

inqaba

YA BASEBENZI

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***Unite for a
Socialist
Southern Africa!***

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Unite for a Socialist Southern Africa

The murderous enemy strike in the night on the ANC in Maputo is an attack on all those who struggle for liberation in Southern Africa. This aggression goes hand in hand with the stepping up of SADF raids on Angola and the reinforced military occupation of Namibia.

Yet behind the firepower of the armoured trucks and helicopters which spew out their uniformed thugs, stands a ruling class with its back to the wall.

Threatened by the masses on all sides, seeing the storm clouds of revolution gathering on the horizon, the South African capitalists grow more divided and desperate. Faced with the task of defending Southern Africa for capitalism, the weakened apartheid regime launches out in barbaric adventures abroad.

For generations the capitalist class in South Africa, sheltering under the umbrella of imperialism, has taken all Southern Africa as its God-given backyard.

In the merciless search for plunder and profits, the SA monopolies (bound up with the Western monopolies) have spread their tentacles as far afield as Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania and Zaire. The obscene wealth of the Oppenheimers has been sucked from the cheap labour of millions of workers across the sub-continent. How many villages do not know Jo'burg?

The workers' labour has made the Witwatersrand a powerhouse of industry. But, in the process, the capitalist system has inflicted poverty and hardship on the masses not only in South Africa but in a dozen surrounding countries.

This was the case even during the world-wide capitalist boom. Today, with world capitalism in crisis, the profit system can only survive in

Southern Africa by threatening mass famine and epidemics. A Zambian MP declared recently that his district was reduced to the "conditions of the Stone Age".

In the decades since the Second World War, the struggles of the workers and peasants have overthrown colonial rule in country after country of Southern Africa. But, except in Mozambique and Angola, these victories have not broken the rule of the profit system.

Yet also in Mozambique and Angola the inheritance of very low levels of production, the economic dominance of South African capitalism, and the attacks of the South African regime, remain huge obstacles to progress.

Only the destruction of the power of capitalism in South Africa itself can break these chains which bind the sub-continent, opening the way to real control by the peoples of Southern Africa over their lives.

Amassing wealth through the development of industry, the South African capitalist class could not help but bring into being that force which will destroy it—the working class of Southern Africa.

The mines, farms, factories and docks have been schools of struggle in which anger against the exploiters has been welded into steel determination, and spread along a thousand channels to the townships and villages of the whole region.

In every country of Southern Africa the struggle for a better life boils down to the struggle for workers' rule. In the victory of this struggle alone lies the solution to every struggle of the masses—against racism and national oppression; against poverty wages and rising prices; for land, jobs, homes, education and health; for an end to

the pillage, rape and murder by the hired thugs of the SA ruling class.

Against the 'total strategy' of the South African bosses, the working people of Southern Africa need mass unity in action to realise their common aims. We must break through the divisive colonial borders upheld by imperialism.

The foundation for building this unity is in the network of migrant labour—the very system the enemy has created to draw workers together in common exploitation across the national borders.

To mobilise now for unity is the responsibility of the leaders of the trade unions and political organisations of the masses throughout Southern Africa. To bring it into being is the direct task of every activist.

In South Africa, the leaders and the rank-and-file cadres of the ANC and SACTU must put themselves in the forefront of this work. At every opportunity we must raise with our fellow-strugglers the need to strengthen the practical bonds with militants in other countries.

Here lies the road to defeating the South African capitalist class.

Against military, economic and political domination by the SA ruling class, we fight for the right of the peoples of Southern Africa to genuine self-determination. Against the imperialist schemes for a constellation of states' under the heel of South Africa, we can set as our aim a federation of Southern African workers' states, expressing the real community of interest of our peoples.

This would raise a beacon for the working masses of all Africa. In unity with the whole international working class, it would open the way to the building of socialism.

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SUPPLEMENT NO. 2

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Page 3

THE WAGES SYSTEM

by F. Engels

Page 5

Editor's note

- **A Fair Day's Wages for a Fair Day's Work**
- **The Wages System**
- **Trades Unions I**
- **Trades Unions II**
- **Social Classes—Necessary and Superfluous**

FURTHER READING

Page 15

Tlhakanelang Afrika e e Borwa ea Bojammogo

Tlhaselo ya bobaba le polao bosigo mo ANC kwa Maputo ke tlhaselo go botlhe ba ba lwelang kgololesego mo Afrika e e Borwa. Polao e e tsamaelana le koketsego ya ditlhaselo tsa SADF mo Angola, gape le tiiso ya bosole mo Namibia.

Mme lefa gontse jaana, nonofo e ya dikoloi tsa dithunya le difofane tsa bo tihootomo diikgwa marabele ka dijunifomo, ditiro tse ke tsa setlhophha sa babusi ba ba itirang ba ba sa boneng.

Ka ntata ya go tshosiwa ke merafe ntlha tsotlhe, ka go bona maru a matsubutsubu a kgololesego a ipopa mo loaping, bakonateledi ba Afrika Borwa ba a thubega ka goitlhoboga. Go sireleletsa Afrika Borwa bokonateledi, mmuso o o setseng o koafetse wa kgathololo o inakantse le ditironyana tsa botala mo lefatsheng.

Ka dingwagangwaga setlhophha sa bakonateledi mo Afrika Borwa, itshireleditse ka puso ya bonokwane, se tsere Afrika se Borwa yotlhe jaaka mpho ya Modimo.

Ka patlo e e setlhogo ya dikhumo, boradikhumo ba Afrika Borwa (ba thusana le ba bophirima-moseja) ba namaletse go fitlha kgakala jaaka Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, le Zaire. Khumo ya bolelele ya bo-Oppenheimer e amulwe gotswa diatleng tsa merafe e e sa duellweng sepe mo tikologong. Ke metse e le kae e e sa itseng Gauteng?

Maatla a badiri a dirile Witwatersrand bonno jwa kgwebo le madirelo. Mme mo tswelolepeleng e, mmuso wa kgatelelo wa Afrika Borwa o tlišitse khumanego le kgatelelo eseng fela mo bathung ba Afrika Borwa, eleng le mo bathung ba mafatshe a a mo tikologong.

Gone gontse jalo le ka nako ya fa boikgagapeledi le bokonateledi bogola mo lefatsheng ka bophara. Gompieno jaaka boikgagapeledi jwa lefatshe bo le mo mathateng, seemo sa maduo se ka tswelolela fela mo Afrika Borwa ka go bolaisa batho

tlala le malwetsi. Mopalamente wa Zambia o buile mo bogarifing gore kgaolo ya gagwe e boetse mo seemong sa nako tsa lefifi.

Mo dingwageng tsa morago ga ntwana ya bobedi ya lefatshe, maiteko a magolo a badiri le balemi a digile mebuso ya bokolone ka tlhomagano mo mafatshing a Afrika e e borwa. Kwantle ga mo Mozambique le Angola, diphenyo tse ga dia kgaola kgatelelo ya seemo sa maduo.

Gape mo Mozambique le Angola, boswa jwa seemo se se kwa tlase sa ditiro, kgatelelo ya khumo ya Afrika Borwa, le ditlhaselo tsa mmuso wa Afrika Borwa, ke dikgoreletsi tse dikgolo tsa tswelolepele.

Fela phenyo ya boikgagapeledi jo bo mo Afrika Borwa ka boyone e ka kgaola dikgole tse di bofileng kgaolo e ya lefatshe, e bulelela batho ba Afrika e e Borwa tsela ya go ipusa le go laola matshelo le phelelo ya bone.

Kgobokanyo ya khumo ka tswelolepele ya madirelo, setlhophha sa baikgaagapeledi mo Afrika Borwa ga sena epe tsela fa ese go aga nonofo e e tlišeng go ba nyeletsa, badiri ba Afrika e e Borwa.

Meepo, dipolasi, madirelo le maemelo a dikepe e ntse ele dikole tsa tlhabanela kgololesego mo mafelong a, kgakalo kgatlhanong le bagateledi e noseditse jaaka maikaelelo a bothata jwa tshipi, mme ebile e tswelolepele gotsena ditropong le metsameng mo tikologong.

Mo lefatsheng lengwe le lengwe la Afrika e e Borwa maitiko a botshelo jobo botoka a tswelolela go batla puso ya badiri. Mo phenyong ya maitiko a fela goteng karabo ya maiteko a batho kgatlhanong le kgethololo le kgatelelo ya sechaba, mabapi le dituelo tsa lehuma le ditlhotlwa tse di tsholetsegang tsa lefatshe, ditiro, magae, thuto le tsa botsogo; go tla nna phelo ya go thubelwa metse, gohubetsa le dipolao tse di dirwang ke marabele a a hirilweng a

setlhophha sa babusi.

Kgatlhonong le "total strategy" tsa bo-base ba maburu, badiri ba Afrika e e borwa ba tshwanetse go kopana ba nne le maikaelelo a le mangwefela. Re tshwanetse go thuba melwane e re e agetsweng ke puso ya bokolone e e santseng e tshageditswe ke bagateledi.

Motheo wa go aga kopano e o mo matsokabeleng a dijoini, yone tsela e e dirilweng ke mmaba a thotha babereki a ba tlodisa melwane goba dirisisa ka kgatelelo.

Go kgothaletsa batho kopano jaanong ke tiro ya botlhokwa ya baeteledipele ba mekghatlho ya babereki le mekghatlho ya dipolotiki mo Afrika e e Borwa yotlhe. Go diragatsa megopolo e, ke tiro ya moithaupi mongwe le mongwe.

Mo Afrika Borwa, baeteledipele le balwelakgololesego ba ANC le SACTU ba tshwanetse go rwala tiro e kwa tlhogong. Ka nako tsotlhe re tshwanetse go godisa tirisano le batlhabanela kgololesego mo mafatsheng a mangwe.

E ke yone tsela ya go fenyisa setlopha sa baikgaagapeledi mo Afrika Borwa.

Kgatlhonong le kgatelelo ya bosole, ya madi le ya bopolotiki e dirwa ke setlhophanyana sa babusi mo Afrika Borwa, re lwela ditshwanelo tsa batho ba Afrika e e Borwa le maikaelelo a bosechaba. Kgatlhanong le ditogamaano tsa kgatelelo tsa go kgobokaganyetsa dichaba ka fa tlase ga serethe sa Afrika Borwa, re ka dira jaaka maikaelelo a rona go aga kopano ya mebuso ya babereki ya Afrika e e Borwa, re diragatsa dithato tsa nnete tsa batho ba goba rona.

Se seka aga motheo wa babereki ba Afrika yotlhe. Ka kopano le babereki ba lefatshe lotlhe, tsela ya kago ya bojammogo e ka bulega.

Introduction

These five articles are part of a series that Frederick Engels, the life-long comrade of Karl Marx, wrote exactly 100 years ago in **The Labour Standard**, a trade union newspaper published in London at that time. Why does **INQABA** reprint them today?

In the first place, the questions discussed by Engels are very much to the fore in the struggles of the South African workers at the present time. Over the past ten years, out of the renewal of industrial struggle on a massive scale, trade unions have begun to be rebuilt among the black workers. Although these unions as yet represent only a small fraction of the workers, their strength is increasing with every new upsurge in the movement.

In the last year alone, trade union membership has tripled from some 68 000 to nearly 200 000 workers. Growth has been particularly rapid in East London and in the Johannesburg municipality.

This rapid growth under the conditions of a police state indicates the strength possessed by the black working class throughout South Africa. The vital question now is the road forward—the way in which the power that the workers have built up in the factories and the trade unions can be used to take forward the struggle for liberation from national and social oppression.

Engels's reply to this question remains as true for the workers of South Africa today as for the British workers to whom it was originally addressed. On the one hand he shows that trade union organisation and struggle is a necessary instrument for the working class in lifting itself above the level of poverty and degradation that the capitalists, if unchallenged, always inflict. As proof,

Engels points at the contrast that existed between the relatively high wages paid to members of strong trade unions, and the miserable wages paid to unorganised workers at that time.

Today in South Africa we find precisely the same contrast among the oppressed black workers themselves. Thus in the motor car industry in Port Elizabeth, the militant and organised African workers have been able to enforce a minimum wage of R72,00 per week as at December 1980. But in industries such as mining, for example, the workers' organisation and struggles have not been developed to the same degree as in the car factories. Thus in the mining industry the minimum wage laid down in July 1980 was only R100 per month (R23,33 per week).

Object

On the other hand Engels shows that the struggle of the workers is not confined to the fight for better wages and working conditions. The trade union struggle, he explains, "is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end: the abolition of the wages system".

Here is expressed a second and even more important aspect of the articles. Not only does Engels outline the nature of the struggle with which the working class is faced, he also explains the **cause** and the **essential object** of that struggle. Scientifically and simply, he shows that the system of wage labour is a system whereby the product of the workers' labour is stolen from them by the capitalist

class, and only a small part is paid back to them as wages. **Wage labour can only mean exploited labour.**

In order to free itself from exploitation, the working class needs to abolish the instrument of that exploitation—the system of wage labour. In the final article Engels indicates what this means: the ending of the capitalists' ownership of the means of production, by which the workers are forced to submit to exploitation, and the taking over of the means of production by the working class itself.

Only the reorganisation of society on this basis can make possible the full liberation of the working class from the many chains that tie them down at present, and allow the downtrodden masses in society to rise to their full stature.

These conclusions are fully in accordance with the experience of the oppressed black workers in South Africa today. Compare Engels's words on the role of trade unions with the defiant answer of a black trade unionist to an American journalist recently:

"The ultimate aim of all genuine unions is first to get a bargaining place for the worker, then use his stronger position in the economy to change the political situation."

"Act politically"

Of course this does not mean that trade union struggle comes first and that political struggle must wait. Capitalism in South Africa has been built on the foundations of cheap black labour. Historically, wage labour was established here in the form of migrant labour—a system which

Hlanganelani iZansi lase Africa elobudlelwano

Ukuhlasele kombulali ebusuku okwenziwa yisitha sitshaya iANC eMaputo yikuhlasela bonke abalwela impumelelo ye Zansi lase Africa.

Lokhu kudlukuluza kwenzeka kanye-kanye lokuqakanyiswa kokuhlasela iAngola yiSADF, kanye lokuqimiswa kokubambhela kwempi eNamibia.

Kodwa ngemua kwezimoto zamasotsha lama helikopta ahlanza ababulali abavunyelweyo kumi iqula elibusayo lifulathele umduli.

Besatshiswa nguZulu kumagumbi wonke, bebona umkhathi uhloma amayezi enguqulo, ungxowa-nkulu wase Zansi udliwa yikudabukana lokwesaba okukhulu. Ukuvikela ungxowa-nkulu eZansi lase Africa, umbuso wobandlululo osuxega uhlasela sanyamazana amazwe akhelene leZansi Africa.

Okwezizukulwane eziningi ezedlulileyo, iqula likangxowa-nkulu wase Zansi Africa, licatshelwe ngaphansi komthunzi we "imperialism", selithethe izwe lonke lase Zansi e Africa njenge guma lalo elaliphiwa ngu-Nkulunkulu.

Zithi zidinga okungenaxolo ukuchithiza, ne ngeniso, iziqhuzu zanse Zansi Africa zihlangene kanye leziqhuzu zentshonalanga yomhlaba sezixakamise izandla zazo eziningi zaze zayafika eZambia, eMalawi, eTanzania lase Zaire. Inotho enyanekayo yabo Oppenheimer imunywe yikuxhaphaza abasebenzi bonke base Zansi yalilizwe. Mingaki imize engaziyo iGoli?

Amandla abasebenzi asenze iWitwatersrand indlunkulu yemisebenzi. Kodwa ngaleyondlela ubungxowa-nkulu sebethese ubuyanga lobunzima kuzulu atshi wodwa weZansi Africa, kodwa lalowo okumazwe amanengi agombolozele i Zansi Africa.

Lokhu bekuvele kuyinhlalo ngitsho langesikhathi inotho kangxowa-nkulu yayinengi umhlaba jikelele. Namhla ubungxowa-nkulu bomhlaba busendubekweni, ingeniso yabomaqhuzu ingaphiliswa eZansi lase Africa yikuqakamisa indlala yaban-

engi kuphela. U M.P. waseZambia umemezele ukuthi impilo yesigodlo sakhe isibiselwe emva kwangathi yisikhathi sekademi kusasetshenziswa amatshe.

Eminyakeni kwedule Impi Yesibili Yomhlaba, ukulwa kokuzimisela kwabasebenzi labakhileyo sekugunqule imbuso yabaphetsheya ezweni lasezweni lase Zansi lase Africa. Kodwa, ngaphandle kwe Mozambique ne Angola, impumelelo lezi azisephulanga isandla esikhamayo sikangxowa-nkulu.

Kodwa ngitsho leMozambique lase Angola, ukudla ilifa lenzuzo encinyane, ukubusa kwemali lenotho kangxowa-nkulu weZansi Africa, lemihlaselo yombuso wase Zansi Africa kusala kuzintaba ezivalela impumelelo.

Ukutshaya uqede amandla engxowa-nkulu phakathi kweZansi Africa ngokwayo yikho kodwa ekugcineni okungephula amaketane abophe izansi yelizwe leli, kuvulela indlela eqondile yokuzakhela kwabantu base Zansi lase Africa impilo yabo lokuqonda lapho baya khona.

Bebutha inotho ngokukhula kwendawo yemisebenzi, ingxowa-nkulu yase Zansi Africa yayingeke yavika ukuzala impi ezayitshaya iyigede—abasebenzi base Zansi lase Africa.

Imigodi, amapulazi, izindawo zemisebenzi, lama "docks", konke lokhu sekube yizikolo zokulwa, lapho inzondo eqondiswa kwabaxhaphazayo isibunjiwe yaba yikuzimisela okuqine sansimbi, njalo yahamba ngenkulungwane yezindlela yayafika emalokishini lasemizini yesigodi sonke.

Ezweni lonke leZansi lase Africa, ukulwela impilo engcono kuqeda sekuyikulwela umbuso wabasebenzi. Ekuphumeleleni kwalokhu kulwa kodwa kulapho okulele khona impendulo yakho konke ukulwa kuka Zulu—esilwa lokubandlulula njalo lokucindezelwa kwesizwe; esilwa lemali yobuyanga, lembhadalo ekwelayo; elwela ilizwe, imisebenzi, amakhaya, imfundo lempilo; elwela ukuqeda ukuchaphaza, ukubamba

abesifazane, lokubulala okwenziwa ngababulali abathengwe liqula lababusi be Zansi Africa.

Ekwehluleni kwendaba ye "Total Strategy" yabongxowa-nkulu base Zansi Africa, abantu abasebenzayo base Zansi lase Africa bafuna inhlanganiso ka Zulu ekwenzeni ukuze babone izifiso zabobonke. Sifanele sephule izehlukaniso zamazwe ezakhiwa ngababusi baphetsheya.

Insika yokwakha lobubudlelwano yizisebenzi eziyizibhalwa eZansi Africa yona ngokwayo inhlalo eyakhiwa yisitha ukuletha izisebenzi zamazwe ndawonye zicindezelwa okufanana-yo.

Ukubutha uZulu ohlangeneyo khona manje yiwo umsebenzi wabakhokheli bama trade union lenhlanganiso kaZulu eyendaba zelizwe kuyo yonke iZansi yase Africa. Ukuyenza yenzeke yiwo umsebenzi oqondene laye wonke umuntu osebenzela impumelelo.

E Zansi Africa abakhokheli labalandeli be ANC le SACTU kumele bazibeke phambili kwalo umsebenzi. Ukuzesiqinise amandla ngokawo ezandleni zabasebenzi abeZansi yonke yaleli lizwe.

Lapha kulele khona indlela yokwehlula ingxowa-nkulu yase Zansi Africa.

Ekwehluleni i "military", i "economic" lokubusa kondlakela okwenziwa liqula lababusi be Zansi Africa, silwela imfanelo yabantu base Zansi lase Africa yokuzibusa kuka Zulu okuqondileyo. Ekwehluleni izenzo zama "imperialists" ze "Constellation of States" ngaphansi kwesithende se Zansi Africa singabeka isimiselo sethu ekwakheni inhlanganiso yamazwe abasebenzi ase Zansi lase Africa; sitshengisa ubudlelwano ngokwabo bezifiso zabantu bethu.

Lokhu kungaba yisibane sezisebenzi zonke zase Africa jikelele. Kumanyano lezisebenzi zomhlaba jikelele kungavulela indlela yokwakha ubudlelwano.

has enslaved not only the millions of working people caught up in its web, but has also extended its tyranny over the workers who have managed to gain 'section 10 rights', by forcing them to 'compete' with the migrants. The entire monstrous machinery of apartheid is only the necessary tool of the capitalists in enforcing the system of wage labour in its brutal South African form.

Central to the interests of the capitalist class are the merciless attempts by the state to undermine and smash the independent black trade union movement, in order to prevent the workers from challenging the system of cheap labour. Thus the struggle to build up independent trade unions is at one and the same time a political struggle—part of the overall struggle against racist repression and social destitution.

"It (the trade union struggle) goes beyond the factory floor", a trade unionist at Chloride in East London explained to the same American writer. "In fact workers are oppressed politically, so they

must act politically in order to free themselves."

Engels spells out the task that inevitably follows from the nature of the struggle between the workers and the bosses: "At the side of, or above, the Unions of special trades there must spring up...a political organisation of the working class as a whole."

Just as the separate trade unions serve the workers to fight for improved conditions in their separate places of work, so the political organisation of the workers must serve the working class as a whole in winning its freedom from oppression and exploitation. In South Africa in the coming period the mass of the working class will have no alternative but to turn to the African National Congress. It is the ANC that they will have to build and transform as the instrument for their organisation as a class.

At the same time, as Engels makes clear, the workers' political organisation must be built around a conscious understanding of the objects of the struggle, from which

the leadership must never be allowed to depart. In South Africa, national oppression is the means by which the mass of the black workers are forced to provide cheap labour for the capitalist class. The liberation of the working class will only be achieved when the struggle to overthrow national oppression is carried through to the point of overthrowing the capitalist system. This objective is summarised in Engels's words, "the abolition of the wages system".

This means that the working class needs to take over the means of production—the mines, factories, banks, big farms etc—and reorganise the production and distribution of goods on the basis, no longer of private profit, but of social need.

Only through an organisation and leadership geared to these objectives can the struggle of the workers in South Africa succeed. It is these aims that the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC will struggle to support and promote.

Verenig vir 'n Sosialistiese Suider-Afrika

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Die moorddadige aanval van die vyand in die nag op die ANC in Maputo is 'n aanval op almal wat veg vir vryheid in Suidelike Afrika. Dié aggressie gaan hand in hand met die toename van die SADF se aanvalle op Angola en die versterking van die militêre besetting van Namibië.

Maar agter die wapenrusting en helikopters wat hul skurke in uniform uitspoeg, staan 'n heersende klas met sy rug teen die muur.

Bedreig deur die massa aan alle kante, sien die Suid-Afrikaanse kapitaliste die stormwolke van revolusie saampak op die horison en word hulle meer en meer verdeel en wanhopig. Om Suidelike Afrika vir kapitalisme te beskerm, lanseer die verswakte apartheidregering barbaarse avonture oor sy grense.

Die kapitalistiese klas in Suid-Afrika het lank onder die sambreel van imperialisme die hele Suidelike Afrika as sy agterplaas behandel.

In die ongenadige soektog vir buit en profyt het die SA grootkapitaal (verbind met die Westerse monopolies) hulle tentakels versprei so ver weg as Zambië, Malawi, Tanzanië en Zaïre. Die liederlike rykdom van die Oppenheimers is gesuig uit die goedkoop slawe-arbeid van miljoene werkers dwarsdeur die sub-kontinent. Hoeveel dorpe ken nie vir Jo'burg nie?

Die werkers se arbeid het die Witwatersrand 'n kragentrum van die industrie gemaak. Maar in die proses, het die kapitalistiese sisteem armoede en ellende op die massa afgedwing, nie net in Suid-Afrika nie, maar ook in 'n dosyn ander lande wat Suid-Afrika omring.

Dit was selfs die geval gedurende die wêreld-wye kapitalistiese hoogkonjunktuur. Met die wêreldkapitalisme vandag in 'n krisis, kan die profytsisteem net oorlewe in Suidelike Afrika deur die massa met hongersnood en epidemies te

bedreig. 'n Zambiese parlamentslid het kort gelede verklaar dat sy distrik teruggebring was na die "omstandighede van die steentydperk."

In die tydperk sedert die tweede wêreldoorlog, het die stryd van die werkers en landbouers die koloniale orde in land na land van Suidelike Afrika oorwin. Maar behalwe in Mosambiek en Angola, het hierdie oorwinning nie die beheer van die profytsisteem gebreek nie.

Maar ook in Mosambiek en Angola, met hul erfenis van baie lae produksie, die ekonomiese oorheersing van Suid-Afrikaanse kapitalisme, en die aanvalle deur die Suid-Afrikaanse regering, bly daar kolossale struikelblokke in die pad na vooruitgang.

Alleen die verwoesting van die krag van kapitalisme in Suid-Afrika self kan die kettings losbreek wat die sub-kontinent bind, en die pad oopmaak na werklike beheersing deur die volke van Suidelike Afrika oor hulle eie lewens.

Terwyl hy sy rykdom opgehoop het deur die ontwikkeling van industrie, kon die SA kapitalistiese klas nie help om die krag in die lewe te roep wat hom sal vernietig nie—die werkende klas van Suidelike Afrika.

Die myne, plase, fabriekke en dokke is skole van stryd, waardeur woede teen die uitbuiters ontwikkel word tot vasberadenheid van staal en versprei word deur 'n duisend kanale na die townships en dorpe van die hele gebied.

In elke land van Suidelike Afrika beteken die stryd vir 'n beter lewe, 'n stryd vir werkersregering. In die oorwinning van dié stryd alleen lê die antwoord vir elke stryd van die massa—teen rassehaat en nasionale onderdrukking; teen die hongerslone en prysverhoginge; vir land, werk, huise, opvoeding en gesondheid; vir die einde van plundering, verkragting en moord deur die gehuurde

moordenaars van die Suid-Afrikaanse heersende klas.

Teenoor die totale strategie van die Suid-Afrikaanse base, het die werkende klas van Suidelike Afrika massa-eenheid in aksie nodig om hul gemeenskaplike belange te realiseer. Ons moet breek deur die verdeling van die koloniale grense wat deur imperialisme in stand gehou word.

Die fondament om eenheid te bou is in die netwerk van trekarbeid—die einste sisteem wat die vyand geskep het om werkers saam te trek in gemeenskaplike uitbuiting dwarsoor die nasionale grense.

Om te mobiliseer vir eenheid is die dringende verantwoordelikheid van die leiers van die vakbonde en politieke organisasies van die massa dwarsdeur Suidelike Afrika. Om dit te realiseer is die uitdruklike taak van elke aktivis.

In Suid-Afrika moet die leiers en die lede van die ANC en SACTU die voortou neem in hierdie werk. By elke geleentheid moet ons met ons medestryders die noodsaaklikheid bespreek om ons praktiese bande met militante in ander lande te versterk.

Hier lê die weg om die Suid-Afrikaanse kapitalistiese klas te vernietig.

Teenoor militêre, ekonomiese en politieke oorheersing deur die SA heersende klas, veg ons vir die reg van die volke van die Suidelike Afrika vir egte selfbestemming. Teenoor die imperialiste se komplot vir 'n 'konstellasie van state' onder Suid-Afrika se hak, kan ons 'n federasie van Suidelike Afrikaanse werkersstate stel as ons doel, wat die ware gemeenskaplike belange van ons mense sal uitdruk.

Dit sal 'n baken verhef vir die werkende massa van Afrika. In eenheid met die hele internasionale werkende klas, sal dit die pad oopmaak vir die opbou van sosialisme.

FREDERICK ENGELS

**THE WAGES
SYSTEM**

The White Election and the Workers' Movement

The April election called by P.W. Botha takes place within the framework of a struggle by the South African bourgeoisie to cut through the constraints imposed on them by the privileged white middle and working class.

Squeezed by the world capitalist crisis and the undefeated mass movement, the ruling class is in a mess. Looking this way and that for an escape from the corner in which it is trapped, it finds no answers. Over the last few years, each move that it has made has only created fresh problems, and led to more divisions and greater panic. Leading figures in the ruling class speak openly of the impending revolution.

Many activists in the liberation struggle dismiss the election as simply a white election—an irrelevant fight between different groups of our oppressors.

In reality the elections are another sign of the unfolding crisis of South African society. Out of them will come developments which will have a profound effect (if not immediately, then in the long term) on the lives of the exploited and oppressed majority, the black working class.

Dismissing the elections in such a manner reflects a misunderstanding of the nature of the South African state. South Africa is a bourgeois state. The absence of bourgeois democratic rights does not alter its essential nature.

The democratic rights of the workers in the advanced capitalist countries are the gains of decades of struggle by these workers. Their absence in South Africa reflects the success of the ruling class in

by R. Malgas

maintaining its rule without making concessions to the majority of the people, the black workers, who are in constant struggle for democratic rights.

To put it in another way, there are no democratic rights for the mass of the workers in South Africa because the capitalist class can maintain the cheap labour system on which its profits depend only by ruling as the ruthless enemy of democracy.

A section of the population, the white section, do have these rights. However, the right of the white worker to vote was granted by the bourgeoisie in a successful attempt to divide the working class. This right has existed only as a privilege. The vote of the white worker is the material evidence of his bribery by the bourgeoisie.

The general election and its aftermath will show how empty these 'rights' of the white worker really are.

For many years, the votes of the white workers have given the Nationalist Party its secure parliamentary majority as the governing party of the ruling class. But now, and for a time past, divisions have arisen in the Nationalist Party, which reflect divisions in the ruling class itself.

The divisions are about how to establish the cheap labour system and the rule of capitalism under the challenge of the black workers' and youth movement.

For the last ten years, for all its bullets, bannings, tear gas and batons, the ruling class has had no peace. The mass movement, with the workplace as its fortress; and youth at its forefront, has drawn into action broader and broader layers of the oppressed against every aspect of apartheid domination.

Against this relentless pressure, the ruling class cannot continue to rule in precisely the same old way. But there is still a small, conservative section of the bourgeoisie that would like to do so: the *verkramptes*. Because of the privileges which the white middle class and white workers have enjoyed for so long, this small section of the ruling class has a powerful appeal for the white voters.

The *verligtes* are the so-called 'enlightened' ones—but only in the bosses' terms. They are looking for a way to subdue the mass movement (and continue the dictatorship of capitalism) in a way which does not

Editor's note

For the reader today, certain references by Engels to events, developments or the perspectives of that time may be unfamiliar or unclear. To avoid misunderstanding or uncertainty, some of these points should be noted:

1. Combination laws. These are the laws by which, prior to 1824, any form of organisation by the working class in Britain was prohibited.

2. Chartist Movement. The Chartist movement was the first political movement of the British working class. It developed around the 'People's Charter', published in 1838, which contained demands for the right to vote for all men over 21 and full parliamentary rights. Parliament, however, repeatedly rejected these demands. Chartism, which developed into a mass movement during the 1840's, soon declined and fell apart; but some of the radical Chartists learned the lessons of their experience and went on, as associates of Marx and Engels, to contribute to the building of the workers' revolutionary movement from the 1850's onwards.

3. Middle class. A hundred years ago, when Engels wrote, this term meant the capitalist class, which stood between the working class and the feudal aristocracy. Today, the term 'middle class' is used to describe the small capitalists, petty property-owners, traders, etc., who stand between the working class and the big capitalists.

4. "Full representation of labour in Parliament". Engels was writing at a time when capitalism in Britain was at its historical height. The struggle for power in Parliament is presented, not as a 'maximum' demand, but as a **transitional demand**—a demand which, within the prevailing conditions, would lead the workers to organise, to build up their forces and strengthen their position in relation to the capitalist class.

In order to gain "full representation in Parliament", therefore, the working class would have to develop an organised power **that would in fact enable it to carry the struggle beyond the limits of parliamentary reforms**—towards "the preparation of the abolition of the wages system".

In South Africa, the revolution-

ary significance of Engels's approach is even more strongly to the fore. The demand for the right to vote has proved, and will prove, a vital demand in rallying the forces of the working class.

But in South Africa, unlike in Britain, the ruling class does not have the resources to allow the masses any real influence over the government and still maintain its power. The right to vote is a demand which cannot be conceded on any lasting basis as long as the capitalist system prevails. Under these conditions the mass struggle for "full representation in Parliament" must in practice become a struggle for the overthrow of capitalist rule. This will mean, not keeping the capitalist Parliament as we know it, but creating in its place the infinitely more democratic councils of the working masses in order to govern society.

rely solely on the support of the white voters.

Thus the rigid conservatism of the verkramptes, with their appeal to the white voters inside and outside the Nationalist Party, is an obstacle which is tying the hands of the bosses. The more far-sighted section of the ruling class, the 'verligtes' and 'liberals' see the desperate situation and are trying to create more room in which to manoeuvre.

The election was called by P.W. Botha ostensibly to rout the verkramptes. But in fact the question goes much deeper than this. The ruling class is well aware that the influence of the verkramptes cannot be diminished within the framework of the parliamentary system. The election has been called, at a favourable moment, to try and give time to the ruling class to reduce the significance of elections themselves.

Even the bosses' press has recognised that this is a 'predictorship election'—i.e. a dictatorship affecting also the existing rights of the whites.

The election is in this respect just one more step in a series of attempts

by the ruling class to regain the initiative, and break out of the political impasse which has plagued them since the huge struggles of 1976.

Impasse

In 1977 another general election was called before the government had served its time. Beating the drum of 'white unity', Vorster called for support for his proposals for constitutional reform. Though he was re-elected with a huge mandate, the proposals were never implemented. There was too much resistance to them from both black and white.

The 'Muldergate scandal' was engineered by a section of the ruling class to oust Vorster and his cronies and bring in new faces. Botha swept into office to the applause of the ruling class and its press.

The Botha regime made many promises of reforms and set up endless commissions to study how to bring them into being. The slogan of 'adapt or die', Botha's 'twelve-point

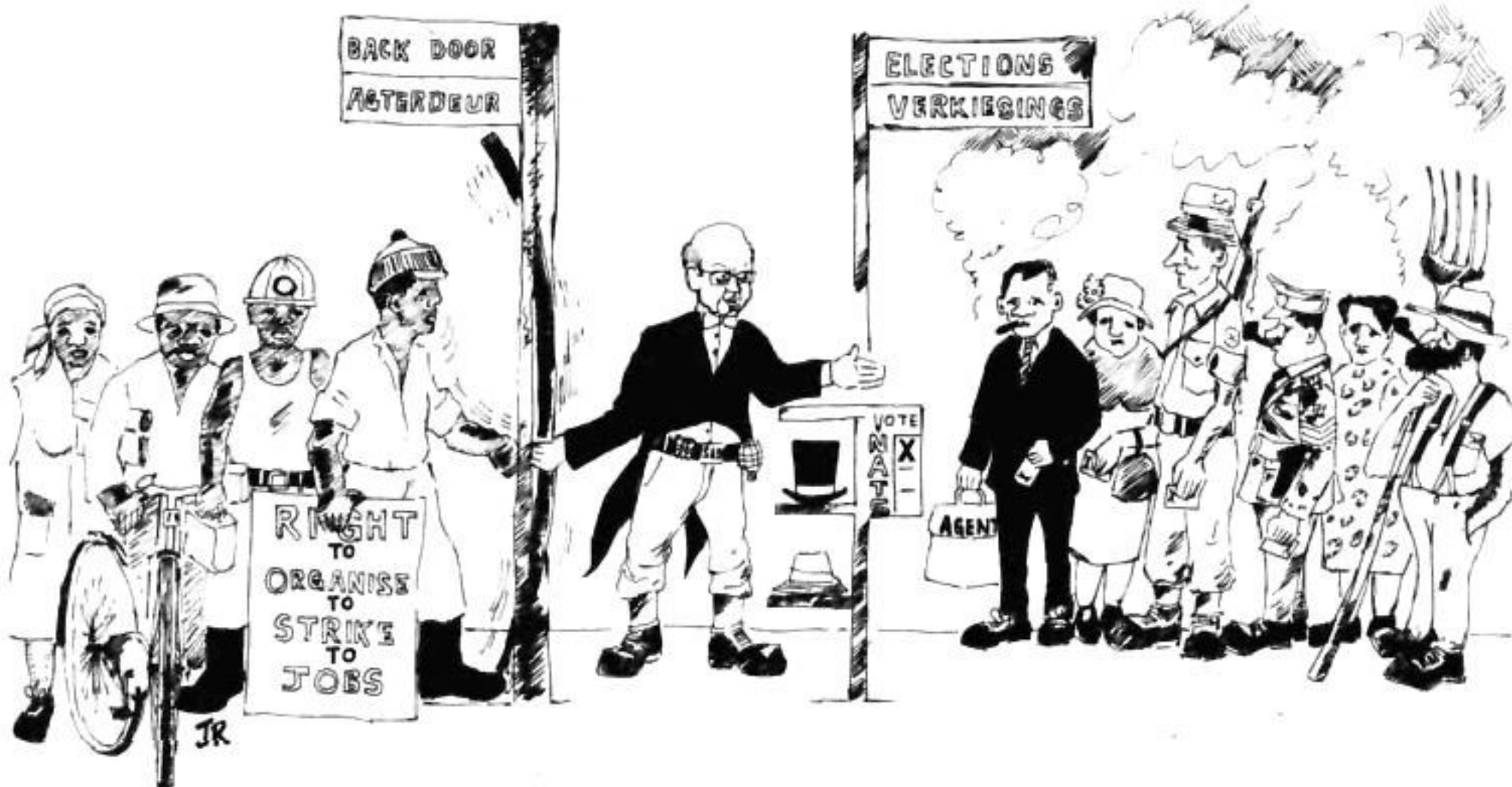
plan', and what went with it was supposed to herald a new deal for blacks in every sphere of life. But, no more than Vorster before him, has Botha been able to carry anything through. In fact the government's plans have foundered even more quickly than Vorster's.

The Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions were appointed and their reports tabled in Parliament. The first steps were taken towards making the Wiehahn proposals into law—and were met with rejection from the side of the black workers, and also, though for different reasons, the white workers.

The labour movement rejected these proposals as an attempt to chain the black workers to influx control, group areas, toothless unions, etc; and as an attack on the right to organise fighting unions and the right to strike. The white workers rejected these proposals as endangering their jobs, by making possible the replacement of white labour by cheap black labour.

The Senate was abolished without so much as a murmur. But the puppet consultative apparatus which

REFORMISM WITHOUT REFORMS!



A Fair Day's Wages for a Fair Day's Work

This has now been the motto of the English working-class movement for the last fifty years. It did good service in the time of the rising Trades Unions after the repeal of the infamous Combination Laws in 1824; it did still better service in the time of the glorious Chartist movement, when the English workmen marched at the head of the European working class. But times are moving on, and a good many things which were desirable and necessary fifty, and even thirty years ago, are now antiquated and would be completely out of place. Does the old, time-honoured watchword too belong to them?

A fair day's wages for a fair day's work? But what is a fair day's wages, and what is a fair day's work? How are they determined by the laws under which modern society exists and develops itself? For an answer to this we must not apply to the science of morals or of law and equity, nor to any sentimental feeling of humanity, justice, or even charity. What is morally fair, what is even fair in law, may be far from being socially fair. Social fairness or unfairness is decided by one science alone — the science which deals with the material facts of production and exchange, the science of political economy.

Now what does political economy call a fair day's wages and a fair day's work? Simply the rate of wages and the length and intensity of a day's work which are determined by competition of employer and employed in the open market. And what are they, when thus determined?

A fair day's wages, under normal conditions, is the sum required to procure to the labourer the means

of existence necessary, according to the standard of life of his station and country, to keep himself in working order and to propagate his race. The actual rate of wages, with the fluctuations of trade, may be sometimes above, sometimes below this rate; but, under fair conditions that rate ought to be the average of all oscillations.

A fair day's work is that length of working day and that intensity of actual work which expends one day's full working power of the workman without encroaching upon his capacity for the same amount of work for the next and following days.

The transaction, then, may be thus described — the workman gives to the Capitalist his full day's working power; that is, so much of it as he can give without rendering impossible the continuous repetition of the transaction. In exchange he receives just as much, and no more, of the necessaries of life as is required to keep up the repetition of the same bargain every day. The workman gives as much, the Capitalist gives as little, as the nature of the bargain will admit. This is a very peculiar sort of fairness.

But let us look a little deeper into the matter. As, according to political economists, wages and working days are fixed by competition, fairness seems to require that both sides should have the same fair start on equal terms. But that is not the case. The Capitalist, if he cannot agree with the Labourer, can afford to wait, and live upon his capital. The workman cannot. He has but wages to live upon, and must therefore take work when, where, and at what terms he can get it. The workman has no fair start. He is fearfully handicapped

by hunger. Yet, according to the political economy of the Capitalist class, that is the very pink of fairness.

But this is a mere trifle. The application of mechanical power and machinery to new trades, and the extension and improvements of machinery in trades already subjected to it, keep turning out of work more and more 'hands'; and they do so at a far quicker rate than that at which these superseded 'hands' can be absorbed by, and find employment in, the manufactures of the country. These superseded 'hands' form a real industrial army of reserve for the use of Capital. If trade is bad they may starve, beg, steal, or go to the workhouse; if trade is good they are ready at hand to expand production; and until the very last man, woman, or child of this army of reserve shall have found work — which happens in times of frantic over-production alone — until then will its competition keep down wages, and by its existence alone strengthen the power of Capital in its struggle with Labour. In the race with Capital, Labour is not only handicapped, it has to drag a cannon-ball riveted to its foot. Yet that is fair according to Capitalist political economy.

But let us inquire out of what fund does Capital pay these very fair wages? Out of capital, of course. But capital produces no value. Labour is, besides the earth, the only source of wealth; capital itself is nothing but the stored-up produce of labour. So that the wages of Labour are paid out of labour, and the working man is paid out of his own produce. According to what we may call common fairness, the wages of the labourer ought to consist in the produce of his labour.

But that would not be fair according to political economy. On

has replaced it, the Presidents' Council, is rejected by even the majority of the middle class—black and white. The mass movement treats it with contempt.

Of all members of the Cabinet, Koornhof has been loudest in his promises. But no sooner did he publish draft legislation (based on Riekert) for his 'new deal' for urban blacks than he was forced to withdraw it—in the face of its outright rejection by the black working class, by the black middle class, and even by the bourgeois opposition. All of these plainly identified it as an attempt to tighten the pass system.

Many other commissions are still 'studying' their subjects, unable to formulate proposals that will be acceptable to anyone. In the meantime the regime continues its brutal repression of the mass movement and tightens its controls over the press.

The 'reforms' promised by the bosses of big industry have been intended to reduce white job privileges in order to employ black labour at much reduced wages (cheap labour) and to lift more of the

tiny black middle class out of their present position into property owners. The latter move is intended towards using the black middle class against the working class in the coming struggles. Their main purpose is, of course, profit.

Economy

The massive growth of the economy in the 1960's began to provoke the need for these changes. The expansion of production under the apartheid system of 'job reservation' has produced increasing shortages of skilled labour. At the same time the boom, drawing black workers in huge numbers into increasingly strategic positions in production, laid the basis of the power of the working class in struggle in the 1970's.

But now the capitalist class is forced more urgently to try to introduce these changes in the conditions of world capitalism entering crisis. Any concessions to the black middle class or to sections of the black workers would have to

be paid for.

With the crisis in the economy, South African capitalism cannot afford to pay for such reforms. Instead the capitalist class is forced to attack the livelihood of the mass of the black workers—and the privileges of the white workers also.

Although the growth rate in 1980 was 8%, this was after a period of stagnation in the mid-1970's from which recovery has been slow. For most of the period of the upturn, despite huge profits made by the capitalists, investment in new plant—machinery and technology—remained low.

This investment is essential to improve the productivity of South African labour, which lags far behind that of the advanced capitalist countries. Though the use of industrial capacity rose from below 80% to 92% during the upturn, productivity was not substantially improved.

In general, the capitalists can improve productivity only by expanding also the scale of production and selling to a larger share of the world market.

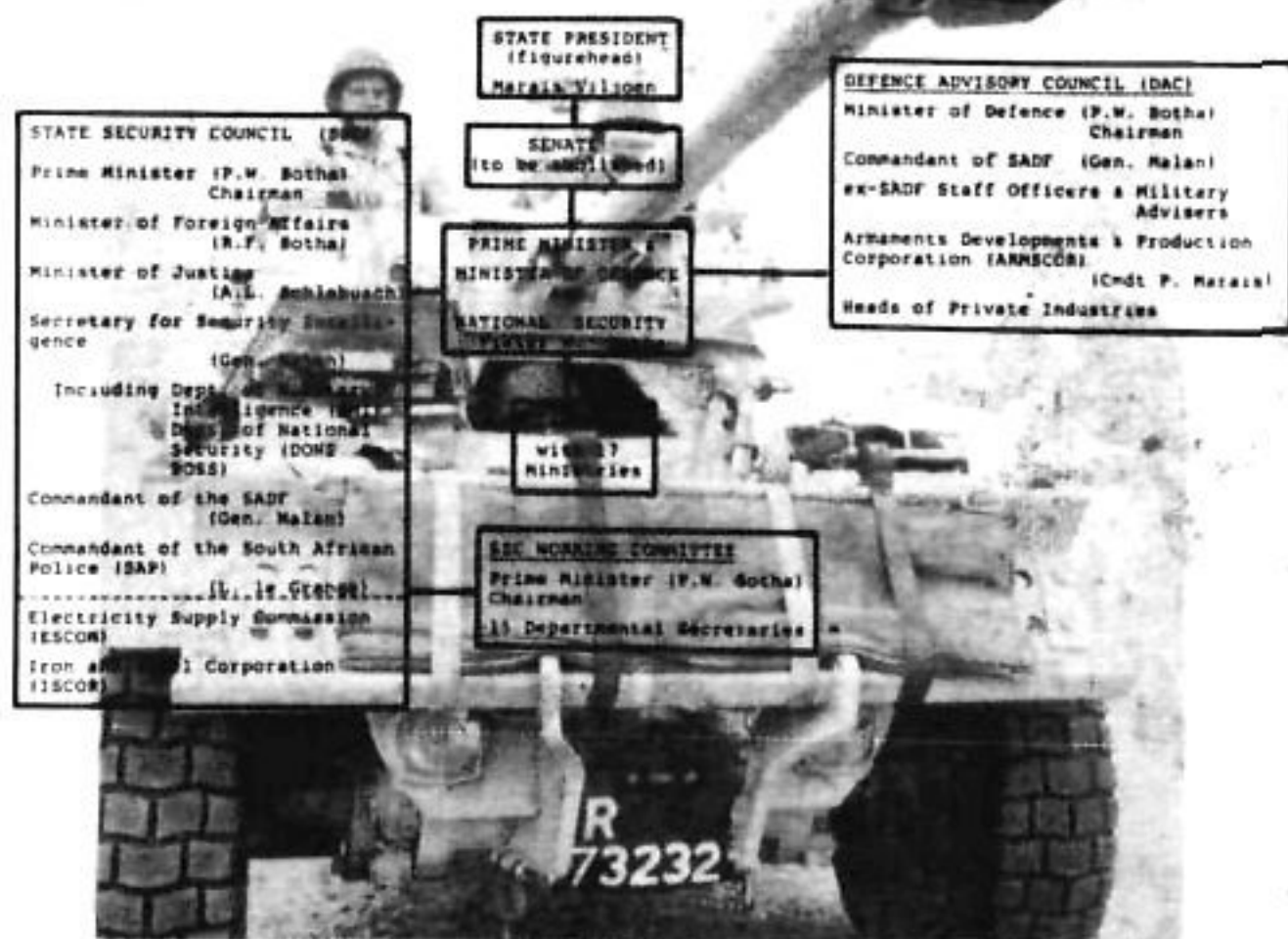
The South African capitalist class has secured a share of the world market on the basis of the export of gold, other minerals, and agricultural goods produced by cheap labour. Cheap labour has meant a small home market. Expanding production thus means expanding the export of manufactured products at prices competitive with the major capitalist countries.

With low productivity, and facing the increasingly aggressive competition of the major capitalist powers in a stagnating world market, the South African capitalists cannot sufficiently expand their manufactured exports.

In fact the growth of the most recent period was permitted only by the rising value of gold exports, due to the rise in the price of gold. Between the end of 1978 and the beginning of 1980 the gold price increased by over 100% to an all-time record of \$850 per oz.

But now the gold price has dropped again: during February and March it was fluctuating between \$550 and \$475 per oz, and this will continue. At the same time the value of other mineral and agricultural exports has been dropping.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE IN SOUTH AFRICA



Military and executive power are closely bound together in Botha's new structure of government.

the contrary, the produce of the workman's labour goes to the capitalist, and the workman gets out of it no more than the bare necessities of life. And thus the end of this uncommonly 'fair' race of competition is that the produce of the labour of those who do work, gets unavoidably accumulated in the hands of those that do not work, and becomes in their hands the most powerful means to enslave the very men who produced it.

A fair day's wages for a fair day's work! A good deal might be said about the fair day's work too, the fairness of which is perfectly on a par with that of the wages. But that we must leave for another occasion. From what has been stated it is pretty clear that the old watchword has lived its day, and will hardly hold water nowadays. The fairness of political economy, such as it truly lays down the laws which rule actual society, that fairness is all on

one side — on that of Capital. Let, then, the old motto be buried for ever and replaced by another:

POSSESSION OF THE MEANS OF WORK—RAW MATERIAL, FACTORIES, MACHINERY—BY THE WORKING PEOPLE THEMSELVES.

The Labour Standard,
May 7th, 1881.

The Wages System

In a previous article we examined the time-honoured motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work", and came to the conclusion that the fairest day's wages under present social conditions is necessarily tantamount to the very unfairest division of the workman's produce, the greater portion of that produce going into the capitalist's pocket, and the workman having to put up with just as much as will enable him to keep himself in working order and to propagate his race.

This is a law of political economy, or, in other words, a law of the present economical organisation of society, which is more powerful than all the Common and Statute Law of England put

together, the Court of Chancery included. While society is divided into two opposing classes—on the one hand, the capitalists, monopolisers of the whole of the means of production, land, raw materials, machinery; on the other hand, labourers, working people deprived of all property in the means of production, owners of nothing but their own working power; while this social organisation exists the law of wages will remain all-powerful, and will every day afresh rivet the chains by which the working man is made the slave of his own produce—monopolised by the capitalist.

The Trades Unions of this country have now for nearly sixty

years fought against this law—with what result? Have they succeeded in freeing the working class from the bondage in which capital—the produce of its own hands—holds it? Have they enabled a single section of the working class to rise above the situation of wages-slaves, to become owners of their own means of production, of the raw materials, tools, machinery required in their trade, and thus to become the owners of the produce of their own labour? It is well known that not only they have not done so, but that they never tried.

Far be it from us to say that Trades Unions are of no use

This is revealing the **slender basis** of the economic upturn. As has consistently been the case since the Second World War, the upturn in the economy means that manufactured **imports** rapidly overtake the value of exports.

In 1980 the value of imports of manufactured goods was R8 222,7 million. If it had not been for the earnings from gold, other minerals, and agricultural exports, the trade account would have been in debt to the tune of R11 198 million.

For 1981, the bourgeois experts are predicting that even if the gold price averages \$500 per oz, there could be a **total deficit** in foreign trade of R2 000 million, although in 1980 the earnings of gold and other mineral and agricultural exports produced a **surplus** of R3 000 million.

A slow-down in the economy is already becoming evident. There is a flurry of readjustments in the forecasts for economic growth in 1981 by bourgeois economists. The predicted growth now stands between 4% and 5%. With the slow-down, the working class will be expected to foot the bill, with further attacks on wages and living standards.

During the economic upturn between 1978 and 1980 the workers have struggled to recover the huge losses suffered during the years of stagnation. There have been important partial gains through the massive strike movement and the tremendous growth of trade union membership. For some workers, living standards have risen slightly.

Yet the boom in the economy has done nothing to improve **general** standards of living. On the contrary, while the profits of the capitalists increased, the workers' overall standards of living have seriously deteriorated.

Of 41 companies and groups declaring their profits for 1980 in the last two weeks of February 1981, only three showed profit increases of less than 20%. Most increased profits by between 21% and 150%—and Toyota, Group Five, and Gresham Industries increased their profits by over 300%.

At the same time a recent investigation in Soweto showed that, between July 1978 and December 1980, wages increased by



Despite record profits in 1980, black working people face continuing homelessness and hardship.

less than 20%. But in the same period, the prices of the goods bought by the workers rose by almost 40%. **Thus, because of inflation, workers' living standards fell during the period of 'boom' by 20%.**

At present, the official rate of inflation is 16% per year, and is expected to increase to 19% by the end of this year. Food prices are rising at about twice this rate. Living standards of those at work will fall sharply.

With the slow-down in the economy, unemployment (currently around 2 million) will mount even faster again. The working people are going to be plunged into even greater hardship. This is the inevitable consequence of a capitalist economy in South Africa with the world capitalist economy in crisis.

The workers must fight to defend their living standards and their jobs—or be pushed into even greater depths of misery and poverty. To be successful this fight will have to link the demands for decent wages, for jobs, for an end to rising prices, to the fight to end the capitalist system.

Elections

Faced with this economic impasse, the bosses lack resources with which to tame the mass movement. Nor, as some of their strategists now freely admit, can they win solid support among, or 'strengthen' the black middle class.

Instead the ruling class faces new problems from the side which previously gave solid support. The crisis of the economy is eroding the privileged living standards of the white workers. At the same time they, and the white middle class, see colonialism and white privilege under assault throughout Southern Africa.

The capitalist politicians in whom the white workers have misguidedly put their trust, are making promises of reforms. Though these 'reforms' dissolve into dust, they increase the insecurity of the white workers. They are losing confidence in the Nationalist Party government which protected them so long.

Against all these pressures, the ruling class seeks to end its paralysis by removing the restraints on its exercise of state power (even whittling down the 'rights' of the whites). **This is to enable them to take more decisive and vicious action against the entire working class in defence of their profits in a shrinking economy.**

Already, under its smokescreen of reforms, the Botha regime has speeded up this process by reinforcing and streamlining the state apparatus.

Botha has cut the number of government departments, and set up a series of new inter-departmental committees, tied into the Prime Minister's office, and headed by the State Security Council.

While still Minister of Defence, Botha and General Magnus Malan

because they have not done that. On the contrary, Trades Unions in England, as well as in every other manufacturing country, are a necessity for the working classes in their struggle against capital. The average rate of wages is equal to the sum of necessaries sufficient to keep up the race of workmen in a certain country according to the standard of life habitual in that country. That standard of life may be very different for different classes of workmen. The great merit of Trades Unions, in their struggle to keep up the rate of wages and to reduce working hours, is that they tend to keep up and to raise the standard of life. There are many trades in the East-end of London whose labour is not more skilled and quite as hard as that of bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers, yet they hardly earn half the wages of these. Why? simply because a powerful organisation enables the one set to maintain a comparatively high standard of life as the rule by which their wages are measured; while the other set, disorganised and powerless, have to submit not only to unavoidable but also to arbitrary encroachments of their employers: their standard of life is gradually reduced, they learn how to live on less and less wages, and their wages naturally fall to that level which

they themselves have learned to accept as sufficient.

The law of wages, then, is not one which draws a hard and fast line. It is not inexorable with certain limits. There is at every time (great depression excepted) for every trade a certain latitude within which the rate of wages may be modified by the results of the struggle between the two contending parties. Wages in every case are fixed by a bargain, and in a bargain he who resists longest and best has the greatest chance of getting more than his due. If the isolated workman tries to drive his bargain with the capitalist he is easily beaten and has to surrender at discretion; but if a whole trade of workmen form a powerful organisation, collect among themselves a fund to enable them to defy their employers if need be, and thus become enabled to treat with these employers as a power, then, and then only, have they a chance to get even that pittance which according to the economical constitution of present society, may be called a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

The law of wages is not upset by the struggles of Trades Unions. On the contrary, it is enforced by them. Without the means of resistance of the Trades Unions the labourer does not receive even what is his

due according to the rules of the wages system. It is only with the fear of the Trades Union before his eyes that the capitalist can be made to part with the full market value of his labourer's working power. Do you want a proof? Look at the wages paid to the members of the large Trades Unions, and at the wages paid to the numberless small trades in that pool of stagnant misery, the East-end of London.

Thus the Trades Unions do not attack the wages system. But it is not the highness or lowness of wages which constitutes the economical degradation of the working class: this degradation is comprised in the fact that, instead of receiving for its labour the full produce of this labour, the working class has to be satisfied with a portion of its own produce called wages. The capitalist pockets the whole produce (paying the labourer out of it) because he is the owner of the means of labour. And, therefore, there is no real redemption for the working class until it becomes owner of all the means of work—land, raw material, machinery, etc.—and thereby also the owner of **THE WHOLE OF THE PRODUCE OF ITS OWN LABOUR.**

The Labour Standard,
May 21st, 1881.

had replaced the army tops and reorganised the army. Now the military, as well as businessmen, have a say in almost all inter-departmental government committees. This was crowned last year with the appointment of said general to the cabinet.

The rejection of Botha's reforms, the inability to carry out many of them and the reorganisation of the army and civil service have one clear meaning. If 'parliamentary democracy' is not serving the interests of the bosses, then the military will have to be brought in to see that those interests are served.

The election has been called by Botha in an attempt to buy time to

continue this process. Taking advantage of the temporary economic upswing, the relative pause in the mass struggle and the ascent of a reactionary ally to the US Presidency, Botha is beating the drum of a 'total onslaught' to try and win a massive mandate for himself. As to his policies, he is forced to ask for a 'blank cheque'.

After the elections

There can be no doubt that the Nationalist Party will remain the ruling party after the elections. But this will not mean a massive mandate for Botha's leadership. Already it is

clear that the bid of Botha and the ruling class to remove the obstacle of the verkramptes through the elections will fail—just as his promises of 'reforms' have come to nothing.

But it is unlikely that the HNP and the CNP will win more than a few seats at most. This is despite the disillusionment of many of the white workers with the Nationalist Party leadership.

Disillusionment has been shown, even in earlier elections, in apathy at the polls. Faced with unprecedented uncertainties, the white workers and now at a loss what to do. Inside and outside the Nationalist Party, the white middle class right-wing and a small section of the ruling class is

'NEW DISPENSATION'

Business International is a journal which advises the bosses of the multi-nationals on what tactics they should use to protect their profits. Recently, they gave some advice to the bosses in South Africa, which shows how they have been taken unawares by the rising movement of the workers. This is what they said: **"The latest wave of labor unrest points out why firms should resist the temptation to promote hand-picked black 'spokesmen' that lack credibility with the rank and file, and should instead accept strong, effective unions. First, black workers are increasingly in a position to enforce sanctions against companies refusing to acknowledge their leaders. Second, unless factory leaders are seen to be getting a better deal for their constituents, the way will be open for more militant political activists to take over."**

On Monday morning, 16 February, 188 Greyhound bus drivers came out on strike in Johannesburg. By the afternoon, 176 had pleaded guilty and been sentenced to 18 months imprisonment. (12 who stood trial were later acquitted). Those sentenced had their prison term suspended for five years provided they returned to work. If they take any form of action in this period (go-slows, refusing to obey orders or strikes) they will be hurled into prison.

Once again the Botha government's promises of a "new dispensation" are proved to be lies. Instead we can see what the regime's plans for industrial peace consist of.

Workers must accept the bosses' terms and trust the racist officials to settle their grievances—or be thrown into jail.

What the government has in store is shown by the refusal to register unions because their constitutions were "non-racial", and by the press leaks concerning new industrial legislation.

These leaks showed the regime was looking for ways to give the Industrial Registrar absolute powers over **all** trade unions—unregistered as well as registered—and that it was considering:

- banning unions in the Bantustans;
- prohibiting unions from working with township organisations;

- bringing unregistered unions under state control.

- no donations to unions to be allowed;

The regime also wants to ban all independent trade union education and clamp down further on migrant workers taking strike action.

Yet at the same time the big employers are forced to recognise that they have to negotiate with the trade unions—and with trade unions which have the support of the workers. While the regime continues mechanically with the well-tried methods of repression, big business is looking for new ways to drug the struggle on the shop-floor.

What this means is that the Wiehahn strategy of the ruling class is in tatters, and that the ruling class is divided on how to respond.

This is the direct result of the explosive struggles of the workers over the recent period. These struggles were a decisive rejection of the Wiehahn strategy to chain the growing trade union movement.

In the process, there have been huge advances in the strength and confidence of the trade union movement. Among the achievements have been:

- wage increases of up to 70% at Ford in June 1980;

Trades Unions I

In our last issue we considered the action of Trades Unions as far as they enforced the economical law of wages against employers. We return to this subject, as it is of the highest importance that the working classes generally should thoroughly understand it.

We suppose no English working man of the present day needs to be taught that it is the interest of the individual capitalist, as well as of the capitalist class generally, to reduce wages as much as possible. The produce of labour, after deducting all expenses, is divided, as David Ricardo had irrefutably proved, into two shares: the one forms the labourer's wages, the other the capitalist's profits. Now, this net produce of labour being, in every individual case, a given quantity, it is clear that the share called profits cannot increase without the share called wages decreasing. To deny that it is the interest of the capitalist to reduce wages, would be tantamount to say that it is not his interest to increase his profits.

We know very well that there are other means of temporarily increasing profits, but they do not alter the general law, and therefore need not trouble us here.

Now, how can the capitalists reduce wages when the rate of wages is governed by a distinct and well-defined law of social economy? The economical law of wages is there, and is irrefutable. But, as we have seen, it is elastic, and it is so in two ways. The rate of wages can be lowered, in a particular trade, either directly, by gradually accustoming the workpeople of that trade to a lower standard of life, or, indirectly, by increasing the number of working hours per day (or the intensity of work during the same working hours) without increasing the pay.

And the interest of every individual capitalist to increase his profits by reducing the wages of his workpeople receives a fresh stimulus from the competition of capitalists of the same trade

amongst each other. Each one of them tries to undersell his competitors, and unless he is to sacrifice his profits he must try and reduce wages. Thus, the pressure upon the rate of wages brought about by the interest of every individual capitalist is increased tenfold by the competition amongst them. What was before a matter of more or less profit, now becomes a matter of necessity.

Against this constant, unceasing pressure unorganised labour has no effective means of resistance. Therefore, in trades without organisation of the workpeople, wages tend constantly to fall and the working hours tend constantly to increase. Slowly, but surely, this process goes on. Times of prosperity may now and then interrupt it, but times of bad trade hasten it on all the more afterwards. The workpeople gradually get accustomed to a lower and lower standard of life. While the length of working day more and more approaches the possible maximum, the wages come nearer and nearer to their absolute minimum—the sum below which it becomes absolutely impossible for the workman to live and to reproduce his race.

There was a temporary exception to this about the beginning of this century. The rapid extension of steam and machinery was not sufficient for the still faster increasing demand for their produce. Wages in these trades, except those of children sold from the workhouse to the manufacturer, were as a rule high; those of such skilled manual labour as could not be done without were very high; what a dyer, a mechanic, a velvet-cutter, a hand-mule spinner, used to receive now sounds fabulous. At the same time the trades superseded by machinery were slowly starved to death. But newly-invented machinery by-and-by superseded these well-paid workmen; machinery was invented

which made machinery, and that at such a rate that the supply of machine-made goods not only equalled, but exceeded, the demand. When the general peace, in 1815, re-established regularity of trade, the decennial fluctuations between prosperity, over-production, and commercial panic began. Whatever advantages the workpeople had preserved from old prosperous times, and perhaps even increased during the period of frantic over-production, were now taken from them during the period of bad trade and panic; and soon the manufacturing population of England submitted to the general law that the wages of unorganised labour tend towards the absolute minimum.

But in the meantime the Trades Unions, legalised in 1824, had also stepped in, and high time it was. Capitalists are always organised. They need in most cases no formal union, no rules, officers, etc. Their small number, as compared with that of the workmen, the fact of their forming a separate class, their constant social and commercial intercourse stand them in lieu of that; it is only later on, when a branch of manufacturers has taken possession of a district, such as the cotton trade has of Lancashire, that a formal capitalists Trades Union becomes necessary. On the other hand, the workpeople from the very beginning cannot do without a strong organisation, well-defined by rules and delegating its authority to officers and committees. The Act of 1824 rendered these organisations legal. From that day Labour became a power in England. The formerly helpless mass, divided against itself, was no longer so. To the strength given by union and common action soon was added the force of a well-filled exchequer—"resistance money", as our French brethren expressively call it. The entire position of things now changed. For the capitalist it

playing on the anxieties of the white workers, claiming to have the answer to the defence of white privilege and jobs.

Because of their position, of entrenched privileges, its edges as yet barely nibbled at, the bulk of the white workers are pre-disposed to follow this rotten verkrampte leadership, with its racist rallying-cry. But in the election they will prefer to follow it **inside** the Nationalist Party, rather than on its ultra-right fringes.

In the Nationalist Party, there has been an unprecedented number of nomination contests between 'verligtes' and verkramptes, with the verkramptes on the whole winning.

A setback for Botha's leadership, this and the state's harassment of the ultra-right parties will probably mean that only the most frustrated and resentful reactionaries will stay with the HNP or CNP.

Future

But the election victory for the Nationalist Party will not even buy Botha and the ruling class much time. The impending downturn in the economy, and the bosses' relentless search for profits, will lay the basis for further huge struggles and upheavals. The mass movement of the black oppressed, full of

confidence, is not prepared to tolerate threats to its very survival. Against the attacks of the bosses on the living standards of the whole working class, the mass movement will respond with vigour.

The ruling class will muster all its forces to crush these struggles, but, so long as the black workers and youth grow together and organise on the basis of greater clarity of aims, the mass movement will remain undefeated. The sword of repression will only stimulate with more urgency the struggle for the democratic means through which living standards can be defended and advanced.

Thus, despite the clamouring it

IS IN TATTERS

- in response to these gains in the Eastern Cape, the struggle of motor workers in Pretoria to organise and win higher wages;

- wage increases of 60% at Kellogs, plus recognition of the union;

- the recognition of SAAWU at Chloride in East London;

- that the strike at Post raised the question: who controls the press? MWASA President Zwelakhe Sisulu (now banned) said the choice facing revolutionary journalists was whether to be "collaborative propagandists or revolutionary propagandists".

Most important of all, trade union membership has nearly tripled, rising from 3% to some 7% of the African industrial workforce. Whole towns are becoming strongholds of the trade union movement. Workers are streaming to the trade unions asking to be organised.

Here is revealed the explosive potential of the trade union movement in South Africa! If a rise in the percentage organised to just 7% has such devastating effects on the ruling class, then the mass of the working class organised around a clear programme will represent an unstop-

pable force!

This is what the ruling class fears. The apartheid regime, and the capitalist class that it represents, cannot tolerate a movement of the united working class. **One of the main reasons for the banning of 'Post' and controls on the press has been the regime's fear of strike reports which, it claims, are creating a "revolutionary climate" in South Africa.**

Those trade union officials who led their unions into the trap of registering under the Wiehahn strategy should now openly acknowledge that this was wrong. Nor is there the way forward through relying on the so-called "liberal" elements of big business: what can be won from them must be used, but without illusions.

At this time, the central task is to organise the unorganised workers. As yet, only about 200,000 African workers are organised, and those are largely the non-migrant section. **Millions** of workers still wait to come

into the unions, including the most decisive section of all, the migrant mineworkers from all the countries of Southern Africa. The organisation of the unemployed, together with the employed, must be taken forward.

By taking up and combining all the pressing demands that workers are fighting for in factories throughout the country, the trade union movement can become a movement of millions. **A central plank in this programme is the demand for a national minimum wage of R90 a week, with further increases linked to inflation.**

Organised into the trade unions in its millions on the basis of a fighting programme, the working class will become a giant power. Building this trade union power, and at the same time struggling to build the ANC as its own mass political movement on a socialist programme, the working class will gain the means to smash apartheid and sweep capitalist exploitation from the face of South Africa.

For a trade union movement uniting all workers!

For a mass ANC with a socialist programme!

became a risky thing to indulge in a reduction of wages or an increase of working hours.

Hence the violent outbursts of the capitalist class of those times against Trades Unions. That class had always considered its long-established practice of grinding down the working class as a vested right and lawful privilege. That was now to be put a stop to. No wonder they cried out lustily and held themselves at least as much injured in their rights and property as Irish landlords do nowadays.

Sixty years' experience of struggle have brought them round to some extent. Trades Unions have now become acknowledged institutions, and their action as one of the regulators of wages is recognised quite as much as the action of the Factories and Workshops Acts as regulators of the hours of work. Nay, the cotton masters in Lancashire have lately even taken a leaf

out of the workpeople's book, and now know how to organise a strike, when it suits them, as well or better than any Trades Union.

Thus it is through the action of Trades Unions that the law of wages is enforced as against the employers, and that the workpeople of any well-organised trade are enabled to obtain, at least approximately, the full value of the working power which they hire to their employer; and that, with the help of State laws, the hours of labour are made at least not to exceed too much that maximum length beyond which the working power is prematurely exhausted. This, however, is the utmost Trades Unions, as at present organised, can hope to obtain, and that by constant struggle only, by an immense waste of strength and money; and then the fluctuations of trade, once every ten years at least, break down for the moment what

has been conquered, and the fight has to be fought over again. It is a vicious circle from which there is no issue. The working class remains what it was, and what our Chartist forefathers were not afraid to call it, a class of wages slaves. Is this to be the final result of all this labour, self-sacrifice, and suffering? Is this to remain for ever the highest aim of the British workmen? Or is the working class of this country at last to attempt breaking through this vicious circle, and to find an issue out of it in a movement for the **ABOLITION OF THE WAGES SYSTEM ALTOGETHER?**

Next week we shall examine the part played by Trades Unions as organisers of the working class.

The Labour Standard,
May 28th, 1881.

Trades Unions II

So far we have considered the functions of Trades Unions as far only as they contribute to the regulation of the rate of wages and ensure to the labourer, in his struggle against capital, at least some means of resistance. But that aspect does not exhaust our subject.

The struggle of the labourer against capital, we said. That struggle does exist, whatever the apologists of capital may say to the contrary. It will exist so long as a reduction of wages remains the

safest and readiest means of raising profits; nay, so long as the wages system itself shall exist. The very existence of Trades Unions is proof sufficient of the fact; if they are not made to fight against the encroachments of capital what are they made for? There is no use in mincing matters. No milksop words can hide the ugly fact that present society is mainly divided into two great antagonistic classes—into capitalists, the owners of all the means for the employment of labour, on the one side; and

workingmen, the owners of nothing but their own working power, on the other. The produce of the labour of the latter class has to be divided between both classes, and it is this division about which the struggle is constantly going on. Each class tries to get as large a share as possible; and it is the most curious aspect of this struggle that the working class, while fighting to obtain a share only of its own produce, is often enough accused of actually robbing the capitalist!

But a struggle between two great

will face from right-wing M.P's, the ruling class cannot return to ruling in the old way—resting only on the white middle class and white workers. Even in the midst of intensifying repression, the regime will be forced to continue its futile search for acceptable reforms. There is a half-truth in the demagogic complaint of Jaap Marais: that in this election, as for the last three, the Nationalist Party leadership appeals to the voters on HNP policies and pursues in government the path of the PFP.

Against the parliamentary opposition, as against the mass movement, the ruling class will have to continue its concentration of power in the hands of top bureaucrats and businessmen—and, above all, of the military. In the period ahead, the verkramptes, inside and outside the Nationalist Party, will expose their inability to influence the course of events by means of the parliamentary framework.

This will open up the most turbulent period yet seen in white politics in South Africa. For, to the extent that the white workers find that the 'rights' granted them by the bourgeoisie offer no solution to their problems, they will be faced with the choice of going towards extreme extra-parliamentary reaction—or towards revolution.

The path followed by the white workers will have critical effects on the course of the revolution that is impending. The destruction of national oppression and the rule of capitalism will be a hollow victory if it is achieved on the ashes of a ruined economy and mountains of corpses.

This is the danger that looms should the white workers continue along the path of reaction. And, as the white workers are forced towards a clear choice under the pressure of events, the stance adopted towards them by the black workers and leaders in the mass movement will be a vital factor.

Already some forms which can be taken by reaction show their outline. The most racist of the class collaborationist union leadership, such as Paulus, attempt to mobilise increasing layers of white workers under their banner, and might attempt to call further reactionary strikes in defence of white privilege like the mineworkers strike of 1979.

More rabid still in the defence of racist privilege are the terror tactics of the Wit Kommando, linked to the ranks of the police.

Taking this path in the coming period offers for the white workers nothing but defeat after defeat. Paulus is presently quite isolated even within the ranks of white labour, and his attempt to call a strike in 1979 was a dismal failure.

The ruling class will have to continue to try to crush such reactionary strikes, in defence of their profits. The Wit Kommando, and similar groups, are tolerated by the ruling class unless they threaten to provoke the black workers and youth. It was when the Wit Kommando recently threatened attacks on black homes that the police were ordered to step in and make arrests.

Yet, for all its twists and turns, the power of the capitalist class in South Africa is slowly crumbling before the developing tidal wave of the mass movement of black workers and youth. Events may force, in time, the suspension of parliament, the declaration of martial law, or full military rule. These could be forced in response to desperate reactionary bids, as well as under the pressure of the masses. But in either case, they would be signs of the weakening, and not the strengthening, of the ruling class. Whatever course it follows, the hour of reckoning is coming for the bourgeoisie.

It is in extremity, when the very forces of the state itself begin to crumble under the revolutionary pressures, that the forces of extreme reaction, fueled by the most desperate sections of the ruling class, can take on flesh...**if the mass movement fails to take immediate steps to prevent this possibility.**

Towards unity

Against the attacks of capitalism in crisis, the only secure future for the white workers and white middle class, as for the mass of the oppressed, lies in the struggle for socialism. This struggle spells the death-knell of white privilege, and all privilege, **but opens up the way to a future of prosperity for all.**

Struggling without compromise against every defence of white privilege, the black workers and

youth must hammer this message home to the white workers. **The black workers must consistently take the lead in showing that the only way forward for society is on the basis of the socialised economy under management and control of the working class.**

Combatting without mercy all the futile attempts of the white workers to cling to the coat-tails of capitalism, warning of the dead-end in store along that road, the black workers must show that the bridge to workers' unity is open. In isolation from the black workers' movement the white workers today have neither the strength nor the perspective to successfully resist the bosses. The only basis for a defence against the attacks of capitalism is around a united battle.

The struggle for this unity will be an extremely difficult one. The cushion of privilege and the heritage of racism will allow the mass of the white workers many reactionary straws to clutch at. But the deepening economic crisis, and the inescapable force of the mass movement, will at the same time register their effects. On the basis of events, and the resolute presentation of an alternative perspective, workers' unity can be built.

Failure to build this unity will result in blood baths of unprecedented scale and, while it may nevertheless end in the defeat of the whites, it will be at the cost of the slaughter of hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of black men, women, and children.

The developments presently unfolding in the labour movement show, however, that with a clear programme of demands the correct conclusions can be drawn by the working class.

This programme must root itself in the defence of the livelihood of all workers. Around the struggle for a national minimum wage of R90 a week, rising according to the rising cost of living, and around all the other basic demands of the workers in struggle, can be built the mass force for the overthrow of the apartheid regime, the destruction of white privilege and national oppression, and the socialist transformation of society.

This must be the programme and the perspective of the ANC!

classes of society necessarily becomes a political struggle. So did the long battle between the middle or capitalist class and the landed aristocracy; so also does the fight between the working class and these same capitalists. In every struggle of class against class, the next end fought for is political power; the ruling class defends its political supremacy, that is to say its safe majority in the Legislature; the inferior class fights for, first a share, then the whole of that power, in order to become enabled to change existing laws in conformity with their own interests and requirements. Thus the working class of Great Britain for years fought ardently and even violently for the People's Charter, which was to give it that political power; it was defeated, but the struggle had made such an impression upon the victorious middle class that this class, since then, was only too glad to buy a prolonged armistice at the price of ever-repeated concessions to the working people.

Now, in a political struggle of class against class, organisation is the most important weapon. And in the same measure as the merely political or Chartist Organisation fell to pieces, in the same measure the Trades Unions Organisation grew stronger and stronger, until at present it has reached a degree of strength unequalled by any working-class organisation abroad. A few large Trades Unions, comprising between one and two millions of working men, and backed by the smaller or local Unions, represent a power which has to be taken into account by any Government of the ruling class, be it Whig [Liberal] or Tory.

According to the traditions of their origin and development in this country, these powerful organisations have hitherto limited themselves almost strictly to their

function of sharing in the regulation of wages and working hours, and of enforcing the repeal of laws openly hostile to the workmen. As stated before, they have done so with quite as much effect as they had a right to expect. But they have attained more than that—the ruling class, which knows their strength better than they themselves do, has volunteered to them concessions beyond that. Disraeli's Household Suffrage gave the vote to at least the greater portion of the organised working class. Would he have proposed it unless he supposed that these new voters would show a will of their own—would cease to be led by middle-class Liberal politicians? Would he have been able to carry it if the working people, in the management of their colossal Trade Societies, had not proved themselves fit for administrative and political work?

That very measure opened out a new prospect to the working class. It gave them the majority in London and in all manufacturing towns, and thus enabled them to enter into the struggle against capital with new weapons, by sending men of their own class to Parliament. And here, we are sorry to say, the Trades Unions forgot their duty as the advanced guard of the working class. The new weapon has been in their hands for more than ten years, but they scarcely ever unsheathed it. They ought not to forget that they cannot continue to hold the position they now occupy unless they really march in the van of the working class. It is not in the nature of things that the working class of England should possess the power of sending forty or fifty working men to Parliament and yet be satisfied for ever to be represented by capitalists or their clerks, such as lawyers, editors, etc.

More than this, there are plenty of symptoms that the working class

of this country is awakening to the consciousness that it has for some time been moving in the wrong groove; that the present movements for higher wages and shorter hours exclusively, keep it in a vicious circle out of which there is no issue; that it is not the lowness of wages which forms the fundamental evil, but the wages system itself. This knowledge once generally spread amongst the working class, the position of Trades Unions must change considerably. They will no longer enjoy the privilege of being the only organisations of the working class. At the side of, or above, the Unions of special trades there must spring up a general Union, a political organisation of the working class as a whole.

Thus there are two points which the organised Trades would do well to consider, firstly, that the time is rapidly approaching when the working class of this country will claim, with a voice not to be mistaken, its full share of representation in Parliament. Secondly, that the time also is rapidly approaching when the working class will have understood that the struggle for high wages and short hours, and the whole action of Trades Unions as now carried on, is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end: the abolition of the wages system altogether.

For the full representation of labour in Parliament as well as for the preparation of the abolition of the wages system, organisations will become necessary, not of separate Trades, but of the working class as a body. And the sooner this is done the better. There is no power in the world which could for a day resist the British working class organised as a body.

The Labour Standard,
June 4th, 1881.

WILLIAM FANO KHANYILE

Before dawn on 30 January, William Fano Khanyile was murdered along with eleven other ANC members by the SA terror force in Maputo. Thus a life filled with experience as a working-class fighter was brutally smashed before it could fully flower.

Khanyile came to SACTU and the ANC as a worker. Born in New Hanover in 1935, his father a driver, he was only able to study at school up to Standard 4. Moving to Pietermaritzburg, his first job was as a "tea-boy" at Edendale hospital, while he continued studying at night-school.

It was a strike at Edendale which brought him into active trade unionism. He became an organiser of the SACTU General Workers' Union and, in 1958, secretary of the local branch of the Railway Workers' Union.

Earlier, Khanyile had been deeply impressed by the struggle of the trade unionists in the Natal ANC to get rid of the right-wing anti-Indian leadership personified by A.W.G. Champion. In 1958, through SACTU, he joined the ANC as an active participant in the Youth League.

It was the organised workers, within the SACTU unions, who made the ANC for the first time a mass force in Natal. **The real strength of the ANC, Khanyile often said, was completely dependent on its base in the unions.**

As Secretary of the Railway Union, he battled for higher wages and medical services for the workers. He was also actively involved in SACTU's intervention in support of leather workers' striking against a sell-out by their union leadership, and in the 1961 strike by Hammarsdale workers against border-area starvation wages.

These local struggles, and the active support of the SACTU national £1-a-day campaign, built the ANC as a mass force in Natal. So did the campaigns in which he assisted against the forced labour of women running the dipping tanks, and against prison labour on the potato farms.

Maritzburg became a leading

centre of the stay-at-home called on 28 March 1960 in protest at the Sharpeville massacre. When workers at Weston bakery were sacked during the stay-at-home—and the bosses carried on production with the help of white students—Khanyile helped organise a boycott of its bread. This secured the reinstatement of the workers, a rare event in the history of our struggle.



With the ANC banned, Khanyile threw himself into the task of organising the trade unions as the main defence of the working class. For this work he was constantly arrested and re-arrested. He was charged with making street collections, for 'obstructing' workers at a shoe factory and later at a dairy. In addition he spent four months in detention during the State of Emergency.

Despite the growing repression, the pace of activity of the workers was still quickening, and the need for organisation in the factories and townships undiminished.

Soon after, however, Khanyile obeyed the call of the ANC leadership for cadres to leave the country for military training, in the expectation that he would soon return to his place among the workers in struggle. Tragically, he was arrested in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) when leaving the country and deported back to SA.

The next nine years of his life were spent in court appearances and on Robben Island. No sooner had he served his sentence under one charge

and been released, before another charge was laid. After being finally released he was then banned to New Hanover for two years.

By the time Khanyile's banning order expired in 1974, the climate of struggle had been transformed by the workers and the youth. The Natal strikes were a year past, and the seeds which were to erupt in 1976 were already being sown.

Khanyile was impressed with the rapid growth of the trade unions after the 1973 strikes. Many of the people he had known previously discussed the need to revive the fighting traditions of SACTU in the labour movement. As to the way of doing this, activists on the ground like Khanyile had to find the answers for themselves.

Many questions, including the link between workers' organisation and armed struggle against the state, remained unresolved. Khanyile, along with eleven other comrades, was arrested, tortured, and placed on trial in July 1976. His comrades sentenced to life or long prison terms, Khanyile alone was fortunate in being acquitted.

Persisting in the struggle at every opportunity, Khanyile faced bleak job prospects, and had no secure place to live. To break out of the cycle of harassment, imprisonment, and bannings, he left the country.

But Khanyile could not be kept away from the struggle. He welcomed his move to Maputo, 100 km from the border, in the hope that he could keep closely in touch with the workers at home. Khanyile escaped the oppressors' prison in the Pietermaritzburg trial only to die at the hands of the same brutes.

Comrade Khanyile was a class fighter who committed his life to the struggle against national oppression and capitalism in South Africa. He was dedicated to building SACTU and the ANC as the instruments for carrying out these tasks. His memory will be preserved by those who take up these tasks and carry them to their conclusion.

Hambani Kahle, ma-Comrades!

Social Classes – Necessary and Superfluous

The question has often been asked, in what degree are the different classes of society useful or even necessary? And the answer was naturally a different one for every different epoch of history considered. There was undoubtedly a time when a territorial aristocracy was an unavoidable and necessary element of society. That, however, is very, very long ago. Then there was a time when a capitalist middle class, a *bourgeoisie* as the French call it, arose with equally unavoidable necessity, struggled against the territorial aristocracy, broke its political power, and in its turn became economically and politically predominant. But, since classes arose, there never was a time when society could do without a working class. The name, the social status of that class has changed; the serf took the place of the slave, to be in his turn relieved by the free working man—free from servitude but also free from any earthly possessions save his own labour force. But it is plain: whatever changes took place in the upper, non-producing ranks of society, society could not live without a class of producers. This class, then, is necessary under all circumstances—though the time must come, when it will no longer be a class, when it will comprise all society.

Now what necessity is there at present for the existence of each of these three classes?

The landed aristocracy is, to say the least, economically useless in England, while in Ireland and Scotland it has become a positive nuisance by its depopulating tendencies. To send the people across the ocean or into starvation, and to replace them by sheep or deer—that is all the merit that the Irish and Scotch landlords can lay claim to. Let the competition of American vegetable and animal food develop a little further, and the English landed aristocracy will do

the same, at least those that can afford it, having large town estates to fall back upon. Of the rest, American food competition will soon free us. And good riddance—for their political action, both in the Lords and Commons, is a perfect national nuisance.

But how about the capitalist middle class, that enlightened and liberal class which founded the British colonial empire and which established British liberty? The class that reformed Parliament in 1831, repealed the Corn Laws, and reduced tax after tax? The class that created and still directs the giant manufactures, and the immense merchant navy, the ever-spreading railway system of England? Surely that class must be at least as necessary as the working class which it directs and leads on from progress to progress.

Now the economical function of the capitalist middle class has been, indeed, to create the modern system of steam manufactures and steam communications, and to crush every economical and political obstacle which delayed or hindered the development of that system. No doubt, as long as the capitalist middle class performed this function it was, under the circumstances, a necessary class. But is it still so? Does it continue to fulfill its essential function as the manager and expander of social production for the benefit of society at large? Let us see.

To begin with the means of communication, we find the telegraphs in the hands of the Government. The railways and a large part of the sea-going steamships are owned, not by individual capitalists who manage their own business, but by joint-stock companies whose business is managed for them by **paid employees**, by servants whose position is to all intents and purposes that of superior, better paid workpeople.

As to the directors and shareholders, they both know that the less the former interfere with the management, and the latter with the supervision, the better for the concern. A lax and mostly perfunctory supervision is, indeed, the only function left to the owners of the business. Thus we see that in reality the capitalist owners of these immense establishments have no other action left with regard to them, but to cash the half-yearly dividend warrants. The social function of the capitalist here has been transferred to servants paid by wages; but he continues to pocket, in his dividends, the pay for those functions though he has ceased to perform them.

But another function is still left to the capitalist, whom the extent of the large undertakings in question has compelled to 'retire' from their management. And this function is to speculate with his shares on the Stock Exchange. For want of something better to do, our 'retired' or in reality superseded capitalists, gamble to their hearts' content in this temple of mammon. They go there with the deliberate intention to pocket money which they were pretending to earn; though they say, the origin of all property is labour and saving—the origin perhaps, but certainly not the end. What hypocrisy to forcibly close petty gambling houses, when our capitalist society cannot do without an immense gambling house, where millions after millions are lost and won, for its very centre! Here, indeed, the existence of the 'retired' shareholding capitalist becomes not only superfluous, but a perfect nuisance.

What is true for railways and steam shipping is becoming more and more true every day for all large manufacturing and trading establishments. 'Floating'—transforming large private concerns into limited companies—has been the



As US president Reagan recovers from the bullet of a would-be assassin, the question remains—where is America going under this right-wing administration?

REACTION IN THE SADDLE

—BUT RIDING FOR A FALL

The election of ex-cowboy film-actor, Ronald Reagan, as President of the United States reflects the crisis of the ruling class as well as widespread disillusionment of a big section, perhaps even a majority, of the American masses.

Only 52% of the voters bothered to go to the polls—a drop from 54% in 1976 and 62% in 1964. This was despite the fact that 10 million 18-21 year olds were voting for the first time in the 1980 election.

Reagan's victory shows the combination of apathy and uncertainty among the voters which has destroyed the ability of either of the two pro-capitalist parties—Republicans or Democrats—to build long-term majority coalitions. This instability is rooted in the crisis of capitalism.

In 1976 the American voters placed Carter in office because he promised full employment, a balanced budget, and low prices. Four years later none of the promises had been fulfilled. Instead the economic situation had worsened—unemployment at 8 million, inflation running at 12.5% and the government spending far exceeding what it received by 27.5 billion dollars.

The new President has also come into office with promises—of tax cuts to "stimulate investment", reductions in government interference, lower inflation and a "healthy vigorous growing economy" to reduce unemployment.

But even the capitalist experts hold out little hope for him being able to measure up to his lofty promises. The *Economist* (November 1980) writes "The odds are that

by Teboho Phiri

he will be judged by 1984 to have failed..." It goes on to speak of "another one-term failure".

Thus even these spokesmen of capitalism have realised the inherent instability that bedevils even the strongest capitalist power.

To understand the crisis of American capitalism, it is necessary to look closely at the rise and fall of the dollar and the changed position of the United States in the world economy after World War II.

Bretton Woods

The USA emerged enormously strengthened after World War II, the only real victor among the capitalist powers. It controlled nearly 50% of world capitalist production, 70% of capitalist world trade, and had 80% of the capitalist world's gold in its vaults.

Thus in 1944 the United States was able to impose the Bretton Woods monetary agreement on the rest of the capitalist world. The

dollar, its value fixed at 35 dollars to the oz of gold, became the main currency of the world trade. It was on this basis that the American government was able to print massive quantities of currency that were not backed by gold or the real value of production.

In the years after Bretton Woods the United States poured out dollars overseas at a far greater rate than it was getting back. It did this through Marshall Aid, buying and investing in industries in Europe, and military expenditure in acting as policeman of world imperialism.

Dollar crisis

As long as the US remained the major capitalist power, with the dollar the unchallenged world currency, she could continue with the policy of printing more dollars. But with the emergence of West Germany and Japan as serious trade competitors of the American capitalists, her position declined.

The policy of printing dollars eventually led to the crisis of the dollar. The fiction could no longer be maintained that an ounce of gold was worth only 35 dollars. And the US government could not provide gold for all the dollars it had printed.

To avoid complete financial collapse the US was forced to abolish the right of holders of dollars to exchange them for gold. The dollar was devalued. Capitalists around the world holding dollars rushed to cash them in for other currencies and the dollars piled up as reserves in the

order of the day for the last ten years and more. From the large Manchester warehouses of the City to the ironworks and coalpits of Wales and the North and the factories of Lancashire, everything has been, or is being, floated. In all Oldham there is scarcely a cotton mill left in private hands; nay, even the retail tradesman is more and more superseded by 'co-operative stores', the great majority of which are co-operative in name only—but of that another time. Thus we see that by the very development of the system of capitalist's production the capitalist is superseded quite as much as the handloom-weaver. With this difference, though, that the handloom-weaver is doomed to slow starvation, and the superseded capitalist to slow death from overfeeding. In this they generally are both alike, that neither knows what to do with himself.

This, then, is the result: the

economical development of our actual society tends more and more to concentrate, to socialise production into immense establishments which cannot any longer be managed by single capitalists. All the trash of 'the eye of the master', and the wonders it does, turns into sheer nonsense as soon as an undertaking reaches a certain size. Imagine 'the eye of the master' of the London and North Western Railway! But what the master cannot do the workman, the wages-paid servants of the Company, **can** do, and do it successfully.

Thus the capitalist can no longer lay claim to his profits as 'wages of supervision', as he supervises nothing. Let us remember that when the defenders of capital drum that hollow phrase into our ears.

But we have attempted to show, in our last week's issue, that the

capitalist class had also become unable to manage the immense productive system of this country; that they on the one hand expanded production so as to periodically flood all the markets with produce, and on the other because more and more incapable of holding their own against foreign competition. Thus we find that, not only can we manage very well without the interference of the capitalist class in the great industries of the country, but that their interference is becoming more and more a nuisance.

Again we say to them, "Stand back! Give the working class the chance of a turn."

The Labour Standard,
August 6th, 1881.

Central Banks. The Bretton Woods system was dead and buried.

Watergate

The Pentagon's vast and costly military adventures abroad, contributed heavily to the weakening of the American economy and the consequent loss of strategic and military power. The growing crisis of American capitalism was particularly reflected in its over-extension in Vietnam. Nixon was swept into office to be able to bring a speedy victory but had to settle for humiliating defeat. In a bid to restore the morale of imperialism, Nixon tried to elevate the Presidency on the basis of authoritarian powers.

But he went too far, even for sections of the ruling class.

The Watergate hearings forced Nixon's resignation. These were more than a personal indictment against him; they were part of a process by which strategists of capital used Congress and the courts to curb the power of the Presidency.

The failure of the Vietnam war, the Watergate affair, the fall of the dollar, the energy crisis, Iran, etc.—all spelt the decline of the post-war strength of US imperialism.

Since then the ruling class has been groping for a strategy and a policy for the future. But the future for the capitalist class is bleak.

The ruling class cannot find any policy that does not involve an attack on the working class. In fact it has been the working class that has borne the brunt of the economic crisis over the last decade.

For a generation after the war a layer of American workers enjoyed prosperity greater than that achieved even by the middle classes in Europe. American goods, American films, and American values, seemed to be the last word in modernity. There seemed to be an endless supply of televisions, cars, and all the other tokens of affluence, as well as an endless supply of dollars to buy them.

Poverty

Those days have gone for the American workers. The **Wall Street Journal** (19.11.79) pointed out that "since 1972 the real income of a typical American family has declined by 8%, although its dollar income has increased by 66%". These figures do not take into account the increases in state and city taxation, so the real decline in living standards is considerably more.

The inflation rate at the moment is given at 12.5% but in reality it is much higher. The official Consumer Price Index does not take into account the fact that poorer families spend a far greater share of their income on the faster rising items like food, housing, energy, and so on.

Even by the government's own meagre standards for 'minimum requirements', poverty now engulfs more than 25 million people.

More than 8 million workers (7.5% of the workforce) are unemployed in America. Teenage unemployment is 19% while black unemployment is 14%. But these figures also hide the extent to which the unemployment affects large numbers of families. It is officially admitted, for example, that while the average level of unemployment in 1973 was 4.9% the total proportion of the workforce who had experienced unemployment for one or more spells in that year was 14.2%.

Unlike workers in Europe, American workers are not cushioned to any great extent by social welfare. Only about half of the unemployed receive any state benefits and that does not take into account the many hidden unemployed and underemployed. When it comes to health charges, the American workers can be seen to be completely at the mercy of the sharks and parasites of the private medical system.

In 1976, when living standards were a little higher than today, nearly 45 million Americans were without even basic hospitalisation insurance and when it came to major medical expenses, 80 million were not insured. It cost the average family, even with insurance cover, about \$2 800 for the delivery of a healthy child. A worker needs a



Unemployed workers in Detroit, centre of the American motor car industry.

Further Reading

These articles of Engels's are very valuable as an introduction to the Marxist explanation of the capitalist system. For the working class this knowledge is essential as a guide to action. It is vital that the workers and their leaders should be able to give clear answers to the questions that face them daily—inflation, long working hours and overtime in a time of mass unemployment, and the reluctance of the capitalist class to invest in new jobs and production even while record profits are made, to mention only a few examples. Only the method of Marxism—developed over many generations of struggle in the working-class movement internationally—will prepare the workers to cope correctly with these and other questions.

Even more important, the workers and youth will need to be absolutely clear on the tasks of the struggle as a whole. A thorough understanding of the nature of the capitalist system will be vital for comrades in the fight to dispel the misconception that national and social liberation can be achieved without the destruction of this system and the conquest of power by the working class.

The outline presented here by Engels of the working and the typical features of the system remains completely valid. Armed with these basic ideas, comrades

will find it much easier to go deeper into the matter.

The fullest explanation of the functioning of the capitalist system will be found in Marx's great work, **Capital**. Volume 1 concentrates on the process of production in the workplace, the exploitation of labour and the historical rise of capitalism. Volume 2 focusses on the circulation of capital, and Volume 3 on the operation of the system as a whole—how the surplus extorted from the workers in production is distributed among the capitalist class as a whole, and the tendencies towards crisis that are inherent in the system.

Volume 4 exposes the theories with which the capitalists have attempted (and still attempt today) to disguise the origins of their wealth—the exploitation of the workers' labour.

Unfortunately it is difficult for workers in South Africa to gain access to these books. In other, shorter works, Marx discusses particular aspects of the capitalist system. These booklets can more easily be obtained and studied as a further step towards building up a clear understanding of the system we are fighting.

In **Wage Labour and Capital** (based on a series of lectures given to workers in Brussels in 1847), Marx sets out the general features of the labour process

under capitalism and the tyrannical nature of the economic and social relations created by this process.

In **Wages, Price and Profit** (the text of two speeches to the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association—the First International—in 1865), Marx explains more fully the questions dealt with by Engels in the articles printed here, in particular the importance of the wage struggle as a means of mobilising the forces of the working class for the overthrow of the wages system itself.

A small pamphlet at present circulating underground in South Africa, which comrades may also find useful to study as an introduction to the Marxist analysis of the capitalist system, is **Asinamali! The Workers' Case**, published by the South African Labour Education Project. This pamphlet also exposes some of the false and misleading arguments put forward by the capitalist class on the subject of workers' wages.

Despite the considerable difficulties involved, it is vital that comrades should make every effort to continue their discussion and study of these questions as a necessary aspect of their involvement in the daily struggle. In future supplements **INQABA** will continue to publish material that will hopefully assist them.



Demonstration against the Vietnam war, Washington, 1968. US military intervention abroad would once again lead to big struggles at home.

is very clear in El Salvador.

Reagan and many of his top advisers have strongly denied that they are preparing to make El Salvador into the Vietnam of the 1980's. Nonetheless as part of the White House arms aid, the military junta there has received \$25 million worth of arms, double the previous figure. Military advisers i.e. US Army Force troopers (Green Berets), helicopters, small arms, etc. are being poured in.

Already over 30 000 workers and peasants have been massacred by the barbaric dictatorship. Right-wing terrorists of the ORDEN patrol the El Salvador streets and kill suspected 'subversives' with license. They are practically indistinguishable from the Army and National Guard—not surprisingly as they are usually the same people.

The potential for explosions all over the world is very much a reality. *Newsweek* (16 March 1981), for example, writes of "the ferment in Central America" and predicts that "the other nations of the region are not dominoes, but they too could become combat zones". Yankee meddling and highhandedness will rebound against the US ruling class.

It is possible that through a 'police action' Reagan will temporarily derail a revolution. However, it is not possible that brutality and mass murder will hold whole peoples in chains. Bloody, large-scale military interventions will lead to the burning of fingers as was the case with

American intervention in Vietnam.

The President said recently that he was considering providing arms for the reactionary Moslem fundamentalists in Afghanistan. And Congress has had an Administration request to repeal the 1976 ban on arms aid to the murderous thugs of UNITA headed by Jonas Savimbi.

Pressure has been building up in Washington to toughen up American policy towards Angola because of the continuous presence of Cuban troops there. Angola could be on the way to become one of the whipping boys for

US setbacks elsewhere in the world.

Given the similarity of the reactionary world outlook of Reagan and Pretoria, Botha will be likely to continue with his 'reformism without reforms' and the Reagan administration will no doubt applaud these empty gestures as an end to apartheid.

Party of labour

Reagan's policies will be shipwrecked on the rocks of the mass movement in the colonial world and the working class in America itself. All the signs indicate that a bid by Reagan to turn El Salvador into the Vietnam of Central America would meet with mass opposition in the US far more rapidly than the Vietnam war itself.

Nationally, government policies will damage already hard-hit industry, not only pushing up unemployment but eventually leading to pressure from industrialists for moderation. But even a U-turn would bring no joy to American workers as different policies would be forthcoming from this millionaires' government to make the working class pay for the recession-hit economy.

The Democratic Party could still be seen as an alternative by the working class, especially under



Brooklyn, New York, in the 1930s. A trade union organiser calls on dockworkers to join the union. (The American flag is displayed beside the speaker because this was required by law at all public meetings.)

Kennedy whose potential as a capitalist vote-catcher is still untapped. But the workers would rapidly become disillusioned as Kennedy also fails to keep his promises.

The battles over unemployment and wages will raise before the American working class **the need for a party of labour** in the most powerful capitalist country—**the only advanced capitalist country which does not have one.**

The national conference of socialists in the US held in early December 1980 is a pointer to the way events will develop in the US. More than 2 500 trade unionists gathered at what the New York **Herald Tribune** called "one of the largest socialist gatherings in the United States in decades", to hear Tony Benn and other prominent figures in the European labour movement.

Calls were made for the trade unions to take the initiative in forming a mass labour party.

It is clear that the actions at home and abroad of the vicious Reagan administration will create a favourable soil upon which an American Labour Party will grow. The development of a mass Labour Party in America would mark an enormous step forward for both the American and international working class. Though it would most likely start off with a reformist programme, it could develop very rapidly towards a socialist and a Marxist position.

The American workers have great traditions of struggle. In the last few years almost every section of workers has been involved in struggle: steel workers, rubber workers, lorry

drivers, local authority workers, and so on. But perhaps the most significant of the strikes of the period was the militant miners' strike that ran for more than three months from December 1977.

Organisation can develop with lightning speed, as the creation of the Congress of Industrial Organisations (CIO) in the 1930s showed. When the American workers were recovering from the depression, the newly-formed CIO organised mass recruitment drives that brought millions of fresh workers into the trade unions for the first time. Between 1933 and 1937 the membership of the trade unions rose from less than 3 million to over 7 million, chiefly as a result of CIO activity.

The economic crisis of the US today will find a class still strong and confident, despite the low level of organisation. Organised on the basis of a socialist programme, the enormous American working class would be in a position to deal with its reactionary rulers, to take power and make an end to the capitalist system.

The American revolution would spell the end of imperialism.

A Socialist United States of America would be a lighthouse to the whole of humanity. Inheriting from capitalism the most up-to-date scientific and technical skills would enable a workers' government in the US, in co-operation with fellow-workers around the world, to overcome all the ills of mankind, not only in America, but internationally. The American ruling class is incapable of developing society any further. The American workers will show the way.

MAY 1



by Elma Louw

Today, under mounting attack from a capitalist class in crisis, the working class everywhere is showing its fighting traditions. More and more the need for unity and international class solidarity is felt.

For almost a century now, 1 May has been a day for the demonstration of workers' unity. In 1886, this was the day selected by the American workers' organisations, the Federation of Labor and the Knights of Labor, to launch action for the 8-hour day.

The United States then was the most rapidly developing capitalist power. The American employers were ruthless, and the contrast between rich and poor was stark. The workers had to toil long hours for their daily bread, while the *wealthy amused themselves* by smoking cigarettes wrapped in \$100 bills. The wealthiest 1% took a larger share of income than the poorest 50% put together.

There was an enormous growth of the unions. In 1885 alone the Knights of Labor increased its membership seven-fold to 700 000. The employers were determined to smash this movement. As a result, unions had to face the violence of the courts, the National Guard and professional scabs.

On 1 May 1886 in Chicago alone 100 000 workers struck for the



New York, April 1980. Transit union negotiators shout their approval as strike is announced.

8-hour day. There was a peaceful march and rally. But on Monday 3 May the police attacked, killing six pickets. The next day a peaceful protest meeting was held. Then a bomb was thrown at the police, probably by a police or bosses' provocateur. The authorities now had the excuse they wanted to attack the unions.

Eight workers' leaders in Chicago were charged with murder. Seven were sentenced to death and one to 15 years. A mass protest movement developed, including France, Italy, Russia, Holland and England. Under this pressure two of the sentences were commuted to life. One had already died in prison.

- INTERNATIONAL

On 11 November 1887 the four workers' leaders were hanged. One of them, August Spies, spoke the following words before he died: "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you have strangled today."

Following the heroic struggles of the American working class in 1886, 1 May became the traditional day of the international proletariat. On 14 July 1889, the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution, the Socialist International declared 1 May as 'Labour Day'.

The first celebration of May Day took place on 1 May 1890. The three main demands were:

- for the 8-hour day;
- for international solidarity of the workers;
- against militarism.

Today these demands are still as relevant as ever. The rotten system of capitalism is creating mass unemployment. At the same time those with jobs have to work long, hard hours and overtime is no exception. In many countries the 8-hour day has never been conceded.

In the richest as well as the poor capitalist countries, less and less money is available for housing, schools and hospitals, but enormous sums are wasted on armaments. In war after war young workers are forced to fight and kill each other in the interests of their 'own' ruling class and to suppress national liberation struggles.

Everywhere the capitalist class tries to weaken the movement of the workers by dividing them. May Day is the day of international working-class solidarity, and the capitalists fear this. In many countries, again and again, they have tried to ban May Day demonstrations and rallies.

Reformist labour leaders have tried to reduce May Day to a mere holiday. But the workers have marched, and will continue to do so. The spirit and traditions of the world proletariat cannot easily be destroyed. Always, even after long periods of lull, the workers are forced into massive struggles again.

May Day 1981 will show that the labour movement is preparing itself

for the struggles that lie ahead. On this day workers in many countries will rally, demonstrate and discuss the tasks they face.

The history of the South African workers' movement has its own examples of workers' solidarity. On May Day 1931, for example, black and white unemployed in Johannesburg marched in a demonstration to the Carlton Hotel and the Rand Club where they demanded food. This event showed the potential for workers' unity across the colour bar, despite the vicious racial divisions sown by the capitalist class.

WORKERS' DAY

1950 was a year of major struggles by the oppressed. The Transvaal ANC, the Indian Congress, the

African People's Organisation and the Communist Party called on people of all races to stay away from work on 1 May and to demonstrate for freedom, land and the repeal of the colour bars. On 26 April the Minister of Justice said strong measures would be taken to counter these demonstrations. All meetings on 1 May were banned.

On 1 May the police broke up gatherings on the Rand, attacked groups of workers who defended themselves, and fired, killing 18 Africans and wounding over 30.

The committee that had organised May Day gatherings declared 26 June a day of national protest and mourning. It called for a general strike to commemorate the 18 who had lost their lives and to demonstrate against the passing of the Suppression of Communism Act.

The call for a general strike met with wide response on 26 June. This day became known as Freedom Day and has remained a focal point for resistance.

26 June will always be an important day in the liberation struggle. But 1 May, which has long been neglected in South Africa, remains the workers' day.

In South Africa on May Day 1981, even if no demonstrations or rallies are called, the workers can begin to discuss the origins, demands and importance of May Day, and lay the ground for future action. By doing so

they will join the immense battalions of the world working class massing together in action on that day.



May Day Rally, Sweden, 1980.



DRIVE APART

by Ken Mark

For the masses of Namibia, the struggle for political independence is a struggle to break free from the system of brutal exploitation and oppression which is inflicted on them by the South African regime. Jobs, land, homes, food and social services are desperately needed. Freedom from South African rule is an essential part of the struggle to satisfy these needs and build a society in which the working people will have control over their own lives.

Hopes for an early end to the occupation of Namibia and for free elections, however, were again dashed during negotiations between SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) and the South African regime held in Geneva in January. The collapse of the talks brought home, once again, that there is no short cut to genuine political independence and social liberation.

If events were determined by United Nations resolutions, Namibia would have been independent more than 10 years ago. In 1966 the International Court of Justice declared that South Africa was illegally occupying Namibia. In 1970 and 1971 there were three Security Council resolutions taken demanding that South Africa remove its army and government from Namibia.

It was even decided that if South Africa failed to withdraw, full sanctions would be implemented.

But in January 1981 it was as if these decisions had never been taken. The Western 'Contact Group' (USA, Canada, France, Germany and Britain) argues that sanctions would be 'premature'. Pretoria boasts of a diplomatic victory and launches further attacks on Angola which is providing bases for SWAPO.

Capitalist monopolies

The breakdown in talks shows the futility of depending on divisions between imperialism (the Western 'Contact Group') and the South African ruling class to achieve independence. In reality, the 'Western Five' and Pretoria are concerned with defending precisely the same interests in Namibia—the capitalist monopolies making their fabulous profits from the labour of the Namibian workers.

Three monopolies stand out like giants: Consolidated Diamond Mines (Anglo-American Corporation), Tsumeb Corporation, and the South West Africa Company. The capital assets of these three are bigger than the gross national product of Namibia. They account

for some 85% of Namibia's mineral exports and 60% of all exports.

Enormous wealth is expected from Namibia's uranium resources which are said to be the largest in the world. The Rössing Mine, owned by Rio Tinto Zinc, produces about 5 100 metric tons. Some 5 000 more tons are expected from other mines in the future. Namibia could soon be the largest producer of uranium outside the United States and Canada.

Enormous profits are made by these monopolies which have a return on capital of 30% to 40%. **This means that in about 3 years they get back in profits all they have invested!**

Not only for economic but also for strategical reasons Namibia is of great importance to the imperialist powers. A Namibia that is wrested from their grasp would strike a breach in their domination over Southern Africa and encourage yet more determined struggles by the masses in South Africa itself. On a world scale it would tilt the balance of forces still further against the imperialists, adding to the series of setbacks they have suffered since the humiliating defeat of the United States bourgeoisie in Vietnam.

All these factors help to explain the manoeuvres of the 'Western Contact Group'. The capitalists of these countries jointly own over 70% of the mining capital invested in Namibia. Here, as in South Africa and elsewhere, they are vitally concerned with defending their interests against the struggles of the working people that beset them on every side. With each round of negotiations it becomes more clear that genuine independence in Namibia will only be secured when the workers and peasants take decisive action in the factories, mines and

HEID TROOPS OUT OF NAMIBIA !

farms.

For those who do not see the class nature of the struggle in Namibia, the UN resolutions and soft talk of the imperialists seem to give a short and easy road to independence.

In fact the advance to independence in Namibia is completely tied up with the struggle of the working masses in Southern Africa as a whole. The diplomatic manoeuvres of imperialist governments and the United Nations are no more than a pale reflection of the upsurges and downturns in that struggle.

The high water mark of the UN 'paper war' against the apartheid regime, Resolution 385 of 1976, was reached in a period when Soweto was blazing, when the South African army had been forced from Angola and the anger of working people world-wide was focussed on the barbaric regime in Pretoria. The imperialists at this time did not want to be seen supporting that regime too closely.

Resolution 385 called for the immediate withdrawal of the apartheid army and officials. Free and fair elections were then to be held by the United Nations, and a government formed for independent Namibia.

But every subsequent resolution and decision taken by the United Nations marks a retreat from this position. The apartheid regime has gone its own way towards an 'internal settlement', with the Turnhalle constitutional discussions followed by ethnic 'elections'. Under pressure from the capitalists internationally, UN resolutions have been adjusted to the tricks of the apartheid regime.

The recent UN plans to implement Resolution 385 show the retreat which has taken place:

- They no longer call for the removal of the whole of the apartheid apparatus and allow 1 500 troops to stay on during elections.

- The South African Administrator General (who commands the police and orders detentions) will stay on and work with the UN Special Representative.

- New UN resolutions leave out the question of elections in Walvis Bay which South Africa claims for itself.

- Even worse, a Demilitarised Zone is to be set up on the northern Namibian frontier. **All SWAPO bases will have to move**

back to Angola or Zambia. It seems as though all SWAPO guerillas in the South are to be disarmed by the United Nations force.

A close study of the resolutions and plans of the Western Contact Group, on which the January 1981 Geneva talks were based, shows every kind of compromise with the apartheid regime and no mention of the original idea of 'free and fair elections'!

But even with these concessions the apartheid regime is not satisfied; it wants more safeguards. On top of this it even wants the UN to prove its 'impartiality' by giving millions of Rand to the Namibian puppets to make up for the support which



SWAPO gets.

Why is the South African regime so stubborn even after these concessions were made? Why were they so arrogant that their delegates in Geneva could take time off to go making snow-men instead of sitting down to stop the bloodshed?

On the one hand, the South Africans knew that talk of sanctions was so much hot air because of the support from imperialist countries. They knew that the new Reagan administration in the USA would be sympathetic to them. Moreover they have built a formidable military apparatus to dominate and oppress the people of Namibia.

On the other hand, any question of the withdrawal of the South African troops presents the imperialists with very serious problems. Apart from a narrow layer of whites the capitalists have scarcely any basis of social support in Namibia. The withdrawal of the South African military would create a power vacuum which, under present conditions, would be filled by SWAPO resting on its own military forces and on the support of the mass of the people.

But an independent Namibian state of this nature would immediately be faced with the demands of the masses for an end to their social deprivation. Such demands could only be met through a fundamental

re-allocation of the resources of the economy.

Inevitably, any step in this direction would involve a head-on collision with the imperialists, resulting either in a defeat for the masses and a 'neo-colonial' form of renewed capitalist domination, or in the nationalisation of mining, finance and industry and the planning of production in order to make possible a programme of real reforms.

Even more dangerous to the imperialists are the effects that an undefeated SWAPO, sweeping to victory in elections, is likely to have on the black masses in the remainder of Southern Africa. This would create tremendous enthusiasm in the South African townships and strengthen the struggle of the workers for similar gains in South Africa. It would also give Botha new headaches from the ultra-right inside and outside the National Party.

The imperialists are determined to avoid the dangers that would arise from a situation of this nature. Their immediate aim is to destroy SWAPO as a military force that could form the basis of an alternative state machine. At the same time they are trying to strengthen the basis of their own state power in Namibia.

There is already a SWA Defence Force (brought into operation on 1 August 1980) and a SWA Police Force (brought into operation from 1

September 1980). The Turnhalle Assembly is now talking of conscription for all young men in Namibia.

To these armed defenders of property and exploitation we have to add the Ovambo Homeguards, ethnic armies, the railway police, and other armed groups. Even the multi-national companies are storing guns in the mines and factories to use against their workers.

On top of the SA Defence Force and these armed bands rest some 16 separate authorities which make up the 'government'.

Over 316 collaborators, with a salary bill of millions, sit in the Turnhalle Assembly etc. The main achievement of this group of incompetents, thugs and fools so far has been to 'abolish' the Immorality Act—by making a long law prohibiting all sex before marriage!

The apartheid regime is working as fast as it can to hand over the task of repression and murder to these anti-SWAPO collaborators; to turn the anti-guerilla operations into a fight of black against black. There has been a big increase in torture, detentions, attacks against Angola and killing of SWAPO supporters and guerillas.

In this way the apartheid regime, supported by the imperialists, is trying to take precautions against the possibility of a forced withdrawal from Namibia. They know that SWAPO enjoys immense popularity and will win any genuine elections they might be forced to call. But they are resolved that, as in Zimbabwe, any elected government must leave the capitalist state apparatus intact and remain, in effect, its hostage.

It is these imperialist pressures which lead to the ambiguity of the UN resolutions, which leave the question of state power in a future independent Namibia very hazy. And now the South Africans are insisting that there must be constitutional talks to discuss federalism (Bantustanism), guarantees to the white minority and blocking arrangements against the majority.

On this basis there would be room for the Turnhalle puppets and the SWA Defence Force even under a future SWAPO government!

What is the way forward for the people of Namibia to genuine independence and social liberation?

During 1975-76, when the revolu-



Impression of workers in action during 1971 general strike of contract workers.

tionary pressure of the masses on their leaders reached new heights, SWAPO declared itself a 'vanguard party' and committed itself to the aim of a "classless non-exploitative society". The programme adopted in August 1976 said SWAPO would "ensure that all the major means of production and exchange of the country are owned by the people" and called for "giving land to the tillers".

Unfortunately, in the search for solutions acceptable to UN diplomacy, the SWAPO leadership has retreated from these radical demands with every round of negotiations. The 1976 programme is no longer talked of as the existing policy of SWAPO.

In 1977 the SWAPO leader, Sam Nujoma, said: "We are fighting for the mass of the workers to have direct control over the means of production". But in January 1981 he told the **Financial Mail** that SWAPO only wanted 'state participation' in industry.

The breakdown in the Geneva talks is an opportunity and challenge to SWAPO to seize the political initiative.

The leadership has promised to step up the guerilla struggle and to campaign for sanctions against Pretoria.

But the imperialists have shown they will never implement sanctions if this will endanger their investments. Only the workers in the imperialist countries can take effective boycott action on the basis of the necessary mobilisation and organisation.

Despite huge sacrifices by the guerillas and peasants, guerilla struggle alone cannot drive the army of occupation from the soil of Namibia once and for all. The defeat of the SA army which protects the interest of monopoly capital in Namibia requires the mobilisation of the masses around a fighting socialist programme.

The task of the SWAPO leadership is to come forward with such a programme of action, taking up and developing the radical demands of the 1976 programme, to organise Namibian workers in the mines, factories, compounds, farms and towns.

In conjunction with the action of guerillas in the countryside, the

ground can be prepared for a general strike, and the arming of the organised workers for self-defence, particularly in the compounds.

In this direction, with the armed workers organised around a program for the complete destruction of capitalist power and the building of a democratic workers' state, the road lies open to genuine self-determination for the people of Namibia.

But such a struggle cannot be confined to Namibia alone. Botha's troops will be defeated only in common struggle with the powerful

black working class of South Africa itself. The great task for the leaders of SWAPO and the ANC together, and for every activist in struggle in the two countries, is to build up the links and put forward the policies, strategy and tactics by which unity in action will be achieved.

Such a victory against the SA army of occupation, would also advance by leaps and bounds the South African revolution itself. On this road lies the solution to all the needs of the Namibian people, and those of Southern Africa as a whole.

BOSSES' PRESS ATTACKS

Supporters of **INQABA** and activists in the liberation struggle may or may not have seen a hostile and vicious attack which appeared in the **Rand Daily Mail** on 16 February, 1981 under the heading "ANC whites start splinter worker group".

Essentially it alleged the formation of a "splinter movement in Britain to concentrate on workers and trade unions". It went further to say that the name of the "new movement" is the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress, and added "though the movement uses this title, the leadership dissociates itself from the ANC".

We summarise here the major points of the memorandum that we have sent to members and fellow-workers of the Media Workers Association of South Africa and to the South African Society of Journalists.

Against the press monopoly of the millionaires in South Africa, **INQABA** stands for a free press under workers' democratic control. This is why we sent our complaint against the **RDM** to the **trade unions of the media workers**.

INQABA regards with contempt the attempt at lies, slander and division by the apartheid bosses' journalism as clearly reflected by the **RDM** article. Contrary to capitalist naked lies:

- **INQABA** is the journal of a definite current of thought within the ANC. This current is the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC.
- **INQABA** calls without apology for the building of the ANC inside South

Africa, as a mass force above all of **black workers**. In this way it identifies and promotes **the actual basis of organised unity**. It fights for a socialist programme in the mass movement and stands for the overthrow of the factory, mine, farm and bank owners—the road forward to the liberation of **all the oppressed**.

- Far from needing any "new movement", the workers of South Africa have an existing fighting movement—a mass movement which is beginning to place its stamp on every aspect of life. **INQABA** fights for the conscious building and strengthening of the leading role of the working class under the banner of the ANC. The Marxist Workers' Tendency is part and parcel of the ANC and will steadfastly remain so.
- **INQABA** emphasises that our struggle is international—the lessons drawn from the struggles of our brothers and sisters throughout the world will strengthen our determination to destroy once and for all **capitalism, the enemy of all the hopes and desires of our people**.

- Finally, **INQABA** underlines that only socialism, meaning workers' democracy, can replace capitalism and bring an end to national oppression, exploitation and poverty.

by **T. Phiri**

Copies of the full memorandum are available from INQABA YA BASEBENZI, BM Box 1719, London WC1 3XX.

ZIMBABWE

- 'TWO-

by Jake Wilson

Throughout Southern Africa revolutionaries have been debating the lessons of Zimbabwe.

A few months after the ZANU-ZAPU government came to power, Comrade Oliver Tambo, ANC President, compared the developments in Zimbabwe with his perspective for the future of South Africa: "Before they took power, the leaders had certain theories of what they would do when in power. But when they did take power, they had to face up to certain realities. That is the way it would be in South Africa."

These conclusions need to be seriously examined. What are the 'realities' faced by the leadership in Zimbabwe? Are they the same realities that are faced by the Zimbabwean masses?

What are the theories which guided the leadership during the struggle, and why did these prove impossible to implement when power passed into their hands?

Every comrade in the ANC needs to address these questions, precisely to avoid similar pitfalls confronting us in South Africa.

The downfall of Smith and Muzorewa and the coming to power of the ZANU-ZAPU government marked a big advance for the Zimbabwean masses and a political setback for imperialism.

Bringing the war to an end itself has lifted an enormous burden of brutality and oppression from the people. Schools, hospitals and shops have been re-opened, families reunited, and political life reawakened.

There has been a recovery of economic activity and a growth rate of 8% for the first year after the devastating war period. But in moving beyond the immediate tasks of reconstruction, the Mugabe government finds itself against a wall of limitations both political and economic.

The bitter armed clashes which erupted around Bulawayo in February, leaving over 300 dead, are a symptom of the huge unsolved problems facing the people of Zimbabwe.

The fighting between ZIPRA and ZANLA former guerillas and units of the national army is not simply a reflection of party rivalries and still less the result of ethnic or 'tribal' differences, as the capitalist newspapers portray it.

The mass of the workers and

peasants in all parts of the country—ZANU and ZAPU supporters alike—are basically **for unity in carrying the revolution forward**. They are united in wanting to gain the land, jobs for all, and an end to the twin evils of black poverty and white privilege.

But they are being forced to bear the continued burden of landlessness, unemployment, deprivation and discrimination of all kinds. This is because the coalition government of the ZANU and ZAPU leaders with the rich landowners, factory bosses, and bankers has meant a **compromise over white privilege, property and profits**.

Instead of real power passing into the hands of the masses, the result has been the concentration and manipulation of power at the top, among the elite. Because of this, a destructive struggle for mere status and position between the ZANU and ZAPU leadership has been inevitable.

In turn this has sharpened old rivalries between the former guerillas, embittered by the immense sacrifices of the war and the failure of the government to bring about the fundamental change of society that was fought for.

As a result of his overwhelming victory at the elections, and also by leaning on the old state machinery

inherited from Smith, Mugabe has been able to steadily weaken the hold of the ZAPU leaders on government. Nkomo was demoted from Minister of Interior, and ZIPRA guerillas were shifted from the centre of power in Salisbury to Bulawayo. The ZIPRA rebellion bore all the signs of desperation as these humiliations sank in.

Some comrades in the ANC have the idea that the unresolved problems in Zimbabwe are attributable to ZANU's victory and that, if ZAPU had gained the upper hand, the situation would have been fundamentally different. **But this is not true.**

Nkomo and the ZAPU leaders are equally committed to compromise with capitalism as Mugabe and the ZANU leaders are. They are equally wedded to the false 'two-stage' approach—which has landed the revolution in Zimbabwe in a cul de sac.

'Progressive'

The idea of the 'two-stage revolution' is that the struggle for socialism belongs to a different stage than the struggle for democracy. First, so the theory goes, democracy must be consolidated with the support of the 'progressive' or 'democratic' capitalists, and then in due course when the country is 'ready' for it the socialist tasks can be taken up.

This was the idea of the Mensheviks in the Russian Revolution and it would have led to disaster there if Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks had not fought successfully against it. (See page 40) Later, after the rise of Stalin, the same idea was taken up again by the 'Communist' parties as they turned away from Lenin's revolutionary method. The 'two-stage' theory has led to a whole number of bloody defeats for the masses, for example in Spain in the 1930s and Chile in 1973.

STAGE` THEORY ON TRIAL ²⁵

The 'two-stage' idea completely fails to recognise that capitalism itself is the enemy of democracy. The workers and peasants want democracy in order to get rid of the very problems that capitalism has loaded on their backs—poverty, homelessness, land hunger, a shortage of jobs. To tackle these evils means precisely to tackle capitalism—and this brings the toiling masses into head-on collision with the rich.

No government can both defend the interests of the capitalists and carry out the demands of the people. That is why the ZANU-ZAPU government in Zimbabwe has been unable, despite its enormous popular support, to solve the land question, to end starvation wages, to provide

jobs for the unemployed, or even to abolish white privilege.

Over the coming months and years Zimbabwe will face a stark choice—either break with capitalism, or see even the democratic content of the revolution turn increasingly to sand.

The Lancaster House agreement signed by ZANU and ZAPU entrenches white political privilege, safeguards the property of the capitalists, and forbids any expropriation of the land. It was signed when the power of the colonial regime had been weakened but not broken and when there was a real possibility of South African intervention. It reflected the interests of the capitalists **internationally** who wanted to slow the pace of the Southern African

revolution and were prepared to bring the white ruling class to heel before their power was smashed.

The only alternative to the Lancaster House agreement was a strategy moving beyond guerilla warfare to the mobilisation and arming of the working masses in Zimbabwe to seize power in Salisbury, and to call on their South African brothers and sisters to help stop an apartheid intervention.

This strategy was not favoured by the ZANU or ZAPU leaders, or by the governments which backed them.

But this does not mean that the Zimbabwean workers and peasants have to accept the terms of Lancaster House. An active struggle is needed





to bring the privileges of the whites to an end, and to clear the way to bring the industries, mines and farms into the hands of the working people.

Capitalism (the private ownership of the factories, mines, farms and banks) and white privilege are bound up together in Zimbabwe. It is the rich whites, the local monopolies and multi-national companies, who own these means of production. Safeguarded by the Lancaster House agreement, the capitalists demand the continuation of their privileges in politics, education, health and elsewhere.

A break with white privilege cannot come about through increased aid (welcome though this will be) but through a break with the capitalist system which demands these privileges continue. It is on this point that the "two-stage" approach of the ZANU-ZAPU leadership has caused the government to falter.

Economy

During the first few months of the Mugabe government it was clear that the workers and peasants would give it some time of grace. But right from the outset the workers in the factories, mines and municipalities put forward demands to implement the promises of the election campaign.

There has been the biggest outbreak of strikes since the Second World War. It is this action by the workers, and not the initiative of the government, which has forced up wages.

A continued demand abroad for the exports of the mining industry—gold, nickel, ferrochrome and asbestos—made it possible for the capitalists to make some wage concessions after years of decline. But the upturn in the economy, which could continue through much of 1981, offers no prospects of a permanent rise in living standards for the working people, whatever the capitalists might claim.

Already there are reports that the expansion of production is encountering limits: further development depends increasingly on new machinery and factories. This in turn depends on expanding exports and enormous aid to bring in sufficient foreign exchange to buy the equipment overseas.

Because of the capitalist basis of the economy, new investment in production is largely in the hands of the multi-national companies dominating Zimbabwe. With these companies facing declining profits world-wide, they will not step up investment unless the government can guarantee high profits, low taxation, and a 'disciplined' workforce.

The ZANU-ZAPU government is thus dependent on the big sanctions-busters of the past—Rio Tinto Zinc, Anglo American, Johannesburg Consolidated Investments, and the General Mining Corporation—to develop the economy. These companies, mostly based in South Africa, demand guarantees for profits and against nationalisation.

At the moment hopes are pinned on mining exports, which increased by 62% in value in the first half of 1980. But this expansion has not been based on much increase in output, rather on the rise in the price of gold, nickel and other ores on the world market. On top of this, 1981 does not look like a good year for mining exports as the United States economy moves into decline.

All these factors limit the possibility of major reforms on a capitalist basis without an enormous struggle by the workers.

While the government is going ahead with a three-year national development plan drawn up by the Minister of Economic Planning (without discussion with the workers and peasants), the demands of the masses are becoming more urgent. Black Zimbabweans are demanding jobs for themselves and their children, an end to cheap labour, land for the peasants, urban housing, and equal education for all.

Despite a year in office the present government is no nearer to putting the bulk of these demands on the agenda of reforms. In fact, these aspirations are impossible to meet within the present economic system, even at the highest growth rate.



The demand of 'jobs for all' brings this out clearly. Today there are over a million workers unemployed in Zimbabwe—while the total number with jobs is only about one million! Employment prospects for the youth are particularly bleak.

Jobs and wages

In fact, the demand for full employment can only be met if the capitalist system is replaced by a **planned economy**. Nowhere in the world, not even in the richest countries, can capitalism provide enough jobs for the workers.

The same applies to the workers' demand for an end to cheap labour. In response to the strikes the minimum wage levels laid down by the government have been slightly increased. But even in the urban centres Zimbabwean workers are still earning wages far below the poverty line. From the beginning of 1981 the minimum wage **per month** for industry and commerce is Z\$70 (R85); for miners Z\$58 (R70) **including payments in kind**; while domestic and agricultural workers are to be paid Z\$30 (R36).

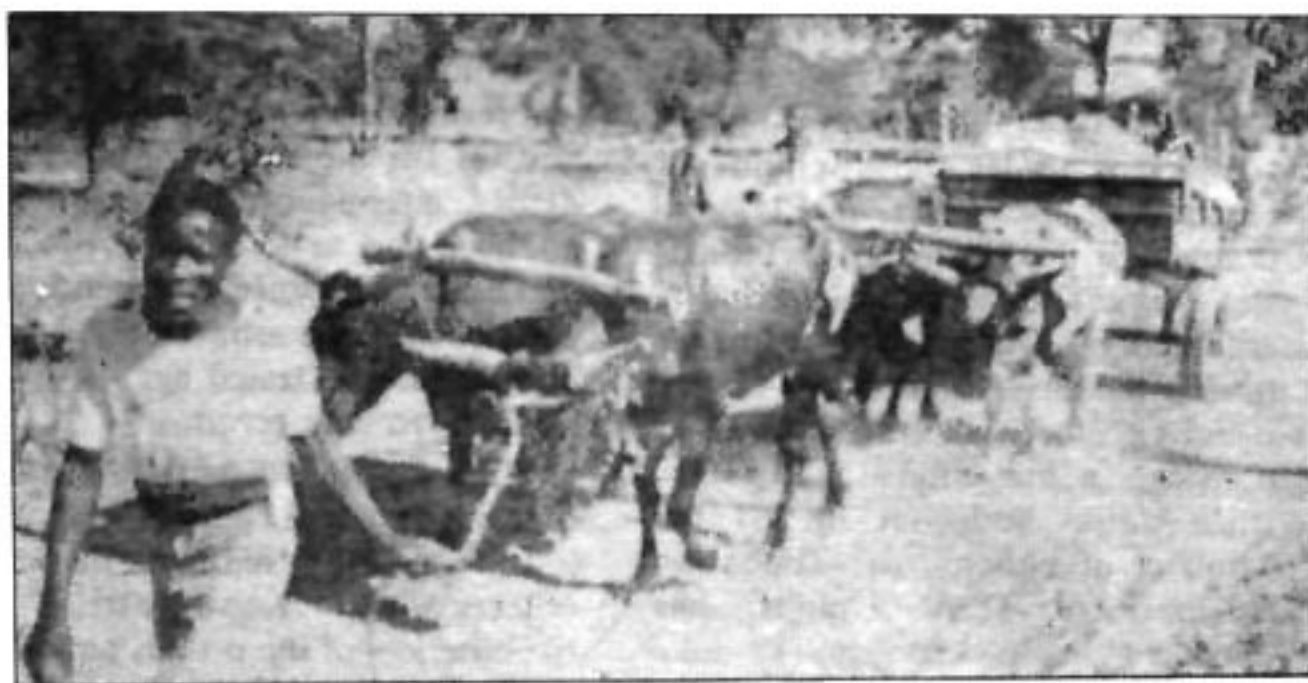
Mugabe has committed his government to raise wages above Z\$125 (R15!)—itself an abysmally low level. But how can even this be achieved under capitalism in Zimbabwe?

Employers faced with even the relatively small increases in wages so far announced have dismissed many workers, saying they cannot afford to continue employing them. There is now talk of the 'refugee problem' of dismissed workers. This shows the rottenness of capitalism which pushes workers out of work as soon as there is an increase in wages—while those who remain in employment have to work harder.

Land

In Zimbabwe, as elsewhere in Southern Africa, the land question is of crucial importance.

During colonial rule the white farmers took the finest land, driving the Africans into so-called 'tribal trust' areas. 95% of the maize sold to the marketing board is produced on



land owned by capitalist farmers and companies. At the same time, while the peasants hunger for land, large tracts of white-owned land are not worked.

Under the Lancaster House agreement even vacant land of the whites cannot be expropriated—it has to be bought. And to do this, the government has to go begging to the imperialist powers for massive aid! Furthermore, at the recent Zimcord aid conference, Mugabe's Minister of Economic Planning and Development made it clear that he has no wish to buy out white capitalists who are actually engaged in farming.

Not surprisingly, the process of giving land to the peasants is going ahead at a painfully slow pace and threatens to grind to a halt. This has led many peasants to move onto unworked 'white' land and stake their claims, even though they are threatened with police action.

The same lack of progress is shown in housing for the workers. In Salisbury, prices in the select suburbs are reaching a premium as the newly-enriched bureaucratic and business layers and embassy staffs look for accommodation at the 'white'—or rather bourgeois—level. But in the same city there has been a **sharp drop** in the building of low-cost housing. The swollen population of the townships must fend for themselves in pondokkies.

Is it not possible, ask the workers, for the government to do more by increasing spending on education, roads, railways and housing, and so steadily improve the conditions of the masses? Every demand for this by the workers must be supported. But we must be clear that there cannot in fact be lasting reforms

under capitalism—and certainly step-by-step reforms cannot lead to socialism.

Under capitalism big welfare spending leads to rising prices. Plans can be made for social reform, but these bump up against the reality that profits for the capitalists have to be maintained. The capitalist system is in **world-wide** crisis—little growth; rising prices; and a general decline in profitability.

This has already been discovered by the Zimbabwean government. Big spending on the military and education is already producing the problem of rising prices which are expected to go up 15% or more this year. The government is now **cutting back** spending to bring these prices down. This has led to the increase in the price of bread which has brought bitter complaints from the workers. Again, government spending and economic expansion is being deliberately slowed in an attempt to curb inflation.

The limits of reform under capitalism in Zimbabwe are becoming very clear. When the present economic upturn has spent itself and inflation hits at the impoverished working class, the bankruptcy of capitalism will be more and more understood by growing numbers of workers and youth.

By following a policy of piecemeal reforms under capitalism, Mugabe is forced to call on the workers to 'work harder and observe strict discipline and self-control' while refusing to take measures against the capitalists in industry and on the land. The struggle for 'socialism' becomes reduced to pleas for 'localisation'—that is, that the multi-nationals should offer shares to Zimbabweans

and develop what they call "a real partnership(!) between management and the workers".

Working under the discipline of capitalism, the ZANU-ZAPU government is now revising the Industrial Conciliation Act (previously enforced by Smith) to give further power to the Registrar of Trade Unions to force all trade unions to register. In the same way the new trade union body set up by the Minister of Labour, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, has appealed to workers not to take strike action. "Each time we down tools", a ZCTU leader told the workers, "we are ruining the economy of our country."

But Zimbabwe does not yet belong to the working people, who produce all its wealth. The capitalists (local, South African, and overseas), still take this wealth—and this is supposed to represent the national interest! It is the demands of the workers and peasants for an end to poverty wages, for the take-over of the land, and all the other needs of the masses which represent the true national interest. And to promote this national interest the workers need the unfettered right to organise and strike against their exploiters.

As the government retreats before the tasks of political and social liberation, the workers will have to fight for socialist policies not only in the trade unions, but also and especially in ZANU and ZAPU where the rank and file is growing increasingly impatient.

A socialist programme could unite the ranks of ZANU and ZAPU, and solve the problems of the people through the nationalisation of the banks, big industries and farms and the distribution of land to the peasants.

Desperate talk of going 'back to the bush' and suicidal actions by sections of the former guerillas, like the ZIPRA revolt in February, cannot provide a way forward for the working people. They can only divide the masses in the face of the ruling class.

In fact the February events actually strengthened the hand of conservative, undemocratic forces in the country. The postponement indefinitely of local elections in Bulawayo is only a small indicator of this.

More important is the fact that the government gained the opportunity (with widespread support) to disarm most of the remaining ZANLA and ZIPRA guerillas—something it had not been able to do before. Also, for the first time since independence, units of the state army were brought into action and tested against black Zimbabweans in revolt.

While reinforced with thousands of former guerilla fighters, the army is still staffed by many of the same officers who previously carried out the butchery of the masses on behalf of Smith and Walls. These filth openly gloated that they were once again able to slaughter 'gooks'.

The failure of the ZANU-ZAPU government to dismantle the capitalist state machine means that it is once again being strengthened. The consolidation of the military as an armed power over an unarmed people represents a mighty weapon of capitalism and a huge danger for the future struggles of the Zimbabwean workers and peasants.

It will be vital in the next period to win over the rank-and-file soldiers of the army to the idea of carrying the revolution through to socialist conclusions. For this reason, too, the revolutionary activists in ZANU and ZAPU need to unite their own efforts.

It is their common demand that the government of Mugabe and Nkomo must end immediately the coalition with capitalism and white privilege. But merely to raise the demand will not be enough.

The workers' organisations need to be built independently of the state and the influence of privileged classes. Workers' unity must be the rallying cry, and the basis for winning the support of the peasant masses and soldiers for action against the capitalist class.

Links need to be made with revolutionaries in South Africa—especially with cadres of the ANC and SACTU and with activists in the trade unions—to ensure maximum support of the SA working class against any new threat against Zimbabwe from Pretoria.

Along this path the revolution in Zimbabwe, for which 30 000 black people have given their lives, can be carried forward to victory, and the domination of the landlords and capitalists finally overthrown.

Organise

The union for unemployed workers which the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) is planning to establish marks an important milestone in the development of the workers' movement in South Africa.

This union is to be formed, according to Thozamile Gqweta, the national organiser of SAAWU, in response to the "systematic victimisation of workers by employers in the East London area". Since July last year 600-700 workers in the area have been dismissed for demanding union recognition or pension rights.

The bosses try to use the unemployed as blackmail against employed workers. "We know it is part of the short-term strategy of employers to use the unemployed workers against the employed workers to curb the power of the trade union movement," Gqweta said.

If organised effectively on a national level and linked closely with the struggles of the workers in the existing unions, the unemployed workers' union could herald a great step forward for the working class.

Capitalism depends on setting worker against worker; young against old, men against women, white against black. But most of all it depends on setting the two great armies of labour—the employed and the reserve army of unemployed—against each other. The queue of unemployed at the factory gate is the most potent strike-breaking weapon at the disposal of the capitalists.

The power of the employers to replace a complete factory of strikers with the unemployed standing at the gate is even greater than the guns and prisons of the regime. This is what makes the unemployed workers' union such social dynamite in the hands of the workers' movement.

The task of the unemployed union is to keep victimised workers within the union movement and to recruit all jobless workers.

The union movement must, of course, move heaven and earth to get victimised workers reinstated, if not in the same factory then in another

the Unemployed!

by
**Basil Hendrikse
and Ken Mark**



job. Trade unionists inside the factories should insist that **only** members of a union should be taken on.

The unemployed union should train new workers and youth in the fighting traditions of the labour movement; in this work the victimised workers will have a leading part. During a strike the unemployed union members can help ensure that no scabs hang around the gates waiting to replace the strikers.

The unemployed as a whole must be rallied around demands of:

- jobs for all;
- a shorter working week and work-sharing without loss of pay;
- an unrestricted unemployment benefit no less than a living wage;
- massive social spending on useful public works (housing, transport, schools, hospitals, sewerage, electricity, irrigation, telephones etc.)
- independent trade unions.

The Botha regime and the capitalist system it defends will fight bitterly against these demands which are to the workers so reasonable.

For the unemployed union to be built on a national basis it is necessary that support comes from workers in all existing unions, even those whose leaders may not want to get involved. A campaign should be started **in the factories** to explain the idea and win the support of all independent trade unions for this huge task.

This great new development in the union movement, along with the almost feverish pace at which the black workers have formed and flooded the independent trade unions, proves that the South African working class is part of the international working class. Throughout the world workers are organising to defend themselves against attacks on their living standards and against the capitalist regimes.

It also confirms that the South

African working class will draw revolutionary conclusions at a rapid pace once they move into action. Capitalism in South Africa has always been bound up with the conquest of the African people and a modern police state oppressing the black workers. The road which the workers have to travel to arrive at the conclusion that capitalism is at the root of all their problems has been a relatively short one.

In South Africa the trade unions must either become revolutionary or ultimately be destroyed. The independent unions need to take up the burning demands of the workers which can only be met with the overthrow of capitalism and the replacement of a workers' democratic state.

In the stormy period which lies ahead, the workers must be thoroughly prepared for Botha's 'Total Strategy' by preparing a programme of total resistance. The unemployed union is part of the workers' shield.

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Rest of world £3-20 [airmail £7-90].

Cheques or postal orders payable to INQABA YA BASEBENZI should accompany all orders.

Forthcoming articles in INQABA will include:

- **The white worker and the national question**
- **Detente or world revolution?**
- **Mozambique**
- **Lessons of Chile**



MONONO'A BONA — MASAPO A RONA

The liberals, always generously offering advice to the workers and youth in struggle, have long been trying to get us to see those 'unprejudiced' defenders of 'justice' in South Africa, the judges and magistrates, as guardians of our rights. Two recent court cases will help us understand this point of view more clearly.

On 4 March, Richard Manewil (aged 20) was sentenced to death for raping a white nurse.

A few days before, Lieutenant Casparus Botha, a white army officer, was sentenced for shooting and killing a coloured child playing by the side of the road. Botha, out with his mates for a drive, had decided to have some 'fun' shooting at children. He killed one and seriously wounded another.

Botha was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, but (no doubt in view of his staunch patriotic qualities) will probably only serve ten.

We cannot help suspecting that a revolutionary tribunal, elected by the organised mass movement, would mete out different treatment to Botha and his likes—and also to the Manewils who are victims and products of the brutalising racist capitalist system.

But it would do this after first passing sentence on the criminal judges and magistrates of apartheid.

"A victory for private wealth. Life's going to be fun again." "Money without shame is in." The "millionaires cabinet"—this is how the "Newsweek" describes the conglomeration of right-wing business executives, military men and academics whom Reagan has appointed to office.

But even the billionaires and multi-millionaires who finance the Republican Party distinguish between their own true representatives and those politicians whom they merely buy to serve their interests.

Senator Jesse Helms is the first kind, Reagan the second. (Helms, by the way, is so far on the right that he thinks Reagan's cabinet are a left-wing threat to America's foreign policy interests!)

A Republican blue-blood, Helms was financed in the elections to the tune of \$8 million. Big banks like Chase Manhattan, the American Bank, also families such as the Rockefellers and Vanderbilts, fuelled his campaign.

Helms has personal control over a phone bank with a 350 000 computerised mailing list "to big-business connections".

Reagan, for what he's worth, was bought for a mere \$4 million as an election gift to Corporation Republicans.

The topic of discussion was "revival of Islam" and the future of Jerusalem. It only cost two million dollars to arrange—not much when the money comes from the sweat and toil of the workers.

42 Islamic leaders of Asia and Africa, kings, sultans, presidents and emirs, met in Taif, a small town in Saudi Arabia, 50 miles from Mecca, that sacred religious spot that most Muslim workers never set eyes on. Following the simple life of Mohammed, these pious leaders met under the most difficult conditions.

Taif was converted into a bustling metropolis for the occasion, equipped with its own satellite communication system. A special hotel was built and to keep these humble gentlemen in solitary confinement—i.e. divorced from the conditions of the ordinary workers—42 palaces were erected, one for each. A lavish conference centre was also built, bigger and more luxuriously equipped than the UN General Assembly building.

After arrival a cheap ceremony took place. Each pious leader was driven to Mecca in his own specially-purchased Mercedes 600 long-chassis limousine. Each wore the white cloth, the traditional dress worn to demonstrate that "all Muslims are equal" in the house of God.

Well Muslim workers, you are all "equal". We all could afford the \$50 million entrance fee to attend this glorious conference!

The law of Zakaat (compulsory tax) is an absolute failure to prevent wealth from accumulating in a few hands. The purpose behind this abominable waste of money was to devise plans to deal with the approaching earthquake of mass upheavals. When the toilers in these countries rise, they will dump these wealthy parasites with their 'spiritualism' into the sea of oblivion. With power and the means of production in the hands of the producers, the workers, they will lay the foundations of paradise not in the hereafter, but on earth.

Marxism and the black youth movement

The unceasing vibrant strength and unshaken determination of the black youth movement are unmistakable signs, together with the awe-inspiring black workers' movement, that the fortress of racist domination and unhindered bosses' terror has begun to crack.

Wrapped in the entire experience of conquest, the rise and growth of naked white national and capitalist dictatorship, the black youth movement arose with all the scars suffered by the movement for class and national liberation.

Black school and student youth, an uncontrollable and grudging by-product of capitalist exploitation, experienced and continue to experience, together with their parents, a consistent ruthless policy of intensified racial baasskap and capitalist exploitation—both in the racist schools and in the bosses' factories, mines, kitchens, and farms. Since conquest, this has been their policy.

The process of perfecting a complete regimentation of black workers, the system of cheap labour through influx control, the pass system and migrant labour—found their counterpart in the regimentation of racist education; **all this in the determined hands of white bosses' representatives.**

Bloody-minded and confident of their power and violence, symbolised by the spirit of the platteland in the police and military, the bosses transformed the mass of blacks into cheap labour and preparation for cheap labour. But this did not meet without the tradition of struggle against conquest.

In South Africa, as around the

by Ashraf Fortuin

world, education has always been a tool serving the interest of the minority who control the factories, mines, farms, universities, and who control the state apparatus.

Initially in the hands of settler missionaries, education was handed over to the white South African ruling class. This white bosses' dictatorship quickly developed education to suit the needs of unobstructed profit-making and racist oppression.

At the centre of their system of superior education for whites and inferior or no education for blacks, was rooted, right from the start, their whole unchanged interest and continuing intention i.e. **to produce willing black slaves who would not rise above the ABC of culture and who would sing the 'praises' of being exploited day in and day out.**

The philosophy of their education, in black as well as white schools, is to succeed in producing the master over servant 'relationship', which in the factories and mines and on the farms is openly upheld by the vulgar domination of the management and foremen.

Where the black worker can be fired and forcefully deported to the reserves, or imprisoned; the black student or pupil is ruthlessly abused, subjected to corporal punishment, expelled or imprisoned.

In the factory, the mines, kitchens, and on the farms, the dictatorship of the bosses is represented by management, foremen and forewomen or the miesies who are

supported by the labour bureaux, the pass office and the unrestricted power of the police.

The bosses' apartheid state is represented in the school by the principal, headteachers and inspectors, who carry out the instructions of government policy.

We shall not continue to be the doormat of conquest at the entrance of bosses' profits!

Erupting in 1973, and subsequently immensely strengthened by the victory of the revolutions in Angola, Mocambique, and Guinea-Bissau, the black workers of Natal demonstrated their strength and announced to the bosses: **'Filumuntu Ufesadikiza!' ('Man is dead but his spirit is alive!')**

These strikes started the decade of the most brilliant national and class struggles of the working class and youth.

Arising from under the bloody heels of baasskap the workers raised the battle cry which was taken up with the greatest exertion of the will to struggle and sacrifice by the renewed youth movement in the Soweto Uprisings of 1976.

Caught between the process of healing past defeats, uncertain of its confidence and lacking the strength of past experience, the youth movement found the correct path under a storm of bullets, the hammer blows of baton charges, and the brutality of mass imprisonment.

Responding to the call of their courageous children, the working class came out in two general strikes, lasting three days on each occasion, in which 500 000 to 700 000 workers participated.

It is without doubt only on the basis of the experience and sacrifices of Soweto 1976, and the confidence in the strength of their working class parents, that the organised mass boycotts started in the Cape in 1980.

From Soweto to Elsies Rivier a mountain of mass experience has been built.

Started by the unrestricted power of the representatives of the racist education, fuelled by the self-same naked hatred for reforms in the entire educational system by the apartheid state; the organised boycott movement of the students struck a blow for the entire black mass movement.

With organised discipline and an understanding of their own limitations, the Cape schools boycott turned to the movement of those who control the machinery of production, their parents, the workers.

United in and out of school, united in and out of the factory; the mass movement has consciously reached heights whose signals paralyse the spines of the apartheid bosses.

Reaching into the furthest corners of South Africa, from the Cape to Witziesshoek, the boycott movement of students and workers has demonstrated with certainty that the bosses can be defeated.

Through the boycott conscious mobilisation was strengthened by united active solidarity with the workers. This was strikingly shown in the meat workers' strike and the Port Elizabeth motor workers' strikes.

From being a boycott centred on the unmet grievances of 1976 the

boycott resumed its character as a political and social struggle, supporting bus boycotts and strikes throughout the country.

The Committee of 81 revealed the power of organised mass democracy in struggle, relying on the strength and participation of the masses, the guidance and willingness to sacrifice.

The boycott remains a landmark of mass struggles in 1980. This spirit of forward movement has been carried into 1981.

To quote an activist in the boycott (May 1980): 'We will no longer be turned out as a cheap source of labour. We are prepared to make sacrifices. It is not now or yesterday we care about, but tomorrow.'

This piercing spirit and undefeated will to continue to struggle against the entire system of national oppression and bosses' exploitation is what is most feared by the Bothas and Oppenheimers.

It demonstrates the direction of the black youth. It also announces the view the youth hold of their struggle.

Their struggle is the struggle with the black working class, and not outside the working class.

The black youth movement has entered 1981 determined to continue to organise the networks of youth organisations which have arisen throughout the country. The youth movement has realised that its semi-underground organisations can only survive if these organisations are linked to the organisations of the workers.

Despite the bannings, harassment and arrests of youth leaders through-

out the country, despite the new laws of compulsory so-called education to punish the entire black working class and the youth, the youth movement continues to strike deep organisational roots.

But this can only survive with struggling to build a Marxist programme to overthrow the bosses with unified workers' leadership.

The struggle for genuine mass unity is at one and the same time the struggle for the Marxist programme and working class leadership. The two cannot be separated. Likewise the strength of a united youth movement can succeed only through the certain leadership of those who have a firm grip on the machines day in and day out.

The Marxist programme is not a set of intellectual ideas possessed by those who have had the privilege to attend high school or university. It is the experience of all working class struggles, based on a scientific method of understanding the role of the working class in liberating itself.

Black youth will only realise fully the traditions of 1976 and 1980 through conscious organisation within the working class, in preparation for future battles, around the struggle for a Marxist programme.

The basis of this programme is the experience of all past working class struggles, that capitalism whatever its form, can only be overthrown by the organised working class, conscious of its leadership in overthrowing the dictatorship of the factory bosses, farm, mine, and bank owners.

The Marxist programme means for us, the realisation in struggle that the overthrow of apartheid and capitalism are simultaneous.

It means the overthrow of Botha and Oppenheimer together. The two cannot be separated.

Racist education cannot be abolished completely without abolishing the entire system whose interests are served by racist education—these interests are 'education' for slave cheap labour.

Our objectives are the total and untrimmed overthrow of national oppression, and the entire machinery of bosses' rule; leading to the establishment of a genuine democratic workers' state and the beginning of socialism.



What way forward for Black Consciousness?

by
Zakes Ramushu

The Black Consciousness Movement started as a movement of radical nationalist confrontation. It arose out of the soil of undisguised *national oppression, the foundation and source of cheap labour.*

With the igniting slogan "Black Power", the student youth from the bush-colleges were expressing the beginnings of a movement which was set to oppose national and racialist domination totally.

The BCM and black consciousness itself has not arisen on a distinct ideology. The nationalism of "Black Power" is essentially the expression of an undeveloped class consciousness, which can only have assumed the form it has taken in the BCM because of the absence of an independent working-class leadership, with its own mass programme. The BCM was the eruption of that hidden volcano of class consciousness, beneath the iron heel of white baasskap.

Power

However, mobilisation for black unity can only be consciously realised by the power of black workers in the factories, mines, and on the farms. **The BCM has been drawn as by a magnet towards the source of its strength, the working class.**

The growth and limitations of the BCM are reflected in the variety of its organisations: the struggles of the SRC's of the early 1970's in the bush-colleges; the formation of SASO, NAYO, and SASM, BPC, BCP, and BAWU; then, with the magnificent uprising in Soweto in 1976, the formation of the original

Committee of Ten; and following on this the appearance of PEBCO and other community organisations; AZAPO, AZASO, and COSAS; the organisations of the mass boycotts throughout 1980; and the rapid growth of SAAWU.

All these, together with the unsuccessful attempts to crush the movement on October 19 1977, impose on the BCM the question:

Either apart from the rising tide of the working class movement, or organised under its banner for the total overthrow of national domination and capitalism.

The BCM leaders cannot successfully create organisational structures of any value apart from or above the

mass movement of the youth and the workers. Yet organisation in the mass movement increasingly requires a clear identification of the tasks of the struggle, and a concrete programme for unity in action.

The unity of the BCM is impossible outside of the mass movement; the unity of the mass movement cannot be completed without a programme for smashing the capitalist state and for taking over the factories, mines and farms into the hands of the working class.

The open turning of the mass of the youth to the black workers' movement in 1980 has shown the answer to all that has plagued the BCM. Being chiefly a movement that



has mobilised the youth, the heroic traditions of the BCM can only be maintained, and its divisions and weaknesses can only be overcome, by consciously resolving to struggle on the basis of a working-class programme for the destruction of capitalism.

The developing struggles within the BCM over the question of

means a society ruled through workers' democracy.

The struggle for clarity will not stop at the past two conferences. Just as the upward thrust of the workers' movement has ignited the search for clear answers to the tasks of our revolution, so its continued forward movement will help produce the necessary clarity among those who

The failure of the leadership of the ANC and the PAC in the 50's and 60's was undeniably revealed for the youth and the BCM in 1976. **The armed struggle had not been prepared amongst the masses, the power of mass organisation was not relied on.** The youth by the thousand were forced into exile.

For the BCM and the youth, exile has offered no solution to the question of armed struggle.

Training, necessary to armed struggle, of itself resolved nothing. The apartheid state remained. The masses were surging forward and building their unity in the trade union and community struggles against the slave-owner bosses.

Now, as before, despite it not being raised by the exile leaderships, the question has opened up with all its fullness among the youth:

How to link the struggle against the state with the masses of workers in their struggles for genuine unions, against rent increases, for better housing?

How to link it with the new community organisations in the townships, with the new youth organisations?

How to organise mass armed self-defence against the police?

In short, what programme is needed to move the masses of the oppressed towards the successful armed uprising, who will arm them, and how?

For the mass movement, the answer cannot be the simple formula of the gun only.

How to organise mass armed self-defence against the police?

Marxism precisely arise from efforts of the youth to clarify the way forward.

The conferences of the BCM of Azania in April 1980, in exile, and of AZAPO in January 1981, both demonstrate the necessity, and wide acceptance of the need, for the development of a Marxist programme. **Both conferences, under different conditions, show that socialism is the only way forward for the black oppressed.**

The weakness of both conferences, however, turned on the question of which class will control the new state and build socialist society. Another unresolved question was whether nationalism, under South African conditions, is opposed to Marxism?

These questions will only be fully understood if we are conscious of the task confronting the mass of the oppressed, the black working class. The working class does not contrast its opposition to white baasskap to ridding itself forever of the **entire system** of that baasskap, i.e. the cheap labour or slave system of the white bosses' capitalism.

Workers' democracy

The only power that will smash bosses' rule is the power of the state in the hands of an undefeated black working class. That means the dictatorship of the working class over the bosses and their supporters. It

have nothing to lose by drawing the correct conclusions—the working class youth.

For the BCM, how armed struggle can be linked with the movement of the masses has become a central question in the recent period.

Armed struggle is no new question to the black oppressed. The unshaken certainty that no other alternative can completely smash the brutal machine of bosses' conquest has been a life-source of mass endurance.

After 1976, the youth and the BCM were decisively thrown onto the path of strategy. How to overthrow the apartheid capitalist state, with what to replace it, with whom?

The latter—with whom?—was answered for the youth in 1976 with the three general strikes by their parents, the workers.





The answer is not to be found in merely repeating the dust and blood of late surprises such as 1976: "where are the guns?"

The answer is a clear and definite need to turn towards the enormous task of preparing—under workers' leadership, with a socialist programme—the difficult and most decisive period of the actual mass armed uprising against the bosses' state.

This cannot be prepared apart from the movement of the masses. Nor can armed actions by groups or individuals be used to electrocute the masses into struggle. The mass armed struggle can only be successful with the full and conscious leadership of the workers' organisations, ready for the greatest sacrifices.

Challenge

In the BCM, the challenge is the strenuous struggle for the socialist programme, as this can be the only guide to the tasks and experiences of the youth and the workers. The impatience of the individual or of frustrated heroes is no substitute for the mass armed struggle leading to the violent liberation of the people from the bosses' chains of profit, privilege, and wage slavery.

For the BCM leadership the growth of Marxism amongst the youth poses a number of questions. The most central of these has been whether the privileged and rabidly racist white worker is in actual fact a worker.

No doubt, the white worker is the immediate tool and the last resort of white bosses' rule, of the bosses' state.

Politically the white worker, through generations of privilege and, essentially, Afrikaner nationalism, has been transformed into the whip in the white bosses' hand. **Who can argue against this reality?**

But, true as this is, the answer to the task of the black workers' movement in relation to the white worker is not found in the useless formula: "All blacks are workers and the white worker is a capitalist". The white workers are exploited sellers of labour power, **even though their labour power is exploited on significantly better terms than that of their black brothers and sisters.**

The white worker question cannot be answered in the BCM **unless the BCM is prepared to answer the question of what the major tasks of the mass revolution are.** The fear of answering the question of the white worker is the fear of decisively resolving that capitalism and the state must be totally destroyed, and

workers' democracy and socialism triumphantly take its place.

Unlike the white bosses, the mass movement of the black oppressed has no interest in loading the guns of capitalism. For the mass movement the white worker is a section of the whole working class which must be wrenched out of the armoury of the white bosses to weaken radically the firepower of white baasskap.

Only the overwhelming might and power, in action, of the ORGANISED black workers' movement can achieve this.

The mass of the black workers and youth have no doubts on this question. **Apartheid and the white bosses' state must be torn up by the roots.**

Not answering the white worker question and not being certain of whether capitalism should be destroyed opens up the mass movement to the arch-capitalists like Oppenheimer and Suzman and opportunist black middle-class elements like Dr Motlana and Bishop Desmond Tutu.

'Reforming' capitalism and apartheid can only become a question when the tasks of the mass workers' movement are misunderstood.

Self-determination

Nationalism offers no solution on its own. Rather it highlights the necessity to destroy the foundations which obstruct its true mission, i.e. genuine national self-determination. This can only be implemented when the workers have destroyed the apartheid state of the Oppenheimers and have taken over the mines, banks, factories, and farms.

The white worker cannot defend all of these without defending also the domination of the Botha's and Oppenheimers. The task of the black workers' movement is to destroy the ability of the ruling class to use this potential vicious tool of the white worker against the total overthrow of apartheid and capitalism by the mass movement of the black oppressed.

The danger in not answering these questions raises the possibility that the BCM will be bedevilled by the apparent radicalism of black middle class figures. The true interests of the majority of the middle class can

only be served by the leadership of the workers' movement with the aim of socialism.

Just as the BCM will have to clearly resolve its relationship with the workers' movement in order to move forward, so too it will have to resolve its relationship with the ANC. This is because the black working class, demanding the greatest mass unity in the life-or-death struggle against the state, will find no real alternative but to rally their forces together under the banner of the ANC.

In the coming years, the ANC will more and more develop inside South Africa on mass foundations, as the people themselves take up the task of **building and transforming** Congress for the revolution. This process will exert a mighty pressure on all the existing organisations, local and national, to draw towards the ANC.

The recognition of this likelihood has already raised sharply the question of the ANC in meetings and conferences of the BCM. Certain of



the Black Consciousness leadership in exile, including some of the founders of the movement, have hurriedly gone over to the ANC—but merely seeking bureaucratic positions for themselves and without conducting any principled struggle for revolutionary policies.

Rejected

An opportunist approach to the question of the ANC is firmly rejected by most of the BCM youth. Where does the answer for them lie?

It cannot lie in keeping their backs turned to the ANC—at least not the ANC as it will grow on the basis of the working class movement in the factories and townships. **The answer lies in boldly taking up the task of building the ANC on genuine mass foundations, and of undertaking a concerted struggle in the ranks of the ANC for the Marxist programme that alone can lead the movement to victory.**

Only in this way can the militant traditions of the BCM, maintained in the fighting spirit of the youth, be brought to full power in the mass movement.

Only in this way can wrong policies of the ANC leadership be successfully combatted.

Playing around with ideas of 'uniting' various organisations at the top in so-called 'Patriotic United Fronts' is no answer to the desire of the masses for **genuine unity in action**. This unity will only arise on the basis of the organisation of the workers and youth around a programme to overthrow every facet of national oppression and capitalist exploitation—a socialist programme that will leave no possibility for the desire for genuine self-determination to be used as a vehicle that will drive across the sacrifices of the masses, only to unite a new group of bosses, black as well as white.

All energies must be bound together for this future transformation. All else will be mere signposts to failure, frustration, and eventual demoralisation.

Forward to mass armed insurrection as the fruit of mass unity under workers' leadership!

Build the ANC as a mass organisation with a socialist programme!

Counter-poison for Apartheid propaganda

Dear Comrades,

Perhaps you know that apartheid gets important support from the right in Belgium. Not only the openly fascist groups, but also leading members of all bourgeois parties support the South African system. From time to time members of Parliament go on expensive visits to South Africa (all free). When they come back they tell the bourgeois press what a paradise South Africa is.

Last year in Ostende, a fascist organisation called 'The Friends of South Africa' was accepted into the Cultural Council. All the right-wing groups, as well as the Communist Party (!), voted in favour of accepting them as a member. The CP argued that, as democrats, we should support the freedom of speech of everybody. Yet it is exactly these fascists who attack anti-apartheid activities and fight for the destruction of the labour movement as a whole.

It's clear that a lot of young people here are looking for counter-poison to the big stream of propaganda issued by the South African embassy and their Belgian supporters. INQABA will help us a lot here. We wish you all the best for your work—success!

Yours comradely,

Yves Miroir

For VONK, Marxist paper for the Socialist movement in Belgium.



Readers in South Africa who have access to copying facilities, and who can do so without too great a risk, are urged to reproduce this journal and circulate it.



FROM A GHANAIAN COMRADE

"Primarily, and above all, the people must know the truth—they must know who actually wield state power." Lenin on Slogans.

That is why the birth of INQABA as a searchlight and theoretical journal for the socialist revolution in Africa must be welcomed by all socialists throughout the Continent

The impact of its appearance amongst revolutionists in Ghana has demonstrated the thirst of the people for worthy revolutionary journals.

Class antagonism is sharpening in Ghana, due to the inability of regimes past and present to take society forward. The working class is awakening to its historical aspirations, which are now being channelled into numerous struggles against the neo-colonial state and the petty-bourgeois government of the Peoples National Party (PNP).

The Ghanaian working class has gone through a period of painful and sustained struggle which is as old as the country itself. This has been so, due to the different forms of capitalist rule that the people have experienced. Nkrumah's nationalist regime, despite its talk of socialism, was unable to make any concrete change in the position of the working class. The same weakness has been passed on to all the regimes that followed Nkrumah.

Both the right-wing military coup against Nkrumah in 1966 and the 'left' coup of 1972 against Dr Busia's bourgeois conservatism demonstrated the inability of the Ghanaian petty bourgeoisie to overcome the crises in an economy dominated by imperialism, and showed the bankruptcy of capitalism to offer any solutions to the ever-mounting problems confronting the country.

The PNP's budget of 1980-81 clearly confirms the attempt by the Ghanaian exploiting class to complete the damage to the workers and the poor, and dash their aspirations of raising their standards of living which have remained static since 1966.

It has fuelled the already explosive inflation, eroding the real income of low-paid workers while it has maximised the profits of big business. It subsidised the education of the children of the bourgeoisie without concern for the dependants of the working class and the poor.

With such an explosive situation already brewing, the PNP government went on record with sacking 1 000 state employees for striking for better conditions and a living wage.

Nevertheless, the writing is on the wall for the PNP that the might and rapid radicalisation of the Ghanaian working class will stand up against exploitation and repression.

With the possibility of civil disorder looming, the government has had to back down on a proposal to cut the already poor social services and to lay off large numbers of workers in the public sector.

The workers have always demonstrated through strikes their determination to use their increased strength and confidence to overthrow the bankrupt policies of the PNP government and end the capitalist exploitation of their labour.

The Ghanaian working class and peasants are linked in their common struggle and aspirations with the Southern African working class in their determination to end the vicious racist capitalist regime of the South African ruling class. Hence the interest shown in Accra at the appearance of INQABA as a journal fighting for the total liquidation of the evils of capitalism on the African Continent. Revolutionary analysis and perspectives are essential in the *struggle for emancipation of the workers and peasants of the Continent and laying the foundations for a Socialist Africa.*

The religion of profit

When a serpent casts off its old scales, it still remains a deadly reptile.

Suddenly, 'kaffir', 'skollie', and 'coolie' workers have become "Human Beings with Souls". This is what the bourgeois political scoundrel, John Vorster, 'discovered' about the black workers before he was sacked by his capitalist masters from office of both premiership and presidency.

Religion, in general and particularly with its false assumptions of "Souls" locked up in a human body, is the spiritual weapon used by the capitalists against the workpeople. Every day, workmen and workwomen, it is hammered into your heads by the capitalist religious captains that your lot here in this world is irredeemable except in the hereafter world to come. All this kind of talk, workpeople, is capitalist justification for sending you, **prematurely**, to your graves by means of the painful whip of poverty to which you are constantly, in a criminal manner, subjected.

The truth, however, is that all that you have, workpeople, is your

labour-power which you sell to the capitalists. From your labour-power, exploited by the capitalists in factories, mines, farms etc., the capitalists make their riches.

In the process of the exploitation of your labour-power, the capitalists dehumanise you, workpeople. You being dehumanised, it cannot, therefore, be true that you have got "Souls" for you are no human beings, but a class of people so wretched that even your being described as "people", as "human beings", is said only for propaganda purposes.

All that you have is your labour-power upon which the capitalists criminally build their wealth. And more important, but sad, you are the producers of social wealth from which you benefit nothing but misery as it is the rule of the capitalists to pay for your labour-power the lowest wages only to keep your "souls" intact for the next round of the exploitation of your labour-power.

T. Sobhola

Joni Bako-Onipa

Starvation in the midst of Plenty

by Yusuf Fakir

The human race, the proud and daring ruler of nature, has repeatedly launched missions into space. Yet despite all the wonders of science and technology we are unable to satisfy our most basic needs. Why?

At present at least 500 million people are undernourished or actually starving. In a "good year" only ten million starve to death. Latin America alone has sufficient resources to feed double the present population of the world. Yet in Latin America hundreds of millions go hungry, 46% are in extreme poverty and 20% live under starvation conditions. Why?

South Africa is a rich industrial and agricultural country which exports a wide variety of foodstuffs. The rich and their ilk suffer from illnesses caused by over-indulgence, such as coronary thrombosis and obesity, while at the same time millions die from diseases caused by poverty. Hunger is a daily experience.

Why do these horrific tragedies continue?

Because of over population and lack of cultivable land resources—is this true? The reality is that, every year there is enough grain alone produced in the world that could provide every man, woman and child with an ample diet of 3,000 calories a day and sufficient proteins.

In South Africa this year the maize crop is expected to break all previous records. In 1974 we produced 11,1 million tons. This year it is already

13 million tons, expected to go up to 14 million tons. There is going to be a surplus of 7 million tons.

The main reason for starvation in the midst of plenty, is the capitalist system. Having ceased to be a slave of nature, man has become a slave of wage-labour. Yes! it is this rotten, decadent profit system of the bosses, capitalism, that lies at the root of our suffering.

We make it, they take it, use it and when a profit cannot be made, destroy it.

Everything in South Africa, the motorways, homes, factories and machines have been built by the toil of the workers. The workers also produce the food. And yet we stay poor, destitute, hungry and many of us die.

Under the capitalist system, the bosses own the land, factories, banks and the farms, hence production takes place not to satisfy the basic needs of people, but to make profits for the bosses.

It is our labour that creates wealth. The capitalist makes profits out of our labour. We are forced to work for them because they have robbed us of our land and savagely banished us to barren, wasteland



"I do not care about South Africa's poor because they have it easier than in many other countries."—Cilliers, Public Relations Officer for the Farmers' Association of South Africa.

reserves—like in the Msinga district, where Mkonjiswa Ngulungu has been working on a farm and earning five rand for every six months. As Ngulungu said, "We told farmers we could not live on ten rand for the whole year so we were sacked off the farm and many other kraals with us". This is how we have to sell our labour in return for a starvation wage.

The bosses are parasites, they live in luxury out of our hard work. We, on the other hand, out of the starvation wage they pay us, are supposed to feed, clothe and house ourselves and our families. At the same time, the capitalists are constantly increasing the food prices. In 1980 food prices were put up by 30% (meat 53,5%, vegetables 35%, milk 25,9%). In 1981, prices are expected to increase again, meat by a further 28% and maize by 20%. There has been a drop in consumption in basic foods despite growth in population.

Death comes to thousands of black children in South Africa before

the burst of life is experienced. The black infant mortality rate (death under one year old) is more than six times the white rate. Up to the age of five years, for every one white child who dies from disease or accident, 13 black children will die.

The human misery and suffering sweeping the forgotten rural areas is appalling. In some parts of Kwa Zulu, for instance, half the children die before the age of 5 years.

There are almost no jobs available in Bantustan areas, and most blacks have no land on which to grow food.

The land in South Africa is owned by the capitalists who hold it for profit-making.

One worker explains: "without food or money, no medicine or medical service will help. We can't eat medicine. It is taken before and after meals, and without work we are without meals".

Another worker in the Transkei says: "With what shall we feed and educate our children? In many homes there is hardly a cent for house money. People literally beg for food. **Child mortality and deaths are our daily bread**, and these can be directly attributed to starvation".

The viciousness and naked brutality of this demented profit system is brought to unbearable heights in Msinga district. The land is so degraded in many parts that it is beyond saving. It is over-populated, poverty-stricken and depressing.

In the towns where workers have jobs food is available, but because of starvation wages and high food prices, the diet is dangerously unbalanced. Their diet consists of mealie meal, bread, cabbage, morogo (spinach) and tea.

From a recent survey on "White City", Jabavu, the people could not afford basics like milk, eggs, meat or vegetables which they regarded as luxuries. For example, Mrs Alinah

'BOSSES' JUSTICE'

Zwetlethini Buthelezi (40) was jailed for six years for stealing 4 hind quarters of beef. While Mr Johannes Petrus Bekker was acquitted of murdering one of his workers for stealing mealie meal and a hen.

Mogale of "White City", a pensioner of 69 with 15 dependents, has R7,50 a month to feed the family. Her two eldest sons are deaf and are mostly out of work. The family survives by **collecting food out of rubbish bins.**

Mrs B. Morgan, a coloured pensioner interviewed in Brixton, said she drank a lot more water and black coffee to fill the gnawing hole in her stomach. While these appalling miseries continue, a Stellenbosch restauraunt owner spends R2 000 for a case of wine (R233 a bottle!). From our labour, the bosses live in obscene wealth. While subjecting us in a painful condition of poverty.

South Africa's most vital export to Black Africa is food, which African countries are dependent on. International aid experts estimate that 60 million Africans experienced prolonged hunger last year and that 1 million died of starvation.

As one of only 4 countries in the world that produces regular surpluses of maize, Africa's staple diet, South Africa is often the only lifeline. In 1980, Zambia was forced to import 250 000 tons of corn, most of it from South Africa. While Mozambique imported 150 000 tons. An additional 183 000 tons of South Africa's wheat went to four African countries that experienced shortages.

But this is a very unreliable lifeline for our brothers and sisters to the north. Food is exported by South Africa only when it is in the interests of the capitalists to do so. When the capitalists cannot find buyers for food, then it is stored, destroyed or dumped in the sea.

Yes! Fresh and perfectly good food is destroyed when at the same time our brothers and sisters and kids are starving to death. No matter how much food is produced by the workers, because of this criminal profit system of the bosses, the workers receive only the bare

necessities to keep them alive and the unemployed go hungry. **This brutal, insane and barbarous capitalist system must be destroyed!**

Workers are struggling daily to defend their rights. They are fighting back by organising themselves both politically and into trade unions. They demand a living wage and not a starvation wage. Our interests can only be defended through the struggle for mass organisation. Strengthen and fight for the growth of the ANC as an organisation led by the working class.

Only the workers can end hunger, poverty and Apartheid by destroying capitalism and by consciously taking control of production themselves. By reasonable planning of the use of natural resources, planned farming and planned production and trade, enough material wealth will be created to eradicate poverty throughout Southern Africa, remove hard and repititious labour and make the age-old dreams of security for all people come true. Only then will every man, woman and child enjoy the fruits of nature and the fruits of their labour.



This boy is suffering the sickness brought on by malnutrition.

SOUTH AFRICA: INFANT MORTALITY RATE 1980

WHITE	BLACK
22 per 1 000	139 per 1 000

The main causes of black infant deaths are pneumonia and gastroenteritis, aggravated by malnutrition.



"The history of a revolution is for us first of all a history of the forcible entrance of the masses into the realm of rulership over their own destiny."—Trotsky, preface to HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

Russian Revolution 1917-

by M. Zondi
and S. Freedman

The greatest event in history has been the Russian Revolution of 1917. For the first time, the working class triumphed and established a workers' state.

World history was profoundly changed by the victory of the Russian proletariat, which was carried through under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party with Lenin and Trotsky at its head.

For us, this is not just an historical event. To carry forward its struggle, the working class needs constantly to arm itself with an understanding of its own history, its rich experience and its tasks. From a study of the Russian Revolution, workers everywhere in the world today can learn vital lessons.

The events of 1917 have been the subject of many misunderstandings and distortions. There are those who assert, quite falsely, that the Russian Revolution was carried through in 'two stages': a 'democratic revolution' in February, followed by a 'socialist revolution' in October. **In fact, it was only with the taking of power by the working class in October that the democratic demands of the masses could be implemented.**

Those who hold to this false position draw from it the 'lesson' that the present struggle in South Africa is for a purely democratic programme of national liberation, and that the struggle against the capitalist class must be postponed until this first 'stage' has been achieved.

If the Bolsheviks in Russia had taken this position—and indeed there were some Bolshevik leaders who wavered towards it—the result

would have been **no revolution at all**. The events opened up by the workers' movement in February 1917, instead of leading to the insurrection of October, would have been reversed by counter-revolution.

These same dangers loom in South Africa as the consequence of a programme that tries to separate the struggle for national liberation from the struggle against capitalism. For us, this is the fundamental lesson of the events of 1917 in Russia.

Until 1917 Russia was ruled by an absolute monarch, the Tsar, whose empire sprawled over a sixth of the world.

Approximately 80% of the population of 160 million were peasants and landless labourers, eking out a miserable existence under semi-feudal conditions. Over half the population consisted of oppressed nationalities. The cultivators of the land were yoked by a huge burden of debt to the landowners and money-lenders. Millions of them perished in periodic famines. Peasant revolts were drowned in blood.

By the end of the 19th century Russia was undergoing a belated industrial development and entering the capitalist world market. But, unable to compete with the already established imperialist countries, the Russian capitalists (bourgeoisie) remained weak and bound up with the feudal landlords. Industry was heavily financed by capital from Britain and France.

As industry developed, peasants

imperialist powers had broken out in 1914 because of competition for world markets. Russia was involved in the war through the Tsar's alliance with French and British imperialism. Millions of Russian peasant soldiers—half-starved, ill-clothed and often virtually unarmed—were sent to their death in service of the ruling class.

Tensions in society had reached an explosive peak by 1917 and cried out to be resolved.

Dual power

In February 1917 revolution swept onto the streets of Petrograd, the Russian capital, with massive demonstrations. As the situation grew out of control of the weakened and rotten regime, the Tsar was forced to abdicate.

Russia was swept into turmoil. Workers everywhere came out on strike. The peasantry began seizing

Government', consisting of liberal capitalists and reformist workers' leaders, was unable to gain control over a society seething with revolution.

Initially the reformist leaders, in particular the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, had a majority in the soviets. This was a result of the explosive tempo of events. The revolutionary cadre in the workers' movement was swamped by the tidal wave of struggle. Large numbers of previously inactive, unorganised and inexperienced workers were being pushed into action by the pressures of the revolution. They had not yet learned to distinguish between the different tendencies and leaders claiming to stand for democracy, and were willing at first to give the reformists a chance.

But the reformists, instead of taking power, propped up the Provisional Government, insisting that the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism was not yet on the agenda. Democracy, they claimed,

All power to the workers !

moved to the cities in increasing numbers. By 1917 there were 10 million urban workers, mostly living and working under appalling conditions. With their families, they totalled 25 million people.

The revolutionary core of this young proletariat consisted of four million workers in industry and transport. Due to the late development of industry in Russia, the latest forms of large-scale production could be imported from the advanced capitalist countries. Over 41% of Russia's industrial working class were employed in big enterprises with over 1 000 workers, compared with 18% in the USA.

Russia's primitive system of peasant agriculture thus came to co-exist with rapidly developing modern industry. The dictatorial feudal monarchy became all the more unbearable to the masses under the new conditions of capitalist exploitation and the added burdens of the First World War.

The war among the major

land and national minorities rose up. **The crucial question was now what power would arise to take the place of the disintegrating Tsarist state.**

For some months this question remained unresolved. In fact, a situation of **dual power** had arisen between the bourgeoisie and the organised workers.

On the one hand the workers, organised through their **soviets** (councils of delegates elected directly by the workers in their workplaces and districts) asserted themselves as a powerful collective force.

Soldiers and sailors began electing their delegates and creating soviets too. The soviet of Petrograd more and more assumed the role of a municipal and even national government.

On the other hand the 'Provisional

could be established on a capitalist basis.

This policy was bankrupt. The Russian bourgeoisie was too weak to take the country forward. Tied up with the landlords and with Western imperialism, it was incapable of meeting the basic demands of the masses which were summarised in a simple slogan of the Bolsheviks: "Bread, Peace and Land!"

For this reason there could be no 'stabilisation of democracy' in Russia under capitalist rule, and no self-determination for the oppressed minorities. Thus the Provisional Government failed to take a single step towards ending the war or solving any of the fundamental problems of society.

The Bolshevik Party had originated, like the Mensheviks, as a

tendency in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, and emerged as a separate party only in 1912. Throughout their existence the Bolsheviks had explained the need for the working class to break completely with the bourgeoisie, even its liberal wing.

Now they were proved to be correct. The vacillation of Kerensky's Provisional Government only enabled the reaction to regroup. In August the right-wing leaders made their bid to crush the revolution by organising an army under General Kornilov to march on Petrograd.

The Provisional Government was too weak and divided to put up effective resistance. The Bolsheviks took the lead in organising a mass united front against Kornilov.

Appealing in a comradely way to the soldiers in Kornilov's army, the Bolshevik activists won over large numbers to the side of the revolution. Kornilov's army fell apart with hardly a shot being fired.

Thus the Bolsheviks demonstrated that in a critical situation the masses—even soldiers—can be won away from reactionary leaders by a bold revolutionary programme.

In practice the Bolshevik policies exposed the unreliability of the reformist leaders who, compromising with the liberal capitalists to 'stabilise democracy', in fact opened the door to counter-revolution.

Through these experiences the workers increasingly learned that there was no 'easier' way to solve their problems than to organise to take power. The Bolshevik slogan, "All power to the soviets", summed up the lesson that only workers' rule could clear the path to real democracy and material advance. During September and October, growing numbers rallied to the Bolsheviks, giving them a majority in the crucial soviets of Petrograd and Moscow.

On 25-26 October the revolutionary workers and soldiers overthrew the Provisional Government in a swift armed insurrection led by the Bolsheviks. Power was placed in the hands of the soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies.

The new soviet government immediately published a proclamation on the land question, calling on the local peasants' soviets to seize the land from the big landowners and

share it among the peasants. It also opened talks with German imperialism to end Russia's part in the war.

The right of national minorities to self-determination was immediately recognised by the proletarian government. The big factories and banks were soon nationalised and the foundations of a planned economy were laid.

Thus, through the victory of the workers' revolution, Russia emerged from the dark age of Tsarism into the modern world.

The first and most important lesson to be drawn from the Russian Revolution is that the problems of the working class and society cannot be solved as long as the workers do

One of Lenin's greatest contributions was to explain the crucial importance of building a party of revolutionary cadres, arising out of the struggle itself, as a necessary instrument for the workers to take power. From long before 1917 he devoted his energies to this work.

Above all Lenin emphasised the independent programme of the working class—a programme for unifying the workers into a mighty force around which all the oppressed layers of Russian society could rally.

Bolshevik Party

The revolution confirmed the



Kerensky's police shoot down demonstrating workers in the streets of Petrograd in July 1917. This is what the Mensheviks called the 'democratic stage' of the revolution!

not take power.

The Russian Revolution was carried through only because the workers came to a clear **collective** understanding of the cause of their problems, and how to solve them.

Leadership

This understanding did not develop spontaneously. The Russian Revolution—and the whole history of the working class—shows that the workers cannot conquer without the development of their own organised revolutionary cadre, digesting the lessons of experience, identifying the tasks of the struggle, drawing together and guiding the class as a whole towards the achievement of those tasks.

correctness of this approach. But, even more, it showed that **the cadre itself needs a far-sighted and resolute leadership** which understands the laws and methods of revolution.

Immediately after February, not only the Mensheviks and SR's, but some Bolshevik leaders too, failed to understand the nature of the revolution that was taking place. These Bolsheviks (in the absence of Lenin and Trotsky who were detained in exile) adopted the Menshevik position that the 'democratic revolution' had succeeded. Up to April the Bolshevik leadership in the country—including Stalin, Molotov and Kamenev—gave critical support to the capitalist government. Their policy was merely to push the capitalists as much to the 'left' as possible.

When Lenin returned from exile in April, he immediately began waging a battle in the party against the position the internal leadership had adopted. Trotsky's return in May gave Lenin a staunch ally.

Unquestionably the intervention of Lenin and Trotsky saved the revolution. They explained that the task for the Bolshevik Party was to prepare without delay for completing the revolution by organising the workers to take power.

In fact, already in February the **objective** conditions had existed for the working class to take power. Between February and October the **subjective** factor—the collective understanding, revolutionary will and leadership of the workers—developed by leaps and bounds. As Lenin said, "The revolution teaches an entire people very rich and valuable lessons in a short space of time".

The Bolshevik Party itself, to guide the movement forward, had to digest these lessons rapidly. Lenin and Trotsky, relying directly on the revolutionary workers, struggled fiercely against sections of the party cadre which lagged in consciousness behind the masses.

The most critical of these struggles took place during September and October, to convince the Party that the time had come to take power. The Bolsheviks urgently needed to seize the opportunity to organise the insurrection. Such chances are rarely repeated in the course of a revolution.

The workers' movement, even in a revolutionary period, does not advance in a straight line; it goes through advances and retreats. But, to ensure victory, it must not allow a decisive turning of the tide against it. Changes of gear are necessary. But if the movement **stalls**, this will lead to demoralisation. The capitalist class will recover and seize the opportunity to inflict bloody defeats, smashing the workers' movement in counter-revolution.

The Russian Revolution was victorious because, within the objective revolutionary situation, a Marxist leadership was able to win the support of the revolutionary cadre, rally the masses, and at the decisive moment lead the insurrection which overthrew the capitalist state.

The question of state power is vital



Mass meeting addressed by Trotsky, Red Square, Moscow, 1920.

for the workers. In the final analysis, every state consists of "armed bodies of men" (Engels). The Tsarist state in Russia was bristling with guns. How could the working class, who in general begin their struggles unarmed and badly organised, succeed in overcoming this powerful repressive force?

This question cannot be answered in purely military terms. Fundamentally the answer is **political**. The crux of the matter is that every state relies on workers or peasants in uniform to carry out its will. The working class can defeat the capitalist state only by fighting on the basis of a programme for the revolutionary transformation of society that can appeal also to the ordinary soldiers, officials and even policemen, to win them away from their reactionary leaders, or at least divide and neutralise them.

Unity

In Russia the armed forces had been drawn overwhelmingly from the peasantry. By winning the peasantry, the working class would at the same time win the armed forces to the revolution.

The only basis on which this could be achieved was the unification of the working class itself. A united working class, due to its social power and its need to change society, acts as a powerful pole of attraction for all other oppressed classes.

It was only as the Bolsheviks succeeded in uniting the mass of the workers behind them that the peasantry could come to see them as a serious force, determined to seize power and implement policies in the interests of workers and peasants alike.

This was the basis, too, of the Bolsheviks' appeal to the army. The soldiers and sailors had suffered terribly in the war, and wanted an end to it. Between February and October it became ever clearer to them that none of the parties, except the Bolsheviks, were willing to pull Russia out of the war.

The Bolsheviks gained the support of the soldiers and sailors as they saw the need to unite behind the workers. Whole regiments deserted from the front and spread the ideas of the revolution over the length and breadth of Russia. Garrisons in the cities, infected by the workers' revolutionary ideas, were ordered to the front in an effort to isolate them—but in turn only carried the message of the revolution to yet more layers of the army.

Thus the overthrow of the Provisional Government was nearly bloodless. There was no way in which the capitalist government could fight against the revolution—nobody followed their orders any more.

By immediately ending the war and redistributing the land, the Bolsheviks gained the loyalty of the mass of the peasantry, in uniform

and out. Millions of peasants, together with the workers, were prepared to defend the proletarian government gun in hand.

The state

Having taken power, how could the working class secure its rule to carry through the transformation of society?

Marx explained that the state is an organ of class rule, serving for the oppression of one class by another. The capitalist state machinery—its parliament, courts, prisons, officials, police and armed forces—exist only to defend capitalism. It must be completely dismantled or “smashed”, to use Marx’s term.

After the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, when the workers for a few months controlled Paris, Marx and Engels even took the trouble of correcting the **Communist Manifesto**. They added: “One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that ‘the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery, and wield it for its own purposes’.”

The crucial lesson of the Commune of Paris—which some leaders in the workers’ movement unfortunately have not learned to this day—is that **the workers must create their own state and establish their own democracy** in order to carry through the tasks of the revolution.

Lenin, in **State and Revolution**, drew conclusions from the experience of the Commune as to the form that the workers’ state should take. **There should be no standing army but an armed people. All state officials should be democratically elected, and subject to immediate recall if not performing their duties as expected. Officials should receive no higher wages than that of a skilled worker. There should be no permanent officials of the state; every worker should take turns in administrative duties.**

Degeneration

The revolutionary Russian workers’ state was built on the principles of workers’ democracy sketched out by Lenin. But, due to its economic



Stalin and US president Roosevelt at Yalta, 1945. There they agreed to divide the world into ‘spheres of influence’ between them.

backwardness and the destruction caused by the war, it experienced tremendous problems.

The consolidation of the workers’ state on these democratic lines depended completely on the success of the workers’ revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. This alone could have given it access to the political, material and technical resources that were needed for the construction of socialism.

However, in the revolutionary wave that shook the whole capitalist world following the October Revolution, the workers gained no further victories. With inexperienced and inadequate leadership, the working class was defeated in Germany in 1918-1919 and again in 1923. The Hungarian Soviet Republic survived only four months in 1919. Also in Italy the revolution was defeated.

Thus the Russian Revolution remained isolated, without the support that the workers of the more advanced countries would have been able to offer.

Instead, the new workers’ state was soon in the throes of famine, and civil war was unleashed as the former capitalists and landowners, with the support of imperialism, tried to re-establish their rule.

The workers and peasants in the Red Army led by Trotsky defended their revolution heroically against 21 invading armies on no fewer than 14 fronts. By 1921, the counter-revolution had been completely crushed.

But many of the most class-conscious young workers had been the first to offer their lives in the war against reaction. A whole generation of revolutionary youth—the generation of October—was almost com-

pletely wiped out.

Exhausted, decimated and increasingly isolated, the Russian working class was unable to maintain control of society. The new generation of workers, drawn fresh from the peasantry, with little organisational or political experience, was compelled to work long, hard hours in order to get the shattered economy going once again. The soviets ceased to function.

With skilled manpower desperately needed, the small layer of technicians and administrators still remaining in Russia was placed in a uniquely powerful position.

Confident of the power of the organised workers to prevent abuse, Lenin had accepted the need to concede temporary economic privileges to skilled personnel in order to induce them to remain. Now, however, these same technicians and administrators (many of them drawn from the old Tsarist bureaucracy) were able to exploit the exhaustion of the working class and entrench their position of privilege.

On this basis, the political power of the working class over the state was increasingly usurped by a layer of professional bureaucrats which gradually consolidated its position throughout the 1920s.

Petty-bourgeois intellectuals and ex-Mensheviks, who had once despised the Bolshevik Party (renamed the Communist Party in 1919), now flocked to join it as the party in government, and increasingly built up their influence. A process of degeneration and bureaucratisation within the party as well as the state had set in, with the working class unable to prevent it.

The caste of bureaucrats that was developing in Russia held tremendous influence even before Lenin's death in 1924. Lenin's last great political struggle, together with Trotsky, was against the bureaucratisation of the state and the party.

In particular Lenin warned against the power that Stalin, now General Secretary of the party, was gathering around himself. Stalin, unconsciously at first, was developing into the leading spokesman of the new bureaucracy.

After Lenin's death the opposition within the party against the bureaucracy came to be led by Trotsky. In Russia and internationally, Trotsky and his supporters (organised as the Left Opposition) struggled for policies which could correct the deformations that had developed and restore the direct rule of the working class.

But as the bureaucracy consolidated its position, the Bolshevik Left

Opposition was isolated, persecuted and eventually annihilated by Stalin. Trotsky himself, deported from the Soviet Union in 1929, was murdered by Stalin's agents in 1940.

Comintern

The degeneration of the Communist Party and the Russian Revolution was on the one hand a result of the defeat of the revolution in Western Europe. But, in turn, it became a decisive factor in causing further and worse defeats.

The October Revolution had served as a rallying point for the workers' movement throughout the world. In 1919, the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky had played a leading role in establishing the Third (Communist) International to take the place of the reformist Second International and serve as the brain of the world revolutionary prole-

ariat.

But revolutions were defeated and the revolutionary tide ebbed. As the Russian bureaucracy became consolidated in power, its interests increasingly determined the policies of the Comintern.

State ownership of industry and economic planning, made possible by the workers' victory, laid the basis for the industrialisation of the Soviet Union and its eventual emergence as a major power. The bureaucracy was progressive in that it was forced to defend state ownership and planning which was indispensable to its own existence. But in every other respect its narrow nationalist interests—expressed in Stalin's claim that it was possible to build "socialism in one country"—had nothing in common with the programme of international revolution upheld by Marxism.

Thus the international struggle of the working class to replace capita-

Racism In France

On Christmas Eve 1980, 50 people led by the mayor of Vitry attacked a hostel of 300 black immigrant workers from Mali in West Africa. They cut off phones, electricity, gas and central heating, and damaged the hostel with a bulldozer.

Were they a gang of right-wing racists? No. **These monstrous actions were carried out by members of the French Communist Party led by a Communist mayor.**

Georges Marchais, leader of the French CP and presidential candidate, said: "I support the mayor and his actions totally and without reservation."

Since then 'Communist' mayors and councils in other parts of France have engaged in similar attacks on black workers. In the Bagnolet district of Paris 60 immigrant workers were expelled from boarding houses; in Ivry-sur-Seine the number of immigrant children in holiday homes has been limited; in Rennes the planned building of an Islamic cultural centre has been stopped; the Mayor of Amiens wants to "thin out the town's immigrants"; the CP Mayor of Lyon refused to accept any

new immigrant families into the city.

The CP calls for an immediate stop to immigration—which, they claim, causes unemployment. The CP leadership also blames immigrant workers for crime, and calls them a "burden" on education and welfare facilities.

In reality it is the crisis of capitalism which brings about mass unemployment and depressed social conditions.

Instead of fighting for socialist policies the CP leaders hope to protect the French workers within the framework of French capitalism. Abandoning the most basic principles of internationalism and workers' unity, they have ended up with racist policies of division no different from those of the capitalist parties.

By their present amazing actions the French CP leaders hope to catch the vote of the 'poor whites' of France. They are appealing to the racist prejudices of the most backward sections of workers. Tragically, no lead is given to the advanced workers who see the need for united struggle against the bosses and the capitalist government of

Giscard d'Estaing.

Trotsky predicted in 1925 that the abandonment of the policies of revolutionary internationalism by the parties of the Communist International under Stalinist leadership would lead inevitably to their degeneration along nationalist and reformist lines. This prediction has once again been borne out in the most unmistakable way by these policies and actions of the Communist Party of France.

The mass of French workers who support the CP will not be satisfied with the bankrupt policies of the present leadership. They will struggle increasingly to find the road to the genuine traditions of communism—to the programme of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky for the overthrow of capitalism, on which their party was originally founded.

South African workers will demand of the leaders of the SA Communist Party that they unequivocally oppose the shocking racist position of the leadership of their French sister party, and support the fight of the French workers—black as well as white—for a socialist way forward.

lism with workers' democracy—the only basis for the construction of socialism—was increasingly abandoned by the Comintern.

Veering between suicidal adventurism and complete opportunism, the Comintern over this period degenerated entirely into an instrument of foreign policy of the Russian bureaucracy. In China (1925-27), Germany (1931-33), Spain (1936-39) and elsewhere, the bankrupt policies of the Comintern led to catastrophic defeats for the workers' movement.

'Peaceful coexistence' with capitalism—the search for agreements and compromises with Western imperialism—became the only basis on which the bureaucracy was able to entrench its own position while at the same time developing the Soviet economy.

Finally, in 1943, Stalin disbanded the already defunct Comintern as a friendly gesture towards his 'allies', Roosevelt and Churchill, prior to their meeting at Yalta to divide the world into 'spheres of influence' between them.

Despite its bureaucratic degeneration, tremendous gains have been made in the Soviet Union due to the

smashing of capitalism and landlordism and the introduction of a plan of production. Industrial output increased over 52 times from 1913 (the highest point of the economy under Tsarism) to 1963, compared with less than six times in the USA.

But no trace remains of the workers' democracy the Bolsheviks had fought for. The working class has no say in the running of the state. Stalin killed literally millions of workers and peasants, including most of the Bolsheviks, in bloody purges to preserve the position of the bureaucracy and himself as leader. Trade unions have been turned into organs of the state with the task of controlling the workers rather than defending their interests.

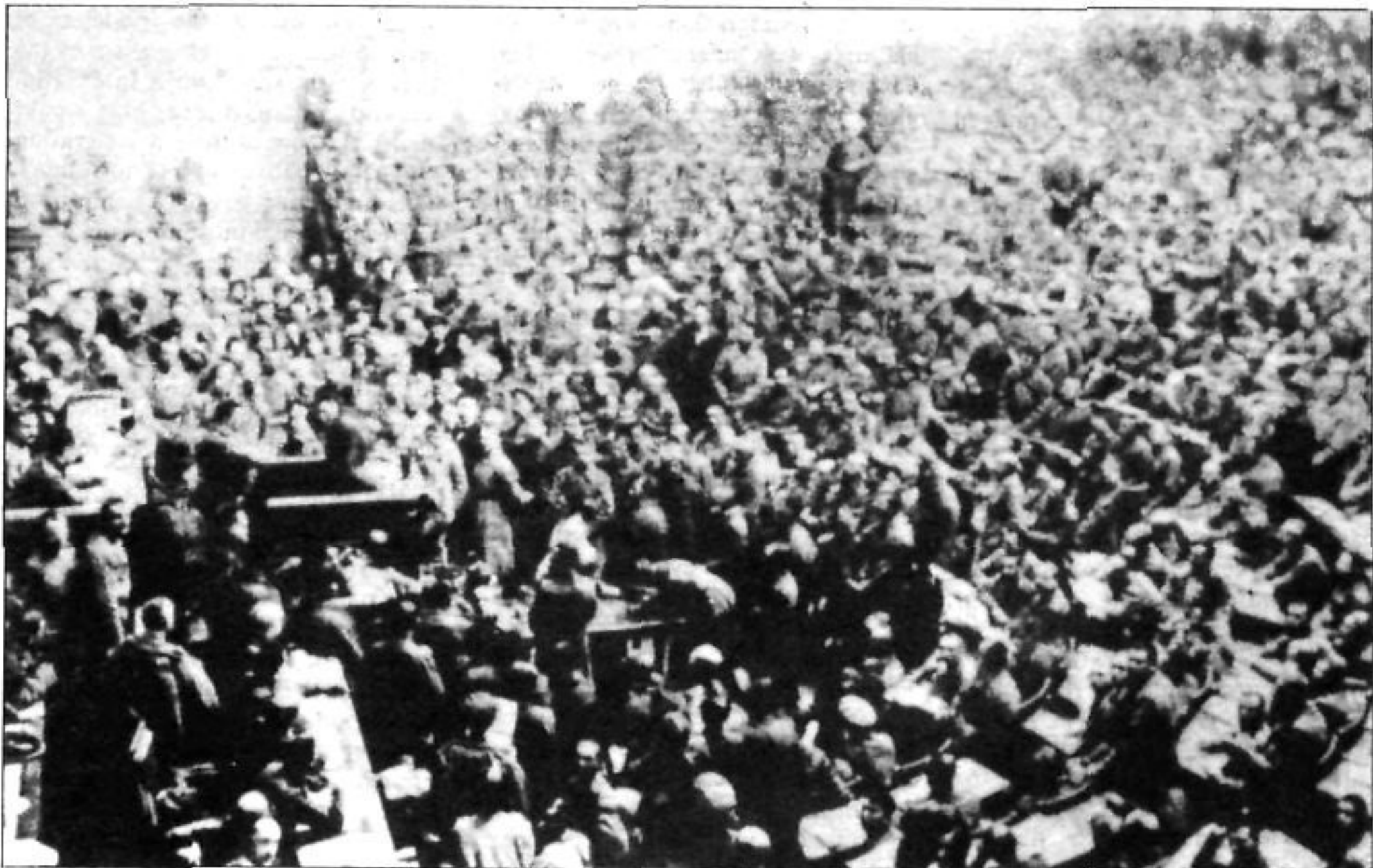
Yet today the period of rapid growth of the Soviet economy has ended. Over the last years, growth rates have fallen below those of some capitalist countries. In the Five Year Plan adopted in 1981 an average growth rate of only 4% per year is expected (compared with 6% or 7% in the early 1970s)—and it is doubtful whether even this figure will be achieved. Living standards of the workers are stagnating.

The parasitic bureaucracy was always a relative fetter on the development of production. Now it has become an **absolute** fetter. Only collective control and management by the working class as a whole can ensure that the economy and society are run efficiently and in accordance with the needs of the people. **Only the working class, by overthrowing the bureaucracy in a political revolution, can re-establish workers' democracy on the basis of the planned economy and develop society to socialism.**

The heroic struggles for workers' democracy by the Hungarian proletariat in 1956, and the renewed movement of the Polish workers since July 1980, point the way that the Russian working class—developed today into the most powerful working class in the world—will be compelled to follow.

Workers' leadership

The lessons of the Russian Revolution can serve as a guide to the struggle of the South African workers today. They show, above all, that the workers must take the lead



The Petrograd Soviet in 1917. As instruments of workers' democracy the soviets were completely eliminated in the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution. In Russia, as in Hungary in 1956, the workers will re-establish soviet power in carrying through the political revolution against the bureaucracy.

in the revolution and smash capitalism. They must build an entirely new state—a **workers' state**—that can abolish the evils of the old society and lay the foundations of socialism.

At the same time the working class must fight to extend its struggle internationally, gain the support of their brothers and sisters in the advanced industrial countries, and place the revolution on unshakeable foundations.

The South African workers will turn in growing numbers to the ANC as the only organisation offering them the perspective of uniting the mass movement.

As in Russia in 1917, however, the revolution cannot achieve its goals without a **correct** programme, rooted in the real needs of the masses of society. The most politically conscious workers and youth will see the need to build the ANC on the basis of a programme for the **simultaneous** destruction of national oppression and capitalism.

As in the Russian revolutionary movement, the struggle for a correct programme will need to be conscientiously pursued in the ANC. Dangerous illusions in the possibility of achieving democracy on a capitalist basis will need to be completely eradicated.

Even more unmistakably than in Russia in 1917, the revolutionary organisation of the working class is the key to the victory of all the oppressed.

The South African working class today is far more powerful in relation to the rest of society than the Russian proletariat of 1917, and indeed forms the large majority of the population. At the same time, we face a far stronger, more experienced and better organised capitalist class and state. It has been confronted by the workers many times, and has learned from conflicts around the world. It is planning and manoeuvring against the workers every day.

It is therefore all the more essential that the workers who are the most conscious politically should organise and prepare to give leadership to the working class as a whole. Only the development of a cadre of this kind will be able to create the collective brain of the working class, out-planning and out-manoeuvering the bosses, and strengthening the unity of all layers of the working class in preparation for the taking of power.

Nothing but the full-scale mobilisation of the armed workers, on the basis of a clear understanding of their class interests and the tasks of

the revolution, can destroy the capitalist monster

The Russian Revolution provides an object lesson in how a Marxist leadership can build unity in action among the broadest masses of the workers, and unite other classes behind them, by organising struggle on a programme for the overthrow of capitalism that provides a solution to the problems of all workers and the masses as a whole.

The creation of a revolutionary state by the workers of South Africa will free the workers and peasants of the whole of Southern Africa from the grip of capitalism. The masses in these countries will join the South African workers in this task, just as the oppressed nationalities of the Russian empire had joined the Russian working class.

Southern Africa under the rule of its workers will be a mighty step on the road to a socialist Africa, and a socialist world.

In this process of world revolution, the basic perspectives of the Russian Revolution and its leaders, Lenin and Trotsky, will be carried to fruition. South African workers in the coming period can build on the foundations laid by the Russian workers in October 1917 and help to extend that achievement world-wide.

INQABA YA BASEBENZI is being published because of the need for a conscious socialist voice in the movement of the workers and youth. Immense tasks face us, both in the trade unions and in the ANC.

Today it is vital to link together those in the movement who, on the basis of experience and events, can explain to their fellow-strugglers the need for socialist policies. INQABA will help to assemble the facts and present the arguments in support of this task.

The bosses control the press, the radio and the television. Daily they use it to defend their class interests against the masses, making propaganda and suppressing the truth.

Our class needs its own papers in which all the problems of our life are honestly discussed—industrial disputes, migrant labour and the pass laws, unemployment, education, housing and transport, police terrorism, the manoeuvres of the regime. We need our own publications where we can argue for the programme, strategy and tactics needed to overthrow the enemy.

Make INQABA your own journal. Discuss it with your comrades. Use it to express your own experiences, agreements and disagreements. Use it to expose the things the bosses and the regime keep quiet about.

Write about the daily struggles of life in the townships and workplaces. Write about national and international issues. Send articles, letters, photographs, cartoons, reviews—whatever you want to bring to the attention of your comrades in the struggle all over the country.

Those who have no safer way of contacting INQABA or of passing material on to us, can use the following postal address: BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX.

CONTENTS

Editorial	page 2
White election	page 6
Trade unions	page 10
William Fano Khanyile	page 13
USA	page 14
May Day	page 18
Namibia	page 20
Zimbabwe	page 24
Organise the unemployed	page 28
Black youth	page 31
BCM	page 33
Starvation	page 38
Russian Revolution	page 40

For security reasons, fictitious names have been used by writers of articles in this issue of INQABA YA BASEBENZI. In every case, however, care has been taken not to give a misleading impression of the background and experience of the comrade concerned.