allowing the embryonic forms of popular power to remain "populist" in form, "addressing social welfare issues without tackling the question of the transformation of production." While the charge of populism is just — insofar as it relates to some weaknesses in the work of the Frelimo Party both in its own right, and through the mass democratic

organisations, especially the leadership of the OJM (Organisation of Mozambican Youth) — it cannot fairly be made in a generalised way. The Central Committee itself, in the report referred to, condemned populism and set it in context:

“(In the style and work methods of the Party) constant combat is necessary against two dangers. One is to limit oneself to the report and the document, thus falling into the error of bureaucratism. The other is to refuse to study them and fall into the error of empiricism and lack of scientific analysis.

Mass work is done through meetings, either directly with workers or with the various structures. But we should be careful. A proliferation of meetings leads to a demagogic and populist style, and a paralysis of work.

The desire to learn, scientific and theoretical study and analysis of practice are characteristics of leadership cadres. Study and knowledge must continually be part of practice in order to avoid authoritarian deviations.” (from Ch. V)

Where De Souza is wide of the mark is in alleging a failure to tackle the question of transforming production. The guidelines established at the 3rd Congress of Frelimo were largely concerned with this crucial question. Subsequent voluntaristic mistakes in projecting grandiose, unrealistic efforts at large-scale and rapid transformations, especially in the most recalcitrant area of production and production relations, agriculture, were criticised and corrected at the 4th Congress in 1983. Of course, as all revolutionary parties know from their own experience, it is one thing to recognise major weaknesses or errors, and another, more difficult to correct them in practice. Especially in agriculture, it is pertinent to ask why the Frelimo Party has found it so difficult to secure government implementation of its policies.

Hanlon, for one, might disagree with the above evaluation of the 4th Congress. He writes, at the end of a detailed and vivid account of agricultural policy:

“Despite the chopping and changing, Mozambique’s agricultural policy has actually been consistent. It has consistently ignored the two essential tasks of socialist transformation — changing the relationship between the state and peasant, and modernizing peasant agriculture — and has instead consistently tried to obtain quick results.” (p. 119)

This, he argues, has compounded the problems of destabilization, drought and the international capitalist recession, and retarded Mozambique’s development.

“Mozambique is probably less developed now than it would have been if Frelimo had stuck to its political goals.” (p. 120)

He seems here to admit, albeit with a not uncharacteristic lack of precision, to a gulf between Party policy and government practice. If this is true, and he is not the only observer to hold such an opinion, what is the explanation?

The problem is wider than just the issue of agriculture, important though it is. De Souza, still assessing the period 1975-77, offers a general formulation:

“Progress towards socialist transformation therefore depended on developing organisationally competent structures of popular power to be involved in planning, as well as considerable democratisation of state structures and the establishment of a balanced relationship between these state structures and those of popular power.” (p. 21)

How valid is the distinction implied here between state structures and those of popular power? Is the state not itself the main and indispensable organ of popular power? Certainly the Frelimo Party has made major efforts to guarantee the popular and democratic character of the state. But the elected Popular Assemblies created at all levels of the state apparatus since independence have proved exceptionally difficult to bring to life. Elections for the national People’s Assembly last took place in 1977, and are now 3 years overdue. Local level elections should also have taken place in 1982. A report by Marcelino dos Santos in April 1984 revealed that a number of the assemblies were not functioning at all, partly because of security problems. The work of those that were functioning was bedevilled by apathy, neglect and lack of contact with the electorate, resulting in a failure to perform the tasks allotted to them. He could have added for good measure that formalism and a limited conception of the role of these bodies have also weakened them.

Perhaps the major problem he identified was the “confusion of functions and jobs between party and state organs, caused by the concentration of various responsibilities on the same people.” This concentration, and resulting confusion — the product of the severe lack of cadres, and as such a part of the colonial legacy — have long been a serious danger to Frelimo’s control of the state and to preservation of the popular character of the state. The leadership’s attempts to resolve the problem have been intermittent, and at best only partially successful.

Nevertheless, Dos Santos concluded: “Our People’s Assemblies have a class nature that identifies them as organs of a democratic and popular state, organs of a worker-peasant state.” Bertil Egero, looking beyond the legislative arm of the state apparatus, would contest this view:

“The power of workers and peasants, in terms of direct participation in government, is still illusory. The real upholders of the state, the urban middle strata, are increasingly dissatisfied. A ‘parallel economy’ is growing, reflecting not only ‘normal’ processes in times of scarcity but also an increasingly undermined confidence in the state — and the party.”

A similar point is made about the state by De Souza, referring concretely to the negative impact of ‘Operation Production’ carried out in 1983, when the attempted removal of unproductive people from the cities caused numerous cases of injustice and hardship, and, says De Souza, “generated fear and

resentment as every single resident of the major urban areas was compelled to go through an exhausting, confusing and authoritarian bureaucratic process" (p.25).

Mobilising the Masses

Several of the writers under review hold the opinion, expressed in a variety of ways, that in the exercise of state power in a period of mounting crisis, the Mozambican government has failed to mobilise the masses, sacrificed democracy and turned to repression (e.g. the harsh penalties operated against black marketeers), opening up a gap between the base and the top which will be accentuated rather than narrowed by current measures to promote the role of private enterprise both domestic and foreign. So long as the security situation remains problematic, and even for some time thereafter, foreign capital will not venture into Mozambique to any significant extent, so this aspect of the danger may be somewhat exaggerated.

Common to nearly all the critics, with Hanlon a notable exception, is a deep pessimism about the future of socialism in Mozambique, and a paucity of ideas as to what realistic policy options the government might consider as alternatives to the present path. The link with the socialist countries is variously accepted grudgingly as an uncomfortable necessity, or questioned as being mistaken or dangerously over-valued by Mozambique.

But the issue which proves most difficult to analyse is the question of who rules in Mozambique, i.e. what coalition of class forces predominates in the Frelimo Party and the state apparatus. Within this question lie further questions about the components of such a coalition, their attitudes to key development issues and foreign policy questions, and how the balance between them has shifted, now one way, now another, over the past ten years. Of all the observers, Hanlon makes the boldest attempt to identify the answers. Like Egero he concludes that "Frelimo has largely failed to build peasant and worker power." (p.183) By way of explanation he offers three factors:

(1) "The misguided worry about the middle peasants, which led Frelimo to support rich peasants while failing to realize that 'middle' is a relative term and that in Mozambique middle peasants are extremely poor and closely linked to poor peasants."

(2) "The widely-held misconception that peasants and the unemployed could simply return to subsistence farming. Coupled to this is the failure to appreciate the almost total overlap between workers and peasants ... Worker-peasants are permanently integrated into the cash economy, which is why the empty shelves in

rural shops, the lack of support for peasant agriculture, and the decline in mine and city jobs (has) produced a peasant crisis.” (p.183-4)

There is much to debate, and some would say to contest, in these observations. But they do not bear directly on the class character of the political power which the Frelimo Party represents, and it is only with his third factor that Hanlon grasps the nettle:

“The third and overriding factor is the class position taken by the people carrying out Frelimo’s policies, the managers and bureaucrats. Many have simply taken on the mantle of the former capitalist proprietors, and have actively opposed peasants’ and workers’ power. Yet they use Marxist rhetoric to justify their actions. They talk of preventing peasant differentiation as an argument for supporting the rich peasants instead of the middle peasants. They justify the rapid expansion of state farms by the need to build a working class, but keep the old relations of production on those farms. Frelimo calls this group the ‘aspirants to the bourgeoisie.’” (p.184)

The Central Committee’s view (4th Congress) is that “The internal bourgeoisie now has more economic power than it held soon after independence. It has infiltrated the trade circuits and the state apparatus.” Hanlon proceeds to dissect these aspirants, finding two different kinds, the *commercial group* and the *state group*.

“The first is based on private commercial capital and is accumulating largely through the black market. The second is promoting a form of ‘state capitalism’ in which the bureaucracy does not ‘own’ the means of production but can still control it in order to divert a significant part of the surplus for its own benefit.” (p.187)

He points out that other terms used for the state group are ‘national bureaucratic bourgeoisie’ and ‘emerging technocratic elite.’ However labelled, the groups are fluid and not well defined, not highly organised or coherent. Their relationship to each other has varied over time, place and level in the hierarchy. But he notes a community of interests between them, and argues that with the state moving into a central position in management of the economy, they moved closer to each other, and their power peaked around 1980. Thereafter recognition “that too many concessions had been made to the bourgeoisie came at the same time as a similar realization that by concentrating so much on the technocratic elite, Frelimo was losing touch with the base.” (p.203).

The 4th Congress

Measures to dislodge and disperse technocrats from central government to enterprises and provincial levels were agreed at the 4th Congress but only implemented to a limited extent, because of opposition.

Summarising a complex of recent policy changes, Hanlon suggests that the state group has:

“*accepted as necessary a three-year pause in state-dominated economic development while hoping to consolidate its position during that period and move forward later;

*joined with the workers and peasants against speculative capital because its own economic control was threatened; but

*tried to move commercial capital into production while it supported and tried to create rich peasants as new potential allies, then working with both these groups to block support for poor peasants.” (p.209)

He concludes that although the state group is divided on all these issues, its role will be crucial in the class struggle in coming years, “both because of its intermediate position between the commercial group and the worker-peasant dominated Central Committee, and because of its command of the state apparatus.” (p.209)

While there are a number of interesting ideas here, the analysis is unsatisfactory because it moves back and forth between socio-economic groups (very loosely defined) and government policies, interpreting each in relation to each other, but without addressing the political processes of policy formation which in reality link the two. In part this may be the result of the difficulty of observing processes which are often hidden from all but the direct participants.

In part, however, it reflects a sociological mode of analysis — ironically precisely the accusation Hanlon makes against the Central Committee’s dissection of the aspirant bourgeoisie. The author does not manage to identify clearly the main political trends and their mouthpieces. More seriously, he does not make a deep assessment of the Frelimo Party, whose class character, social composition (not yet disclosed in detail), and political maturity and cohesion are together the single most important issue in the future of the socialist revolution in Mozambique.

The debates and assessments of Mozambique’s future would benefit from an objective appreciation of the balance of forces internationally, which would identify the alliance with the socialist countries as an absolute key and essential condition (though not the only one) for socialist-oriented development in countries recently liberated from colonialism. They would benefit too from a firm grasp of the concept of non-capitalist development as it has been enriched by practice in a number of countries. Again, it cannot provide a blueprint, but it helps to identify key issues, and to avoid some of the subjective misapprehensions which abound in the literature. These can all too easily spread confusion about issues which are extremely complex, delicate, and at the same time profoundly important for the future of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa.

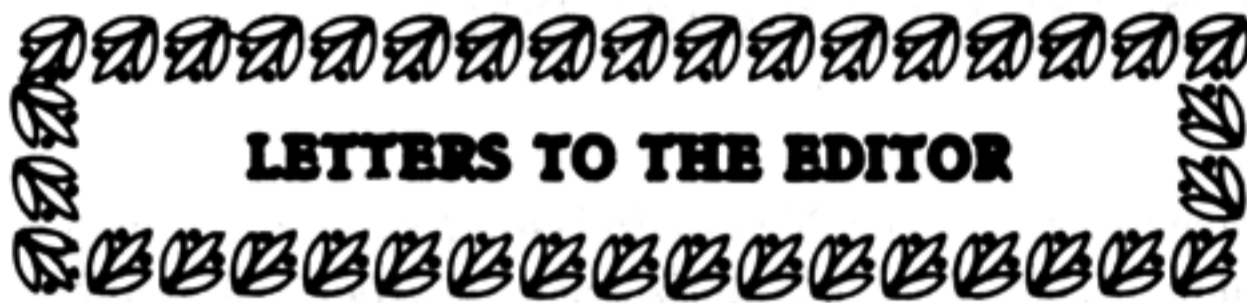
References:

- (1) Paul Fauvet: review of Hanlon's book *In Marxism Today* (London) Nov. 1984.
- (2) In the following numerous extracts from Hanlon's book, this reviewer comments on some points, not on others; but silence does not mean agreement. I specifically would condemn as unsubstantiated gossip, deplorable in a serious journalist, Hanlon's superficial remarks about the attitudes towards each other of people in the ANC and SACP on one side and the Frelimo Party on the other, in his Postscript on the Nkomati Accord. Relations between fraternal organisations cannot be reduced to the level of this sort of gibe:

"Since many (in the ANC) felt they had little to learn from Frelimo, they failed to pay attention to what was going on around them. Some in the South African Communist Party even laughed derisively at Frelimo's attempts to build a Marxist-Leninist party from illiterate peasants." (pp. 261-2)

Since this seems to be the only mention of the SACP in the whole book (there is no index), it is doubly unfortunate.





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following are extracts from letters to the editor. We regret that we are unable to publish all letters in full owing to shortage of space.

THE DANGERS OF ANTI-COMMUNISM

Dear Editor,

I think it is important that genuine anti-fascists and anti-racists should learn that anti-communism leads to an all-out onslaught by the most reactionary and racist circles against the liberals themselves and on the very high human principles which they stand for ...

In South Africa the outlawing of the Communist Party in 1950 opened the way for the banning of the ANC and other anti-fascist and anti-racist organisations. Inside the USA, under the pretext of combatting the "red menace", legislation was brought in to launch an attack against first the Communist Party and then the trade unions, progressives and liberals. The McCarthy period was a logical result of these attacks on the hard-won democratic gains of the American people and thousands of anti-fascist liberals of the Roosevelt school, too, became victims of the inhuman McCarthy witch-hunt ...

History clearly shows that liberals and humanists who pander to, or try to outdo, the arch reactionaries in anti-Communist prejudices, eventually destroy themselves or land up in the reactionary camp and do damage to the struggle for winning the ideals that they hold dear.

B.S.A., Berlin, GDR.

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7.00 p.m. Daily
10.15-10.45 p.m. Wednesday
9.30-10.00 p.m. Thursday
10.15-10.45 p.m. Friday

Shortwave 25mb, 11880 KHz

8.00-8.45 a.m. Sunday

Radio Luanda

Shortwave 31mb, 9535 KHz
and 25mb

7.30 p.m. Monday-Saturday
8.30 p.m. Sunday

Radio Madagascar

Shortwave 49mb, 6135 KHz

7.00-9.00 p.m. Monday-Saturday
7.00-8.00 Sunday

Radio Ethiopia

Shortwave 31mb, 9595 KHz

9.30-10.00 p.m. Daily

Radio Tanzania

Shortwave 31mb, 9750 KHz

8.15 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday
6.15 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

The above are South African times