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● **Marxism in Africa**
by Walter Rodney

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- **International of Crime and
Terror Invades Angola**

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In the political doldrums of the sixties, black university students searched for ways to revive the legacy of banned liberation movements. They questioned their own participation in a liberal and predominantly white student body which confined itself to verbal attacks and symbolic protests against the government. At the end of the decade they gave birth to Black Consciousness which they have since diffused beyond the university campuses. Today Black Consciousness hegemonises the thinking and actions of the oppressed at every level of organisation. Mbulelo Mzamane addressing a BCMA meeting on 12 September 1981 in London to commemorate the 4th anniversary of the murder of Steve Bantu Biko reiterates the fundamental precepts of Black Consciousness and recalls the circumstances under which it emerged.

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Racism perpetuates prejudices of all nature, not least of which is sexism. Lorna De Smidt's amazing article brings out the "sexual hypocrisy and moral aberrations" practised by the White ruling oligarchy in South Africa to preserve "the purity of the Herrenvolk". The article examines White racial attitudes in South Africa against the background of the HOUSEHOLD FERTILITY SURVEY, a stillborn but insidious survey of the sex lives of South African women, undertaken at the express instructions of Dr. Andries Treunicht (nicknamed "Dr. No" for his negative and retrograde mind), Transvaal leader of the Nationalist Party, as Minister of Statistics. "All very well if they cannot base their planning and calculations on existing statistics," says a Black nursing sister. "But the type of questions asked all pointed to something far more sinister." Lorna De Smidt is an exile from South Africa, now resident in London.

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In a speech delivered at a conference on "U.S. Policy Toward South Africa: A National Agenda", May 27-28, 1981, organized jointly by Northwestern University and the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, Francis A. Kornegay, Jr. examines recent political developments in South Africa, as seen from a Black perspective. Francis Kornegay Jr. is Director of Research at the African Bibliographic Center.

MARXISM IN AFRICA Page 31

Dr. Walter Rodney, celebrated author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, discusses the relevance of Marxism as ideology and methodology: "For us, to make it more precise, Black people, no doubt well-meaning Black people, will ask the question whether an ideology which was historically generated within the culture of western Europe in the 19th century is, today, in the third quarter of the 20th century, still valid for another part of the world, namely Africa, or the Caribbean or Black people in this country; whether it is valid to other societies at other times?" Dr. Rodney's lecture was delivered in March, 1975 to the Seek Program at Queens College in New York.

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The International of Crime and Terror Invades Angola

The military invasion and attack of Angola by the South African Defence Force is not an act unconnected to acts by the Reagan Administration against Libya, Grenada, Cuba and the popular democratic struggles in El Salvador or in Palestine. All these acts are part of a single pattern to re-establish even more firmly the US as the guarantor of world imperialism. These acts are targeted at either the popular democratic and socialist struggles whose victory signal an end to imperialism or the countries which give moral and material support to these struggles. Our response to any act of terror and crime against our struggles and our supporters must be to intensify the struggles against oppression and exploitation.

The South African racist regime's aggression against Angola is an act of proxy carried out on behalf of the Reagan Administration. The invasion and attack of Angola followed fast on the heels of a number of secret exchanges between South Africa and the Reagan Administration during which assurances were made that the US will not, unlike at the time of the last major invasion of Angola in 1975, renege on its support for South Africa. In one of these exchanges, according to a verbatim report, the Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker assured the apartheid regime that

the "present Administration would have more backbone in face of pressure than previous one. Our objective is to increase South African Government confidence".

Crocker made clear that "he hadn't come to discuss South Africa's internal affairs". Indeed, why should imperialism be perturbed by "internal affairs" which yield for it super profits as a result of a cheap labour system maintained by oppressive legislation and a white minority dictatorship? For the present, the apartheid economy and military machine, fuelled as they are by imperialist investments are sufficiently strong to be relied upon by the Reagan Administration to maintain oppression and exploitation of the majority, and continue brutally repressing the national liberation struggle.

What Crocker made plain was that he had come down to secure "US interests" in Namibia and Angola. That, of course, is a euphemism for securing US interests in South Africa itself: apartheid, cheap labour and super profits. To secure "US interests" in Angola and Namibia and, though not explicitly stated, in Zimbabwe and Mozambique as well, is to isolate the Azanian struggle, to leave it without the support of revolutionary allies across the borders and so weak as to be easily dealt a death blow by the apartheid military regime appearing to

stand on its own. Attack Angola by ostensibly invading Angola to destroy SWAPO basis is the first step to securing "US interests" in the whole of Southern Africa.

Since its inauguration, the Reagan Administration has demonstrated in both word and deed its determination to restore the US to its pre-Vietnam role as the leader of internationally organised crime and terror against popular liberation movements in every part of the world. The strategy it employs is spelt out by Crocker when "he emphasised US desire to deal with destabilisation threats (to profits? — Editor) world wide by going to their sources, *using means tailored to each source and region involved*" (our emphasis).

In practice the devolution of the strategy is as follows. In Libya the US intervenes directly by provocatively trespassing on Libyan territorial waters and shooting down two Libyan planes. In El Salvador the US intervenes by pumping massive military aid to prop up an unpopular and terrorist dictatorship. In the Caribbean it menacingly deploys its navy to harass Cuba and destabilise Grenada. In the Middle East its interests are secured by Israel which it aids and abets in the suppression of the Palestinian struggle; Egypt and other reactionary regimes hostile to Libya are given military aid. In Southern Africa it gives covert support to South Africa's acts of terror and crime against SWAPO, Namibia and Angola.

The Reagan Administration may protest the presence of Cuban troops in Angola and on that account excuse its support for South Africa's aggression against Angola. The apartheid regime may protest the sanctuary Angola gives to the SWAPO freedom fighters and use that as an excuse to invade Angola — as if its occupation of Namibia is legal. But in either case the excuses are a smokescreen

to hide the real aims of the US-led International of Crime and Terror which, tailored to the region of Southern Africa, are immediately to effect:

- 1) a destabilisation of Angola and the overthrow of the MPLA by UNITA;
- 2) a weakening and electoral defeat of SWAPO in UN supervised elections thus enabling the racist and puppet Turnhalle Alliance to take over government; and as a consequence of the foregoing
- 3) a retardation of the Azanian struggle for national liberation.



The real
'terrorist international'

But in today's world acts of international aggression have a tendency to destabilise the aggressors themselves. America's war of aggression against Vietnam generated a mass protest movement within the US which lobbied powerfully for the end of the war and thereby shook the confidence of a weary Admin-

istration to prosecute the war. The wars of aggression against the peoples of Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Angola led to the emergence of a democratic movement within the Portuguese army itself which finally overthrew the fascist dictatorship in Portugal.

South Africa's white regime, spurred on by "More Backbone" Reagan, has chosen the road trodden by Portugal in Africa and the US in Vietnam. At the end of this road lies certain defeat for the apartheid regime and total victory for the oppressed, exploited people of Southern Africa. However, it is not an end which we must complacently await. Nor is it enough to say to the US and its proxies

Hands off Angola
Hands off Libya
Hands off Grenada
Hands off SWAPO
Hands off El Salvador

Additionally, it is necessary for us to intensify precisely the struggle, the Azanian struggle, which is the ultimate target of the Reagan Administration and the apartheid regime.

In the last decade or more, particularly since the Soweto Uprisings of 1976, our struggle has assumed an unprecedented height in militant resistance by the black working class, students and other sections of the oppressed. Significantly, these struggles are leading more and more people to realise that the struggle cannot be for sops — the vote, anti-apartheid and multiracialism bogusly called "non racial". In place of demands limited to elementary bourgeois democratic rights, a perspective of socialism is now on the agenda.

A struggle for socialism implies an organisation of the working class, that is, the *black* working class who by virtue of their preponderance constitute *the* working class and by virtue of their racial oppression and super exploitation consti-

tute the only working class capable of being mobilised for a democratic and socialist revolution.

With the fantastic growth of the black labour movement in the last few years, the time has never been more propitious for the emergence of socialist demands and a socialist vanguard to influence the course of struggle in the direction of socialism.

But socialism remains at the level of rhetoric and a vanguard is not a vanguard unless we anchor ourselves in the working people and the masses, and unless we play a leading part in the struggles which are now taking place. The time is now for building a socialist vanguard rooted in a mass working class movement.

Only with a vanguard actively soiling its hands in mass struggles on the side of working people can we hope to strike a mortal blow to South Africa as the harbinger and executor of US strategy in the regions of Southern Africa, and put pay to the acts of crime and terror against the people of Angola and Namibia, and, as a People's Government of Azania, join in international anti-imperialist struggle on the side of our brothers and sisters in Angola, Mozambique, Libya, Grenada, Cuba, Nicaragua and in the popular national liberation movements of Namibia and El Salvador.

Steve Biko Memorial Address

MBULELO VIZIKHUNGO MZAMANE

One of the cornerstones on which the Black Consciousness Movement was built is the belief that the cultivation of any 'personality cult', however well intentioned, is always, in the final analysis, detrimental to the principles of self-reliance and self-determination for which this organization stands. That is why in the early days of the movement nobody was ever allowed to hold office for more than one term, as far as this was practical, although office bearers could alternate portfolios. Our stance then was eminently reasonable in the context of student politics and while we could operate from the home-base. In the schools, colleges and universities students come and go. But today circumstances have drastically changed. Black Consciousness has not only gained a firm foothold beyond the institutions of learning at home, but it has also gone beyond the borders of our country. This has necessitated certain organizational and tactical innovations and modifications. But we still stand by our fundamental precepts, which I would like to reiterate.

I am not proposing to cultivate the kind of 'personality cult' we have seen grow around certain figures in our movement —

a phenomenon which may be justifiable in one respect, but can also be damaging to the collectivistic ethic by which our organization operates. But today we have come to pay homage where it is due and to rededicate ourselves, as it were, in the selfless spirit of those who have gone before us. We have come to take stock of



STEVE BIKO

ourselves, to ponder over issues of direction and perspective. We have selected as our point of reference the life and times of Steve Bantu Biko, a man who did as much as anybody to put this movement on its feet and set it along the path it has taken. But as we ponder over Biko's life and work, let us also remember nine of our other foundation members, now languishing and incarcerated on Robben Island, for their role in advancing the Black cause and bringing the day of the Black people's liberation nearer. The comrades I am referring to are: Sathasivan 'Saths' Cooper, Muntu Myeza, Mosiuoa Gerald Lekota, Nchaube Aubrey Mokoape, Nkwenkwe Nkomo, Pandelani Nefolohodwe, Kaborane Sedibe, Strinivasa 'Strini' Moodley and Zithulele Cindi. Alongside all these, let us also remember other early martyrs of our movement: Mapetla Mohapi and Mthuli Shezi and Abraham Onkgopotse Tiro and all those who have laid down their lives that we might live.

We do not believe in glorifying the past *per se* or in wallowing self-indulgently in the past. Our immediate task is in the present and our responsibility is to future generations. But to know where we are going, we must also know where we have come from. And so, with this objective in mind, I would like to recapture in brief the formative years of our movement, so that we may all see what our organization stands for and by what principles we stand or fall.

After the spate of repressive measures introduced by the White minority racist regime of South Africa, following the Sharpeville and Langa massacres of 1960, some student organizations tried to revive the legacy of the liberation movements which had been outlawed. But due to the victimization of people who identified openly with any of the banned organizations, Black student organizations like the African Students' Association (ASA)

and the African Students' Union of South Africa (ASUSA) did not survive for long.

Between 1963 and 1966 many African students began to drift towards NUSAS, the anti-apartheid multiracial National Union of South African Students, and for a brief period after 1967 towards another multiracial organization called the University Christian Movement (UCM). The authorities at the segregated universities for Blacks, with the exception of the Black medical school at Wentworth, refused their students permission to affiliate to NUSAS. And as there are more White university students in South Africa, anyhow — in 1969 the figures were 27000 Whites in the English-speaking universities only as against 3000 Blacks in all the Black universities put together — NUSAS had an overwhelming majority of Whites from the English-speaking universities, where it drew its strength. These White students took it upon themselves to champion the Black cause and were, in turn, seen by many Blacks, in the absence of any authentic Black organization that could articulate their grievances, as important spokesmen for the Black cause. Thus a state of virtual White trusteeship came into being.

However, at the end of the day NUSAS failed dismally to meet the genuine aspirations of the Black students who had been drawn to its ranks. This took some time to register fully in the minds of many people. In April 1964 the President of NUSAS called for support for the underground liberation movement. But when reports of his speech leaked to the South African alarmist press, a conservative backlash ensued and students from the White campuses threatened to disaffiliate from NUSAS. When, in addition, it was revealed at the July 1964 annual conference of NUSAS that several prominent NUSAS leaders were also members of the African Resistance Movement (ARM), an

organization of Whites which had adopted the tactics of sabotage employed by the banned underground movement, ripples of shock emanated from the majority of the White students in NUSAS. The new NUSAS leadership after 1964 steered the movement back to the middle of the road, confining themselves to verbal attacks against the government and to symbolic protests, within the framework of the 'law'. Disgruntled Black students began to look for a new home elsewhere.

In 1967/68 a great deal of soul-searching was taking place among Blacks within NUSAS and the UCM. Prominent from the start among these students were people like Steve Bantu Biko, Vuyelwa Mashalaba, Aubrey Mokoape, Barney Nyameko Pityana, Harry Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu, Hendrick Musi, Petrus Machaka, Manana Kgwane, J. Goolam, Strini Moodley and Henry Isaacs. Black students thus set themselves up as a united Black front to frustrate the government's efforts to separate Black people along ethnic lines, in accordance with the White minority racist regime's 'divide and rule' policy, which is euphemistically called 'Separate Development'.

The July 1967 annual conference of NUSAS at Rhodes University in Grahamstown was the occasion which set Biko and his colleagues along the Black Consciousness path. The University administration at Rhodes prohibited mixed accommodation and eating facilities during the conference. Black student delegates were accommodated at a church building in the Black township of Grahamstown. There was bitter reaction from the Black students, who began to question even more deeply the value of the superficial integration at which NUSAS was playing. Strong doubts were expressed about the sincerity and the integrity of White liberals — Rhodes

University was one of the citadels of White liberalism, alongside other English-speaking institutions — who had set themselves up as spokesmen for Blacks. There was dissatisfaction with the manner in which the NUSAS leadership had easily given in to the challenge at Rhodes, after the usual motions of condemnation against the establishment. The politics of White liberalism was exposed as sterile, bold at the verbal level but impotent to effect meaningful change, which could never come through their ritualistic token protests, within the framework of the 'Constitution'. But even more important to the evolution of Black Consciousness, the aptitude of Whites to define Black experience and grievances and to articulate Black aspirations was seriously questioned. The tactics which had been adopted by White liberals and foisted upon Blacks to gain concessions from the White power structure came under severe critical scrutiny. It was pointed out that these same liberals stood to gain more from slight modifications to the system than from its complete dismantlement; while the Black people would never be satisfied with the re-arrangement of the same old furniture within the same decrepit apartheid structure.

At the July 1968 conferences of NUSAS and the UCM, which were both held within the same vicinity of Johannesburg, Black delegates from the two bodies withdrew to confer among themselves about what to do when the 72 hours during which they were permitted by law to remain in the exclusive White area expired. During the meeting other matters affecting their interests as Black people cropped up. Thus the South African Students Organization (SASO) was conceived.

A Blacks-only meeting was called for December at Biko's old high school in Marianhill and the name SASO was formally adopted. The conference

resolved to break with NUSAS in order to create a situation where Blacks could spell out their problems as Black people and prescribe their own carefully thought-out remedies. An inaugural conference was planned for July 1969 at the University of the North in Turfloop.

The conference at Turfloop decided to drop the term 'Non-White', which was used in all official government communication. They saw the term, in Fanonian terms, as a negation of their being. They were being described as 'non-something', which implied that the standard was something else and they were not that particular standard. "They felt that a positive view of life, which is commensurate with the build-up of one's dignity and confidence, should be contained in a description which you accept, and they sought to replace the term Non-White with the term Black," Steve Biko explained in 1976 at the trial of the 'SASO NINE' (whose names were mentioned earlier).

At the July 1970 General Students Conference at Wentworth, where Biko was then studying, multiracialism in the context of South Africa, where Blacks were doomed to be perpetual junior partners, was found to be untenable. "Blacks are tired of standing at the touchlines to witness a game that they should be playing," Biko had declared in a policy statement issued shortly before the Wentworth conference. "They want to do things for themselves and by themselves." A resolution adopted at the SASO General Students Council in July 1970 at Wentworth affirmed that "the emancipation of Black people in this country depends entirely on the role Black people themselves are prepared to play." (Perhaps today we would delete "entirely" from the resolution and substitute it with "primarily". But the fundamental thrust in our movement remains the same). These then are some

of the basic tenets to which the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA), regarding itself as the external wing of the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO) and its successors, still subscribes. These are some of the pledges we have come here today to remind ourselves of and to rededicate ourselves to.

To complete this brief historical picture: The diffusion of Black Consciousness beyond the university generation took the form of an adult umbrella organization, the Black People's Convention (BPC), whose honorary President Steve Biko was upon his death in September 1977. The BPC was formally launched in Pietermaritzburg in July 1972. Some of the organizations which participated from the start where the Business and Professional Women's Association, the Interdenominational African Ministers' Association (IDAMASA), the Association for Educational and Cultural Advancement (ASSECA), the St. Peter's Seminary Old Boys' Association, the Sales and Allied Workers' Association and older members of SASO. In August 1972 an umbrella Black Allied Workers' Union (BAWU) was launched under the auspices of the BPC to provide the vital link with the workers in industry, commerce and the agricultural sector. The Black Community Programmes also came into being, under the ever watchful eye of Steve Biko and others, to operate as a wing of professional experts. BCP was formed to carry out specific tasks in community development in a spirit of self-reliance. The philosophy behind BCP was that Black people had to be helped by their own kind to diagnose their own problems and to participate in the solution to these problems. Some of the community development projects undertaken were the erection of creches and clinics, the setting up of adult literacy and preventive medicine programmes,

home industries and other economic projects mainly in the impoverished rural areas, and the establishment of leadership and youth programmes — a project which was to have far reaching consequences in 1976.

The spread of Black Consciousness to high schools was greatly facilitated by young teachers like Onkgopotse Tiro and other recent graduates from the Black campuses, where SASO had gained a firm foothold. Some of the most notable political youth organizations to blossom throughout the country from the end of 1972, and the ones which were to produce the organizational impetus behind the Black people's uprising in 1976, were the South African Students Movement (SASM — high schools); and the National Youth Organization, a federation of youth groups in Natal, Transvaal and the Cape. The ever vital link with the workers is in evidence all over the country today, among the trade unions of Black Consciousness persuasion. Although this proliferation of Black Consciousness organizations was banned by the White racist minority regime on 19th October, 1977, barely five weeks after Steve Bantu Biko's death, others have arisen to fill in their place, as they will continue to do until the yoke is broken. That is the legacy we of the BCMA carry abroad.

To cut a very long story short: The SASO Newsletters, which began to appear in August 1970, when Biko was relieved of his duties as President and appointed Chairman of SASO Publications, give a very precise formulation of Black Consciousness. But I shall not go into the details of our political philosophy. We have a collection of Biko's writings, *I Write What I Like*, a title taken from his regular feature column in the SASO Newsletters; we also have issues of our official mouthpiece, *Solidarity*. Those who would acquaint themselves more

intimately with our work and our views are urged to dip their heads into these documents.

Finally, please note that in our struggle for nationhood what is very fundamental to our stand is the belief in ourselves. To us, Black Consciousness means the structuring of an alternative context to apartheid, an alternative that will not merely be an amelioration of our condition. We do not want our chains made more comfortable. We want them off. We tell ourselves all the time that we *must* learn to swim on our own, out of the quagmire of apartheid, or drown. In this context, we need to reiterate what has always been a central plank in our platform, that Black Consciousness is not racism in reverse. It is ridiculous to accuse a movement that draws its membership from the oppressed people of mixed racial origins of practising racism. We have said it before that racism is conceived by those who wield power, for the purpose of subjugating those under them. The power in our land is in the hands of Whites. The polarization, as we see it, is between the oppressed and the oppressor, in whatever guise the latter may appear. Black Consciousness is colour-bound yet it is also colour-blind, that is, our constituency has been determined for us not so much by our Blackness as by the White minority racist regime's discriminatory and exploitative practices. They are refusing to share power in any meaningful way, not us. Our major contention, to return to my analogy, is that it is infinitely better to learn to swim on your own than to rely on self-appointed life-savers, who keep their British and other foreign passports safely tucked away somewhere where no water may ever reach them, and who may be conveniently off-duty or on holiday abroad when you require their assistance.

We do not underestimate the enormity

of the task that lies ahead of us. But we would urge all those who would be our allies to help us help ourselves. And not hijack the revolution from the disadvantaged and oppressed people of Azania, or divert it into politically innocuous channels! And so we would once more, with all due humility and sincerity, urge all those who would support us — and we have no illusions about the fact that we need all your support — to remember that if you bring us fish we

may only eat for one meal, but that if you allow us to learn how to fish by ourselves we shall certainly be able to feed ourselves for the rest of our lives. That, in a nutshell, is Black Consciousness as a political philosophy and as a way of life — the legacy Steve Bantu Biko and all the others whom we remember on this day left us.

12 SEPTEMBER 1981

Foreign Investment and Labour Codes

DIDIMALANG PHAKAMILE PHITLHO

BACKGROUND

It is common knowledge that multinational companies would like to invest in 'stable' countries where their investments are guaranteed. The political situation in South Africa has never been stable and Western governments have ignored the illegitimacy of the South African settler regime. They have gone all out to help the settler regime in South Africa by giving it the necessary technological know-how and finance, to bolster their repression which makes the country safe for investments. Their investments and loans have helped the regime survive 'rough times'. It is also very clear to anybody that their presence in South Africa is precisely because they are able to reap

super profits: the result of racial discrimination and starvation wages Blacks receive.

The Sullivan and European Economic Commission Labour codes were developed during and after the Soweto uprising of 1976. The Sullivan Principles were developed by the Rev. Leon Sullivan, a director of the Ford Foundation. Initially, the uprising was a student action; but later other sectors of the Black Community joined, in significantly the Black workers. The Black workers participated in general sympathy strikes and this made the regime and its backers (multinational corporations, banks and western governments) nervous.

Faced with this situation, the companies recognised that they must justify their presence in South Africa. In this regard the Sullivan Principles had to be rushed and they fell on receptive ears. These companies were however cautious as it took over a year for the Rev. Leon Sullivan to develop the six points on which 12 companies would agree. These points were:

1. Non-segregation of the races in all eating, comfort and work facilities;
2. Equal and fair employment practices for all employees;
3. Equal pay for all employees doing equal or comparable work for the same time period;
4. Initiation and development of training programmes that will prepare, in substantial numbers, Blacks for supervisory, administrative, clerical and technical jobs;
5. Increasing the number of Black and other 'non-whites' in management and supervisory positions;
6. Improving the quality of employees' lives outside the work environment in such areas as housing, transportation, schooling, recreation and health facilities.¹

In March 1977, after the principles had been fully discussed with the South African regime, the code was announced to the U.S. public. The South African regime was sufficiently confident that the Principles posed no danger to them, so they released them in South Africa as well. Those companies in the original group of signatories were American Cyanamid, Burroughs, Caltex, Citicorp, Ford, General Motors, IBM, International Harvester, Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing, Otis Elevator and Union Carbide.² The U.S. government officials, eager to keep U.S. business presence in South Africa, cited the Principles as an appropriate yardstick by which to judge companies' fitness for credit guarantees

or similar assistance. As Richard Moose, Assistant Secretary of State, said at a meeting between the Rev. L. Sullivan and the signatories: "American business will be increasingly called upon to demonstrate that it's an instrument for meaningful change on a significant scale, and that it is not indeed supportive of apartheid by whatever name. There can be no doubt that your effort is producing a tangible result". Other US firms, seeing what was happening, rushed to join the band-wagon. By mid-1979, more than 120 companies had endorsed the Principles. Lately, the Rev. L. Sullivan tells us there are 140 signatories.

Despite the growing acceptance of the Sullivan Principles, no formal mechanism has been set up to check on signatory companies to see if they implement the code and no action is taken to punish companies that violate the Principles. Yet the Rev. L. Sullivan remains highly optimistic, as he has been from the start, regarding the Principles' potential to bring about change. Going far beyond a discussion of what their role can be in the workplace, he has repeatedly expressed the hope that they will become a 'tremendous force for change and a vital factor in ending apartheid in South Africa'.

NO THREAT TO APARTHEID

Far from being a vital factor in ending apartheid, however, the Principles do not challenge the system of apartheid. Instead, they serve merely as a set of guidelines for instituting limited reforms in one area of society: the workplace. The Principles are a true imperialist-bourgeois smokescreen as most cannot be implemented because South Africa has a myriad of laws — job reservation, pass laws, Group Areas Act — which have to be removed before they could be implemented. The entire system of apar-

theid is geared towards making blacks inferiors and slaves in the country of their birth. Blacks cannot vote or take part in decision-making and are considered temporary residents in urban areas; their movement is controlled and they are removed to Bantustans whenever their labour is not needed.

Because of the intrusion of apartheid into every aspect of life, the problems faced by Blacks in the factories cannot be separated from those encountered elsewhere. As Black Allied Workers' Union has pointed out "Black workers' interests extend beyond the factory, they extend to the ghetto where Black workers stay, in hostels under squalid conditions . . . to the stringent, irksome and humiliating application of influx control to the lack of political power and machinery".⁴ Given this situation, reforms such as the formal non-segregation in the factory — the first of the Sullivan principles — becomes meaningless. Blacks are not struggling and dying to reform various aspects of apartheid. They want nothing less than the total eradication of the system and the establishment of a popular, democratic socialist state of Azania. That the Sullivan Principles are not directed at attacking the roots of apartheid is not surprising. Corporations do not exist to change society. The role of multinational corporations in any country is to maximize profits and, historically, South Africa has been a very profitable place for US companies to operate. Until the recession of the mid-70's, US companies in South Africa were earning at least twice as much for every dollar invested — often far more — as they were in the world as a whole. Even now, South Africa compares favourably with the rest of the world in this regard.⁵

The corporations describe their position in South Africa as that of guests, a position they do not wish to jeopardize by antagonising the apartheid fascist

government. A Wall Street Journal editorial of August 18, 1979 summed up the corporate views: "we provide goods and services to our customers and profits to our investors, we obey the local laws and try not to do anything beastly, and politics is the politicians' business". Taking the same view, Kodak said in a recent statement: "Kodak regards its proper role in South Africa, as elsewhere, as a business dedicated to normal commercial transactions within the law of the land, and not as an instrumentality involved in political activity".⁶ It is clear that these views are shared by many other US corporations.

CONTINUED AID TO THE APARTHEID SETTLER REGIME

While the Sullivan Principles provide a convenient cover for the US companies' continued activities in South Africa, they fail to address the issue of the role corporations play in supporting the white settler minority. As Bishop Tutu, General Secretary of the SACC, said in an interview in 1979: "Foreign investors should not kid themselves, their investments maintain the apartheid system". US corporations have helped provide South Africa with much of the capital it needs to strengthen its economy and assure whites a continued high standard of living. Their investments, which stand at about \$1.8 billion, have gone primarily to building up and expanding manufacturing, mining and refining facilities. At the same time, US banks have provided capital in the form of loans, which now stand at \$2 billion, for both government and firms. This money has gone to cover rising oil and arms costs and to finance government self-sufficiency projects, as well as balance of payment problems.

Among the corporations which have provided South Africa with much needed

technology and equipment are many signatories to the Sullivan principles. General Motors, one of the first signatories, continue to supply trucks and other vehicles to the police and army. General Motors' South African subsidiary has continued to supply the regime with the necessary parts from other sources to avoid US Commerce Department regulations.⁸ It has itself acknowledged that commercial vehicles can be effectively used for defence purposes. Secret contingency plans, prepared in 1977 by General Motors officials in South Africa, reveal that the company will co-operate with the regime "in the event of civil unrest".⁹ In fact, the plans reveal that General Motors' entire operation will be taken over by the army in time of emergency.

The Fluor Corporation of California, which endorsed the principles in 1979, has received two contracts totalling more than \$4 billion to expand South Africa's previous small facilities for converting coal into oil.¹⁰ This immense project will help South Africa, which has no oil of its own, to lessen its vulnerability to a possible oil embargo on a world-wide scale. Meanwhile, Mobil and Caltrex, two original signatories, continue to refine and sell close to half of South Africa's oil, some of which was secretly given to the former settler regime of Ian Smith.

Another signatory, Control Data, whose Chairman commented in 1979 that the "little bit" of repression that is added by the computer in South Africa is hardly significant, compared with the good the company feels it is doing. Yet the South African regime could not maintain its current degree of control over Blacks without the vast use of computers for administering pass laws, for maintaining police files and other similar functions. It was revealed in 1979 that Control Data was knowingly supplying certain parts for equipment sold to the

South African police, in violation of US Commerce Department regulations.

Other signatories, Citibank and Chase Manhattan, have made loans to South Africa, either unilaterally or as leader of a group of banks, which total over \$1 billion. One \$110m loan in which both banks participated went directly to the government to assist with balance of payment problems.¹³ Other loans, just as important, have gone to corporations whose stability helps to determine the regime's overall economic wealth.

WORKPLACE REFORMS IMPOSSIBLE

Quite apart from the issue whether they will change apartheid, the Sullivan Principles can do little to change the Black working conditions. The South African regime has made it clear that it has no intention of permitting Blacks to acquire any significant rights to organise themselves. Without these rights, Blacks cannot be content with the small gains which might be possible under the existing labour system. Besides negotiations and operating within the system, other means have to be found. At this moment only mass-based revolutionary armed struggle can remove the fascist settler regime and secure a significant advance for the labour movement.

The Weihahn Commission, set up in 1977 by the South African government to look into labour laws, heard voluntary testimony from some of the signatories to the Sullivan Principles, who said they favoured ending all discrimination in these laws. An amplified version of the Principles was introduced which, to correct a glaring omission in the original six, endorsed the right of Blacks to form Trade Unions.

When the commission issued its report in 1979, however, it did not appear to have been much moved by the

US companies' statements. As with the Sullivan Principles, the Wiehahn report proved to be an exercise in providing cosmetic changes for the benefit of those who wished to pacify their critics. While the commission recommended that those non-registered Black unions, which currently exist, be permitted — indeed forced — to register, thus becoming legal bargaining agents with the right (under limited conditions) to strike, it proposed terms of recognition, such that organised Black labour would not be a force for social change.

The potentially most damaging of these terms is that no union will be allowed to have within its ranks any worker classified by the government as a migrant. Between one third and one half of all Black workers are so classified. Many unregistered Black unions will lose virtually their entire membership as a result of the migrant clause. The uproar which greeted this particular clause forced the regime to compromise on this clause, and to allow migrants to belong to registered unions under special circumstances.

On the question of keeping some jobs only for the whites, job reservation, a practice opposed by the Principles under a pledge of equal and fair treatment, the Wiehahn Commission again offers little hope of change. While proposing that job reservation be phased out in certain areas, it proposes keeping it in others. More importantly, it provides for the continued existence of closed shops, which means that if a white union has organised a given operation, there is no way a Black can work there unless of course he is made a member of the union. The Wiehahn Commission said that there shall be no mixing of races in unions except under special circumstances.

BLACK REACTION TO FOREIGN CODES AND INVESTMENT

Investments and foreign labour codes have never met with approval in Azania, despite claims to the contrary. The viability of the Sullivan Principles was tested in the Black workers' strikes at a Ford plant in Port Elizabeth in late 1979. The treatment these workers got from Ford convinced everyone that there is no difference between South African and US firms. Ford had dismissed about 700 Black workers after a strike and wanted to "re-hire" them after the strike had ended. This meant that they could have lost all their fringe benefits — bonuses, pension, etc.

It was only after immense national pressure that they were taken back, but at the price of having their leader, Thozamile Botha, detained and later banned. It is ironic that the points they listed in their strike manifesto include points in the Sullivan Principles. Their points were:

- (i) No victimisation based on colour or race;
- (ii) Equal pay for equal work;
- (iii) People should not be dismissed without tangible reasons being given.

They also complained about: (1) failure of the management to maintain good relations between Black and White workers, (2) imbalance of training periods between Black and White workers. Black workers claimed that whites become supervisors after training for only 3 months, whereas Blacks have to undergo training for 3 years.¹⁴

In the light of the treatment meted out to Black workers at Ford, the Sullivan Principles came under attack from Blacks in Azania. As Dr. Motlana, Chairman of the Committee of Ten said at a press conference: "The labour dispute involving 700 dismissed workers

has confirmed the scepticism which existed about the effectiveness of the Sullivan Principles in influencing the South African labour situation". Another speaker at the same press conference, Mr Curtis Nkondo, said: "Adherence to the codes by the various firms was just a hollow boast". He said the companies were just like the government which spoke of change without changing. Ford company represents the attitudes of the companies in the country. This problem has to be internationalised by alerting the international Trade Unions." Bishop Tutu added that the dispute on the surface was economic, but in reality it was political.

After his recent visit to South Africa in September 1980, the Rev. L. Sullivan was criticised and accused of bolstering the apartheid fascist regime. On his arrival he said he had come to listen. But spent most of his time in the luxurious Carlton Hotel, with security guards milling around him. The impression he gave later was that he had not anticipated the criticisms that greeted him on his arrival here. He "understands why people are disillusioned with the Principles, but they don't understand that the principles are still evolving." He said he had struggled to get the first 12 companies to sign and now there are 140 signatories. He is tightening the Principles as he goes along, depending on the feedback, he said.

It was a different Rev. Sullivan who gave a lecture at the Wits Great Hall. He was foaming at the mouth, as he denounced apartheid and oppression and threatened a disinvestment campaign against South Africa if change did not come fast enough. His faith in the Principles is unshaken, the only problem being that they are not being implemented. No wonder there were few Blacks to hear him at Wits.

DISINVESTMENT

We now turn to another thorny issue — disinvestment. Though speaking about it means possible imprisonment under the Terrorism Act, many people have bravely advocated it. The BCM's standpoint regarding foreign investment is contained in a resolution adopted at the 1971 General Students' Council of SASO. The essence of the resolution was a complete rejection of foreign investments on the following grounds:

- that foreign investors profit from such exploitation and end up with vested interest in its maintenance;
- they make it possible for South Africa to maintain the racist regime and to spurn world opinion;
- they boost South Africa's international image and make South Africa an ideal land for investment whilst social evils practised by the regime are lost sight of;
- they give South Africa an economic stability that enables her to gain diplomatic and economic acceptance internationally.¹⁶

It is very ironic that IBM, Ford and General Motors are among the companies met by the SASO Executive and showed interest in their stand. It seems to be part of their fun to approve such schemes. In the light of the BCM's stand, 9 BCM militants were indicted on a charge related to the stand. They are serving sentences of up to 6 years on Robben Island.

Despite the risks, many are prepared to give a clear pointed as to where their sentiments lie. SACC secretary-general Bishop Tutu says: "Because of the laws in South Africa, all I can say is that we need economic pressures. People can interpret it the way they wish"¹⁷. AZAPO's George Wauchope goes a bit further: "We are not in favour of foreign investment in South Africa".¹⁸

Disinvestment enjoys the backing of Blacks in the country. This is clear from the vociferous attacks levelled at puppet trade unionist Lucy Mvubelo, after she spoke on SABC-TV recently and once again put her stamp of approval on continued investment here. No wonder she went to the US to speak for continued investment!

Whatever the motives of the Rev. L. Sullivan and his backers, Blacks argue that foreign codes are merely an attempt to reform or modernise the present apartheid system. Blacks think that labour codes cannot effect fundamental changes, and see no moral content in the desire of foreign governments and companies to stay and expand their interests in South Africa. Rather, they argue, foreign investors are here because with its cheap labour South Africa offers the highest return on investments in the world. Further, the West has assured access to important minerals with the present settler regime in power.

Supporters of investments argue that they provide employment. To withdraw would hurt/harm the Blacks first. Secondly, they argue that investments can be a positive force for change — that is, not only will employment filter through to the Black population, but also that social and political improvements will inevitably follow.

On employment, it is significant to note that US firms employ a mere 0.2% of the Black work force. European firms, constituting 65% of foreign investment, employ a slightly higher proportion. Leonard Mosala of the Committee of Ten says: "Blacks have and will always bear the brunt of unemployment in the event of economic recession in our society, until certain fundamental structural disadvantages change. The presence of foreign investments *per se* as nothing to do with this situation beyond the fact that it provides the enabling resources to maintain these

structural disadvantages."¹⁹

Black critics of foreign investments argue that despite the enormous economic growth in S.A. in the last decade, things have got worse and not better for the Blacks. The income gap between whites and Blacks is still considerable and, they say, the projected increase in social and political rights have not materialised. In fact, economic abundance, like the present soaring gold price, has been accompanied by intensification of political repression. While foreign companies do not employ a large proportion of the Black workforce, they perform some of the most vital functions in the apartheid economy.

It is clear that the Sullivan Principles cannot bring political rights to the Blacks. The only way we can regain our fatherland is by launching a mass-based People's War with the Black workers playing a vital role. Rev. Sullivan's principles and the EEC labour code are only delaying the inevitable.

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Black Artists in the Struggle

DIMAKATSO McKAY MOTSHABI

Man is destined to master and understand the universe. This is actually necessary for the continued survival of the human race. Because man is a thinking being, he formulates rules and principles and theories that will harmonise his existence with other natural phenomena and promote peaceful co-existence of individual members of the human race. These rules and principles permeate all the organisational structures of society: education, ethics, religion, economy and so on. The totality of these is what constitutes the culture of a nation. Culture is the form under which everything that is, is expressed. It is the universal will of the people. It animates all the affairs and institutions of the nation.

The general culture of a people is therefore not accidental. It is rationality (human reason) in process. It is from this point, and from the instability of nature itself, that culture is necessarily a dynamic process. Culture advances in direct proportion to the advancement of human thought, of human knowledge, that is, it advances in direct proportion to man's understanding of the universe. Culture is not tradition. This distinction is important to make. Tradition is, or

could be the transmission of opinion or belief or practice from one generation to another, by art, literature, or even orally. This trend of tradition immediately imposes upon itself a very strong limitation. It should not transmit opinions or beliefs or practices that no longer conform to contemporary human rationality. Tradition is the warehouse of different stages of culture. We refer to tradition to check the different stages of culture. What falls under tradition will not necessarily satisfy every generation that is to come. To cite a few examples; it is by tradition that the current regime in South Africa celebrate annually Kruger's day or the day of the republic. However, it will not make any sense for us to transfer this practice into a free Azania. This is where rationality comes in, in the dynamism of culture. Or again, it makes no sense to impose beliefs that have been outdated or are reactionary on every generation that is to follow. To summarise this distinction, tradition is the archive of culture. The refined and updated aspects of tradition constitute the present culture of a people.

These traditional aspects reign for as long as they still make sense to human

thought. They are stored in tradition as soon as new circumstances arise, to be replaced by their modifications or even different forms. The difference lies in what constitutes the past, the present or even the future. To follow tradition uncritically is to live in the world of the past. Culture calls us back to the world of today and its problems.

CULTURE AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR DOMINATION

This is precisely what colonization has denied us, that is, the right to actively participate in the formation of our society. We are required by nature to make our own history, but unfortunately colonization has made history for us.

The agents of colonialism have fed us with myths whose purpose is to maintain the status quo. These myths are



presented to us as reality. We are made to understand self-determination in a purposefully prescribed manner. At present, self-determination is distorted to mean self-determination in the so-called Homelands or Bantustans. According to this

myth, anyone who preaches self-determination should essentially accept the homeland system for this is the only way to realize it. Further, this myth is supported by other similar myths: that the whiteman, by virtue of his colour, is a superior being; that they are a chosen people to bring "civilization" to Africa; that the blackman is naturally inferior and unintelligent, and therefore needs a guide to lead him through history.

These are but some of the myths we have to denounce in order to actively participate in the formation of our own history. Our task is to bring to light the facts that: the theory behind the formation of the homeland system is not self-determination behind if the motive is to create reservoirs of cheap black labour; there is no self-determination implied if the motive is to disrupt the unity of the black people; the black man is not naturally inferior or unable to make his own history. The "inferiority" or "stupidity" of the black man cannot be ascribed to nature. The source of black deprivation is the system itself. Educationally and otherwise, the black man is denied the opportunity to reach levels of maturity. Therefore, the black man is "inferior" and unintelligent in as far as the current social system in South Africa does not avail him the opportunity to develop his capabilities. It is not an attribute of nature but a result of exploitation.

All such myths which support the theory of domination must be denounced.

Once we accept self-determination in its true sense, we cannot at the same time retain such myths. This is so because self-determination is incompatible with domination. Therefore, in order to dominate a people, it is essential to impose upon them a culture that will compel the people to turn a blind eye to domination. It is necessary to impose upon them a culture that will interpret

domination as a necessary pre-condition for their existence. This has been the strategy of colonialism and is still the major strategy of neo-colonialism.

Cultural domination is necessary for the success of economic domination. Once the people are brainwashed they fail to instantly realise the shortcomings of the new economic system imposed upon them.

Capitalist domination is practising exactly this atrocity in South Africa. All the institutions of the South African government have a task in hand: to maintain cultural domination. We are taught to view ourselves through the eyes of the oppressor. Our culture is labelled with such terms as primitive, barbaric, uncivilized etc. Because our culture would not accommodate their sinister mission of domination, we are therefore taught a new culture, one that will accommodate their interests. We are taught a completely alien value system: Individualism, private property, an insatiable desire for wealth, and all other anomalies alien to our culture. This process has reached appalling heights in our society. One need only look at the rise in bourgeois tendencies among the black people. We need only look at the aspirations of the rising black middle class, a class that is nothing but a result of acculturation. That is, a class that has accepted bourgeois values: a class that is actually maintained financially by the oppressive regime; a class that views life according to the prescriptions of the oppressor; a class whose ultimate goal is private property and mass accumulation of personal wealth; a class that emphasises individualism over communalism; a class that sees domination of one class by another as justifiable; a class that talks in terms of reforms and not revolution. This class sees change as the transmission of power to the black man, in order that the black man may

acquire personal wealth in much the same way as the white man does currently. This class does not preach the overthrow of the entire capitalist system. It is therefore a class that will, given the opportunity to rule, still secure the interests of the oppressor.

This matter, is not just a question of being assimilated into white culture. There is absolutely nothing wrong with a progressive white culture. Progressive culture is one that does not deprive man his essence. One that does not aim at justifying exploitation of man by man. One that recognizes and appreciates self-determination. Bourgeois culture, a culture that is a manifestation of capitalism and not just "white" culture, does not have these qualities. The indigenous people of Azania are being gradually swallowed by this bourgeois culture.

CULTURAL ACTION FOR FREEDOM

Having identified the problem we are now a step ahead towards the solution. We have to "return" to our own culture. However, we first have to note that there is a gap of more than three hundred years between our original culture and the culture we are striving for. People usually misinterpret us as saying that we want to go back to the culture of the seventeenth century or so. This is not true since it is immediately contrary to the point we have discussed before, viz. the dynamism of culture. To go back to our roots is not to wind the clock back, for even without western civilisation, our culture today would be far different from primitive culture. "Western" civilisation was probably more of a menace than a blessing. It interrupted the course of our history.

Ever since the inception of "western" culture in our society, our culture has been a culture of resistance. Resistance to cultural domination, resistance as a

means to a particular end.

The task facing all Azanian artists at this juncture is to incorporate the progressive cultural elements of our past into our present culture of resistance. Our role is unique. We have to be armed with a revolutionary ideology in order to make art — in painting, theatre, music, literature and so on — meaningful to the people and express their aspirations.

We should realize that we are a part of the entire forces fighting for liberation. Our task is to aid mass politicisation by giving cultural expression to the people's struggle for liberation.

In particular we must give expression to the struggles of our working class and counter the system to bourgeoisify them. This is necessary for it is from within the

working class that a new culture will emerge. After all in what other way does man realise his human essence except by the human activity of labour and production.

Our tasks are thus:

To denounce myths and values of bourgeois culture;

To arm ourselves with a revolutionary ideology;

To create revolutionary music, theatre, poetry, literature and painting;

This is how we will realise our role in the struggle for liberation and prepare ourselves for the vanguard role we have to play to carry out a complete cultural revolution in a free and socialist Azania.

ARTISTS OF AZANIA, UNITE!!!

to the study of African literature by trying to remedy the situation among those who are later going to teach. Their book attempts to develop poetry appreciation step-by-step. Beginning with a chapter on meaning, tone and intention, the authors build up to a discussion of diction, imagery, form, sound effect and other devices. Each chapter takes into account what the student is supposed to have learnt in the preceding chapters. The book is written in simple language and avoids technicalities and jargon. While it is suitable for use in classroom situations, its emphasis is on eliciting the personal responses of each student, based on a sound grasp of the principles of literary criticism. However, there is a serious imbalance in the selections of poems. Southern Africa is under-represented, by single poems each from Brutus and Serote — there are more poems by T.S. Eliot alone, or Alexander Pope, than by poets from Southern Africa. This imbalance in the authors' selections defeats their objectives, as expressed by Dr. Dwamina, of using familiar material, which the students in Africa can more readily comprehend or identify with.

The limitations of Robson's otherwise important book become evident when they are seen against the background of the declared aims of the Macmillan Commonwealth Writers Series, which are to provide "useful guide and reference books for students of Literature in secondary schools, liberal arts and training colleges and universities". Burton's and Chacksfield's book is clearly suitable for students training to be teachers. But it is difficult to see whose needs Robson's book is designed to satisfy. It is above the level of most students at secondary schools and below that of their teachers; while university students, at least in Africa, are likely to find it somewhat elementary and superficial. Robson should have followed the guidelines laid

down presumably by Prof. A.N. Jeffares, as general editor of the series, when he writes: "Each book will start with a survey chapter, placing the major works and events in the author's life and times." The survey chapters in Robson, "Ngugi and the social and political issues of Kenya" and "The position of Ngugi in the literary development of East Africa", come last and are sketchy. Their place could have been taken by the two-page appendix on "Biographical details". Due to lack of proper organization Robson is frequently tempted to make random skirmishes in the wake of the plays, novels and short stories to explain matters which he should have disposed of in the preliminary chapters. "Any assessment of Ngugi's value and skills as a writer," Robson states, "must take into account the social, political and historical base from which he is working." Yet it is at the level of the social, political and historical context of Ngugi's work that Robson's study is most deficient. Ngugi's writings point outside to a real world. But in Robson's discussion we are told very little about its structure and operations. There is a serious shortage in the book of a reasoned, informed, informative and (in the last resort) "ideological" base to the discussion. Teachers and serious students of African literature will probably find the bibliography and list of references at the end of the book more useful than Robson's treatment of Ngugi's work.

Mbulelo Vizikhungo Mzamane

Book Reviews

S.H. Burton and C.J.H. Chacksfield. *African Poetry in English: An Introduction to Practical Criticism*. London: Macmillan, 1979. 145p.

C.B. Robson. *Ngugi Wa Thiong'o*. London: Macmillan, 1979. 164p.

In his foreword to Burton's and Chacksfield's *African Poetry in English*, Win-grove Dwamina mentions some of the problems in the teaching of poetry in African schools and points out the need for the book in the following terms:

Most people will agree that students in the sixth forms, in advanced teacher training colleges, and in basic studies in universities in

Africa should be encouraged to develop a greater sensitivity to poetry than is the case at the moment. That our schools do not give of their best in this part of the literature course is . . . due to the lack of good textbooks on the subject . . . Some of the current textbooks tend to increase the difficulties by using foreign and incomprehensible material for close study.

The damage among African children studying poetry occurs in the elementary stages of their education, where the teachers are either poorly trained or their orientation is not African. Burton and Chacksfield render an invaluable service

South African Sex Probe

LORNA DE SMIDT

The South African Government seems to have at hand, a limitless supply of laws, each a tentacle of their Apartheid octopus.

Only the outcry which the latest Regulation evoked forced the Government to scrap the whole exercise. Titled with characteristic subtlety, the HOUSEHOLD FERTILITY SURVEY, it was perhaps, the most bizarre to emerge from that unhappy land.

Planned in a shroud of secrecy by the arch-Conservative Dr Andries Treurnicht, Minister of Statistics, the survey compelled all women between the ages of 15-45 to answer a detailed questionnaire about their sex lives. In the face of public outrage, the Government decided to drop the threat of a R200 fine for failure to comply. Realising too late that without the threat of prosecution co-operation could only be optional, the entire survey was scrapped.

The results of the survey, the Government claimed, would have reflected a fairly accurate estimate of the expected increase in population and all future social services could therefore be planned accordingly.

"All very well," said a Black Cape

Town school teacher, "If they cannot base their planning and calculations on existing statistics. But the type of questions asked all pointed to something far more sinister. This was not just an invasion of individual privacy, this survey predicated another attack on the Black population!"

It was this invasion of privacy which most upset the White women of South Africa. All, irrespective of race, were expected to answer a list of questions which included details of marital status, out-of-wedlock relationships, the contraceptive methods used, the age at which the first sex experience first occurred, and even more mind-boggling, how often each woman has sex!

The Government, with shameless mendacity, expected South African women to believe that the survey was all part of an International statistics gathering exercise which left the women both disbelieving and unimpressed.

"We might be living in a laager down here but we are not that damned cut off from the rest of the world not to have heard of an International Survey." snapped a Black nursing sister when the survey first came to light. She was quite

adamant that she would prefer a prison sentence than answer questions about her sex life which she regards as, "entirely her own affair and no business of the South African Government or an International Community!"

The house-to-house foot-slogging job was to have fallen to what a Government spokesman described as "responsible, qualified, uniformed nursing sisters" which would have ensured complete confidentiality. A guarantee greeted with great scepticism. No-one, except the most naive would believe that South Africa has at its disposal an army of "responsible, qualified, uniformed nursing sisters" who could at short notice conduct a house-to-house survey.

In its very first mention of the survey on the State-controlled TV network, one of these "responsible, qualified, uniformed nursing sisters" was interviewed between house visits.

Described by the Cape Town school teacher as a semi-literate, the "nursing sister" was asked to explain the term "coitus interruptus." Unable to do so, the interviewer attempted several explanatory circumlocutions, upon which it dawned on her and after an embarrassed giggle, said: "Oh! Reverse gear, you mean!

The "sister" rattled off in inordinate haste, a series of questions and in wanting to know how many children one bewildered woman regarded as the ideal number in a family, herself volunteered to "put down four since that is the ideal number" — even before the stunned interviewee could get her wits about her.

Possible methods of contraception mentioned also a popular soft-drink, in some circles regarded as synonymous with American culture. The other, a well-known washing soap!

A bemused man, at home while his wife was out at work, found himself quizzed about his sex life by one of these "nursing sisters" — even though the quest-

ionnaire is supposedly for women only.

Cosmetic changes in the facade of Apartheid notwithstanding, White South Africans remain unshaken in their belief that any physical contact between Black and White would threaten their survival as God's Chosen. A nightmare, with which they constantly grapple, is their paranoia around the Black birth rate. Though, for a Volk convinced that their's is a divine mission demanded by Christianity and ordained by the Almighty, the methods they employ to maintain their self-arrogated role of White superiority shows a gross disregard for the tenets of their faith.

Prime Minister P.W. Botha's political kite-flying around a possible repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act was seen as simply a sop to international critic of Apartheid and a false show of pragmatism for the benefit of the small liberal element. For Dr Andries Treurnicht who pendulums between the Ruling Party, of which he is a member, and its extremist Right-Wing opposition, it was however, a bitter pill to swallow.

Unsure of what to do with a Cabinet Minister who still commanded a large following, especially in the Transvaal, but fearful of the repercussions within Nationalist Party ranks if he was simply to put Treurnicht out to pasture, Botha shifted him instead from Labour to Statistics. That done, Botha hoped that the post was one in which the troublesome man would cause the minimum of embarrassment.

Botha has obviously misjudged Treurnicht's ability to stir up a hornet's nest yet, despite the outrage the planned survey has caused, must of necessity, offer his Minister some measure of support, albeit only in the name of unity.

Long before the present Government came to power in 1949, talk of forced sterilisation of Black women after a given

number of births was unashamedly peddled and the fears around Black births is still uppermost in White minds. Therefore, whatever castigation Treurnicht might face behind closed doors, it would not be over an ill-conceived idea but rather for the mismanagement thereof.

To stand accused of going against anything even remotely Christian is something the South African Government has long since learnt to cope with. Not so, the accusation that the very foundation of their bigotry is rooted in an interwoven obsession with both colour and sex.

Victims of the dichotomies inherent in the Apartheid system, very few South Africans can remain untouched by both the laws which govern their sex lives and the attitudes towards their own sexuality which these laws demand. Sexual taboos based on misrepresented Calvinism, then compounded by unadulterated sexism and legalised racism, manifest their schizoid face most sharply in the courts where transgressors of South Africa's sex laws are tried.

As a Black child of a Cape Town ghetto, born into the Christian faith and baptised in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Kerk (Dutch Reformed Mission Church), the latter a fact which for years I preferred to forget, my sex education, or lack of it, was by and large due to the grim dictates of the NGK dominees.

Severe and dour old men who spoke disapprovingly of "the unmentionable parts of the body", watched with dismay as a succession of equally severe and dour colleagues were arrested under the Immorality Act, a law which expressly forbids miscegenation between Black and White.

Marched off to the cells by members of a special squad of policemen whose main function is to prevent sex across the colour line, these dominees suffered every

kind of public humiliation short of a whipping in the town square. Ostracised by their people, censored by their church and imprisoned by their laws, the downfall of those charged and convicted would have been tragic had they not also been the chief defenders of their Government's bigotry.

At the same time, the Immorality Squad devised, in the course of their duties the most ingenuous methods of spying on suspected transgressors of the law. Perched in trees, hiding in the boots of unmarked cars, flashing torchlights on courting couples, peeping through key-holes, breaking down doors gun in hand and cameras popping, they went about their tasks with ill-concealed delight.

Many policemen were needed to form the Immorality Squad. Yet they were suspected and in several cases charged and convicted of breaking the very law of which they were supposed to be the guardians.

When over a dozen leading members of a small Orange Free State community in Excelsior were arrested under the Immorality Act, they allowed themselves total acceptance of public disgrace and in the case of one of the accused, suicide. None admitted to the stupidity of the law — at least not openly.

The crime is not so much in breaking the law but in being caught at it, so that often the White male's public humiliation is regarded as enough of a punishment. The wrath which hides White embarrassment is reserved for the Black woman. She might be charged with having broken the law but the punishment is for being a temptation.

The rape of a White woman carries the death penalty. The same heinous act by a White against a Black woman is interpreted very differently since in the words of a former Transvaal Attorney-General, "A Black woman often regards

rape by a White man as an honour!"

In the present political climate which the Botha Government would have the world see as "genuine change", such blatant articulation of racist attitudes might no longer be uttered in public, which is not to say that they are not expressed in private.

With the newspapers publishing every transgression of the Immorality Act in lascivious detail — and the more exotic the circumstances, the greater the detail it is no small wonder that the myth of Black male virility and Black female fertility manifests itself in almost every sexual bar-room joke and anecdote.

Endless variations of a popular White joke revolve around whether sex is work or play, "considering that Kaffirs do it too!" Another is around whether any White man would "let his sister marry a Kaffir!" And both hide a deep insecurity perpetuated and nurtured by their own White myth that Blacks "are better in bed."

There must surely be more than superficially meets the eye, as was recently the case, when an Afrikaner caught his four year old son cuddling his Black nanny. He beat the woman to death in full view of the child. Unrepentant, he claimed in court that he did so in order to teach the boy that Black women should not be kissed and cuddled.

It is in the light of such sexual hypocrisy and moral aberrations that the HOUSEHOLD FERTILITY SURVEY should be seen. There is no doubt that the results of the survey, and more importantly, the acting upon of the results, was aimed primarily at the Black population.

Black mothers complain that minutes after giving birth, they are coerced into accepting sterilisation. A fact confirmed by a London-based White South African doctor.

The present sterilisation rate for

Blacks, not as successful as the Government would like it to be, has been reinforced with a haphazard pill and Depo-Provera programme. As a punitive measure for having more than the Government desired number of children — or for that matter, having children at all, Blacks are denied a tax rebate. Conversely enough, Whites are encouraged to produce as many babies as possible with tax rebates and added concessions in the case of multiple births.



One of the foremost proponents of mass sterilisation for Black women was Robbie Leibrandt, a self-declared Nazi sympathiser and fellow detainee of former Prime Minister, later disgraced President, John Voster. Both spent several years in detention for openly aligning themselves with Nazi Germany during the war. When the Nationalists came to power, Leibrandt found a suit-

able platform for his horrific ideas. However, as Nazi-atrocities came to light, his extreme views, though seconded by many of the Party leaders, were couched in far too distasteful terms for their comfort. So, while a programme of birth control, ostensibly for all races was set in motion, the possibility of enforced sterilisation to curb the increase in the Black birth rate was never completely eliminated.

Black women were therefore understandably suspicious of the sex survey and the implications which it embodied. Neither will they be satisfied that the

survey will not be re-introduced in some other form. They see home and hospital confinement, registration of births, marriage applications and any other activity which call for documentation, as a means which the Government can employ to get the answers they want. Government offices and departments concerned with Black issues are totally separated from those Whites. As the Black nursing sister said: "Any talk that such a survey would have enabled Andries Treurnicht to plan facilities for the children of the future, irrespective of colour, is just so much horse manure!"

Black Politics in Transition

FRANCIS A. KORNEGAY, JR.

Any discussion of the internal dynamics of struggle in South Africa in terms of the politics of white minority domination and the black politics of liberation is bound to involve a large degree of speculation. The oppressiveness of the Apartheid system by and large imposes an underground quality to black political activity while the insular and often obscure nature of white politics — especially the politics of Afrikaner nationalism — makes for a difficult task

in deciphering South Africa from "the inside" by one on the outside. Nevertheless, since the early 1970s, South Africa's internal situation has come under increasing scrutiny from the outside world as unrest within that country has escalated, and as the politics of both the ruling white minority and the oppressed black majority have reflected considerable ferment and change. However, this discussion will focus largely on developments in black politics.

By way of moving into a brief discussion of these developments, I would like to refer to some comments and observations from the 1st Quarter 1981 issue of *Solidarity*, the official organ of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania — or BCM as I will refer to this movement hereafter. In an open Letter to No Sizwe, "referring to the provocative volume entitled *One Azania, One Nation* (Zed Press, 1979), A. Sivanandan of the Institute of Race Relations in London declares that: "holistically, South Africa shows up as an exceptional capitalist social formation in which race is class and class race — and the race struggle is the class struggle" (emphasis added). In the same publication, in a piece entitled "A Further Determination of Black Consciousness," Fr. Buti Tlhagale contends that in moving beyond black self-actualization toward radical action within the context of South Africa's industrial civilization "where the question of ethnicity has been blown up beyond reasonable proportions, black solidarity spearheaded by black workers assumes new dimensions. It is the collective awakening of black workers to their historic role in the black liberation struggle that can herald a new epoch." He further states, with reference to the black intelligentsia and student generation: "They have given rise to the philosophy of black consciousness and have transformed black existence into an existence of protest and resistance," and that: "A student-worker alliance will readily lend its organisational power to the entire black solidarity. It will not be a marriage of convenience, but communal sharing of common aspirations to bring about radical change."

I think these selections from a leading black South African political and intellectual journal provides a useful framework and point-of-departure for examining South Africa's internal

dynamics from a black perspective. What is more, daily events in the Republic tend to give a good deal of substance to the comments I have just quoted. For the black struggle in South Africa has clearly escalated to a new level of challenging the Apartheid system at perhaps its most vulnerable point: the question of labour and manpower; the question of labour and manpower in a sophisticated industrial economy — the most advanced on the African continent; it is seen in a virtually unending wave of labour unrest where wave upon wave of industrial actions are being initiated by an assertive black proletariat organized into independent — and for the most part unregistered — trade unions.

The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, which burst into the world's consciousness in the upheavals of 1976, has often been criticized from orthodox and neo-Marxist perspectives as a minority movement of educated, middle class students and intellectuals in the urban centers without a mass base of support; without a base among workers and peasants — and that BCM would prove to be a transient phase toward a more Marxian perspective in which racial pride and consciousness would be seen to be inadequate to the struggle at hand. In fact, the BCM has undergone changes in which class analysis has become incorporated within the movement's perspective on the South African struggle while the BCM itself has revitalized such older movements as the African National Congress (ANC) — the oldest African political movement in South Africa. Further, the BCM has been a catalyst to the emerging black labour unions and labour federations which have become, in my view, the vanguard of the current struggle.

BCM's catalytic role in relation to the current industrial actions on the labour front became increasingly apparent in the

late 70s after the bannings of the first generation of black consciousness organizations (SASO, BPC, etc.) in October 1977 when internal criticism within such successor organizations as the Azanian People's Organization - Azapo, and the Writers' Association of South Africa (WASA) acknowledged a need for BCM to identify more closely with black workers and their aspirations. Subsequently, the Writers' Association made the transition into a union, becoming the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA) and carrying out a strike against the Argus newspaper publishing company at the end of last year which ultimately led to government retaliation in forcing the closing down of the major black newspapers - the *Post* and the *Sunday Post* which succeeded the *World* and the *Sunday World* which had been banned in October 1977. The Media Workers Association reflects the politicized nature of the new black labour movement in South Africa, which is not just content to preoccupy itself with the economic advancement of its individual members, but concerns itself with local community issues as well, and with the overall issue of the struggle against Apartheid. The Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA), and the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) are among the leading forces in this new black and non-racial labour thrust.

Beside the labour movement, black political momentum in South Africa also expresses itself in such community-based movements as the Port Elizabeth Black Community Organization or PEBCO in the Eastern Cape and the Soweto Civic Association with its Committee of Ten leadership - examples of organizations whose leaders reflect a newer generation of black leadership that was legitimized by the upheavals

of 1976, and who owe their political mandate to the aspirations so militantly expressed by black youth during and since that time. While the leaders of these organizations still indicate a tendency towards negotiation, their followers, especially among the younger generation are increasingly less tolerant. These organizations are militantly opposed to any collaboration with any elements of the Apartheid system.

This militant non-collaboration posture sets these urban-based organizations apart from the South African Black Alliance led by the controversial KwaZulu Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and his Zulu-based Inkatha movement. This Alliance is composed of elements that oppose the Apartheid system from within that system and are often open to harsh criticism from more militant organizations for pursuing such a strategy. The Coloured Labour Party and the Indian Reform Party are members of the South African Black Alliance along with Inkatha. While Inkatha has shown a keen interest in expanding its ethnic/regional base beyond Zululand and Natal into such urban areas as Soweto, the main pre-occupation of its leader, Chief Buthelezi has centered on his own commission which is studying the political future of the KwaZulu homeland in relation to Natal province - an exercise that has drawn considerable support from some sections of the English-speaking white provincial leadership.

In terms of the underground movements, the ANC and the rival Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), there have been steady signs of a resurgence of internal support - especially with regard to ANC - as symbolized in the campaigns to free jailed leader Nelson Mandela on Robben Island and in signs of stepped-up sabotage attacks. Meanwhile, the PAC has been in a state of virtual disintegration in the wake of the death of its

founder, Robert Sobukwe. However, the recent assumption of PAC leadership by Nyati Pokela, long a prisoner on Robben Island, holds out the prospect that this movement might eventually pull itself out of the doldrums. While both ANC and PAC advocate armed struggle against the Apartheid system, neighbouring black-ruled Southern African countries like Zimbabwe and Mozambique are not expected to play a major role in providing sanctuaries for these movements for fear of South African retaliation. On the other hand, such sanctuaries may be irrelevant since it is possible that Pretoria is unwittingly creating *internal sanctuaries* for the freedom fighters in the separate tribal homelands it is creating in an effort to fragment and divide-and-rule the black majority. Increasing unrest in these rural enclaves cannot be ruled out as possible bases for operations by the liberation movements.

However, at this point in time, political fragmentation and rivalry continues to be a major problem confronting black South African resistance. Major points of tension revolve around the rivalry between ANC and the PAC, and of the controversial roles of the South African Communist Party on the one hand (in its relationship with ANC), and of the KwaZulu homeland-based Inkatha and its equally controversial leader, Chief Buthelezi on the other. Meanwhile, polarization between black and white increasingly renders future prospects of a negotiated settlement of South Africa's problems highly problematic despite the increasing divisions apparent in Afrikaner nationalist politics. The April 29th election results reflected these deepening divisions within Afrikanerdom, and such divisions have often been viewed as a necessary pre-condition to more far-reaching change in the Republic.



However, the major threat to Afrikaner unity at this point is a challenge from the far right, hard-line elements among blue-collar, mining and working class constituencies in the pivotal Transvaal province where Afrikaners feel threatened by the government's 'concessions' to black labour - 'concessions' that are not seen as such by blacks. Thus the current battle in white politics is a battle for the soul of the Transvaal Afrikaner. Whether or not this 'Battle of the Transvaal' will be resolved in a manner and in enough time to produce an accommodation of black political aspirations before mounting violence rules out serious dialogue is difficult to predict, but could conceivably hold the key to the type of transition that confronts South Africa's future.

Marxism in Africa

WALTER RODNEY

INTRODUCTION

First of all we must understand the background for this kind of debate. When one is asked to speak on the relevance of Marxism to Africa at this particular point in time, one is being asked to involve oneself in a historical debate, an ongoing debate in this country, particularly among the Black population. It is a debate which has heightened over the last year and, from my own personal observations, is being waged in a large number of places across this country. Sometimes it appears in the guise of the so-called nationalist versus the marxist; sometimes it appears in the guise of those who claim to espouse a class position as opposed to those who claim to espouse a race position. Thus it would not be possible for us in a single session to enter into all the ramifications of that debate but, it does form the background for our discussions.

It is an important debate, it is an important fact that such issues are being debated in this country today, just as they're being debated in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America and in many parts of the metropolitan world in western



Dr. Walter Rodney: He was assassinated on June 19

Europe and in Japan because the widespread nature of the debate and its intensity at this time is a reflection of the crisis in the capitalist-imperialist mode of production. Ideas and discussion do not just drop from the sky. It is not simply a plot on the part of certain individuals to engage others in a meaningless debate. Whatever the outcome of the debate, whatever the posture the different participants adopt, the very fact of the debate is representative of the crisis in capital-

ism and imperialism today and, as the crisis deepens, people find it more and more difficult to accept the old modes of thought which rationalize the system which is collapsing; hence the need to search for new directions and, quite clearly, Marxism and Scientific Socialism pose themselves as one of the most obvious of the available options.

The question is not new to Africa or to the Black people as a whole — that is perhaps essential to understand. Many of us have before raised the question of the relevance of marxism to this or that. Its relevance to Europe; many European intellectuals debated its relevance to their own society. Its relevance to Asia was debated by Asians; and, to look at it geographically, its relevance to Latin America was debated by Latin Americans. Individuals have debated the relevance of marxism to their own time. Was it relevant to the 19th century? If so, was it still relevant to the 20th century? One can debate its relevance to a given facet of the culture of a society, or to its law or culture as a whole. These are all issues that have been debated before and we should have some sense of history when we approach this question today, because with that sense of history we can ask, why is it that the question of the relevance of marxism to society always crops up? And, a very brief answer. I would suggest that what is common to the abdication of the question is, first of all, a condition of crisis, a condition of struggle, a condition in which people are dissatisfied with the dominant mode of perceiving reality. At that point they ask about the relevance of marxism. More than that, the second condition is people do ask the question because of their own bourgeois framework. Because one starts out located within the dominant mode of reasoning, which is the mode of reasoning that supports capitalism and which we will call a bour-

geois framework of perception, because one starts out that way, it becomes necessary to raise the question about the relevance of marxism. After one is advanced, it is probably more accurate to raise the question of the relevance of bourgeois thought because the shoe would be on the other foot! But initially it is true that however much the bourgeoisie disagree, there is one common uniting strand to all bourgeois thought: they make common cause in questioning the relevance, the logic, and so on, of marxist thought. And therefore, in a sense, unfortunately, when we ask that question, we are also fitting into that framework and pattern. We are also, in some way, still embedded to a greater or lesser extent in the framework of bourgeois thought, and from that framework we ask with a great degree of hesitancy and uncertainty, what is the relevance of marxism.

It is particularly true in our parts of the world, that is, the English-speaking parts of the world, because the Anglo-American tradition is one of intense hostility philosophically speaking, towards marxism, a hostility that manifests itself in a peculiar way. It manifests itself by trying to dissociate itself even from the study of marxism. If you were to check on the continental tradition in Europe, you would find it is not the same. French, German and Belgian intellectuals whatever their perspective, understand the importance of marxism. They study it, they relate to it, they understand the body of thought which is called marxism and they take a position vis-a-vis that body of thought. In the English tradition, which was also handed down to this part of the world, to the Caribbean, to many parts of Africa it is fashionable to disavow any knowledge of marxism. It is fashionable to glory in one's ignorance, to say that we are against marxism. When pressed about it one says but why bother

to read it? It is obviously absurd. So one knows it is absurd without reading it and one doesn't read it because one knows it is absurd, and therefore one, as I said, glories in one's ignorance of the position. It is rather difficult to seriously address the question about the relevance of marxism unless one does the basic minimum of accepting that one should attempt to enter into this full body of thought, because it is a tremendous body of literature and analysis, and from the outside as it were, it is extremely difficult, indeed, I would say it is pointless, strictly from the outside, without ever having moved towards trying to grapple with what it is, to ask what is its relevance almost an unanswerable question, and I think in all modesty, those of us who come from a certain background, and we all come from that background, one of the first things we have to do is establish a basis of familiarity with the different intellectual traditions, and as we become familiar with them we can then be in a better position to evaluate marxism's relevance or irrelevance as the case might be.

Now I will proceed on the assumption that what we are trying to discern in this discussion is whether the variants of time and place are relevant or, let me put it another way, whether the variants of time and place, make a difference to whether marxism is relevant or not. In a sense we would almost have to assume its validity for the place in which it originated, western Europe. We don't have the time to deal with that in detail. But we can then ask, assuming that marxism has a relevance, has a meaning, has an applicability to western Europe, or had in the 19th century, to what extent does its validity extend geographically? To what extent does its validity extend across time? These are the two variables, time and place, and those can be translated to mean historical circumstances, time —

and culture, which means the place, and what social and cultural conditions exist in each particular place. For us, to make it more precise, Black people, no doubt, well-meaning Black people, will ask the question whether an ideology which was historically generated within the culture of western Europe in the 19th century is, today, in the third quarter of the 20th century, still valid for another part of the world, namely Africa, or the Caribbean or Black people in this country; whether it is valid to other societies at other times? And this is the kind of formulation which I wish to present (for discussion).

THE METHODOLOGY OF MARXISM

I would suggest two basic reasons why I believe that marxist thought, scientific socialist thought, would exist at different levels, at different times, in different places and retain its potential as a tool, as a set of conceptions which people should grasp. And the first is to look at marxism as a methodology, because a methodology would, virtually by definition, be independent of time and place. You will use the methodology at any given time, at any given place. You may get different results, of course, but the methodology itself would be independent of time and place. And essentially, to engage in some rather truncated presentation of marxism, inevitably oversimplifying, but nevertheless necessary in the context of limited time, I would suggest as one of the real basis of marxist thought is that it starts from a perspective of man's relationship to the material world; and that marxism, when it arose historically, consciously dissociated itself from and pitted itself against all other modes of perception which started with ideas, with concepts and with words (and adapted itself) to the material conditions and the social relations in society. This

is the difference with which I will start. A methodology which begins its analysis of any society, of any situation, by seeking the relations which arise in production between men. There are a whole variety of things which flow from that: man's consciousness is formed in the intervention in nature; nature itself is humanized through its interaction with man's labour and man's labour produces a constant stream of technology which in turn creates other social changes. So this is the crux of the scientific socialist perception. A methodology that addresses itself to man's relationship in the process of production on the assumption, which I think is a valid assumption, that production is not merely the basis of man's existence, but the basis for defining man as a special kind of being with a certain consciousness. It is only through production that the human race differentiates itself from the rest of the primates and the rest of life.

What does it (marxism) pose itself against? It poses itself against a number of hypotheses, a number of views of the world which start with words and concepts. For those who are familiar with Marx's own evolution, it is well known that he started by looking first at Hegel, a very plausible and perceptive analyst of the 19th century who was guilty in Marx's own estimation, of putting forward an entirely idealist position, one that placed ideas in the center of the universe and saw the material world virtually deriving from those ideas. In thinking about this I felt that I wouldn't go into Hegel, I would go further than Hegel for a classic exposition of the idealist world view. I take it from the New Testament, the Book of John, where he stated: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. And the Word was God." That is the classic exposition of the idealist position. You take every other thing from there: the

Word was God! But we are suggesting that the word is itself an emanation from people's activity as they attempt to communicate with each other, as they develop social relations out of production, and that we shouldn't be mystified with words. Oh, naturally enough we will have to deal with concepts and with the force of consciousness which is a very powerful force which even some marxists have been tempted to underestimate.

Now Marx, taking that broad framework of methodology, tried to apply it to western Europe. He applied it to a range of societies in different places and at different times but, he concentrated his attention to western Europe. If you examine the body of literature produced by Marx and Engels, you will find that they speak about slavery, about communal society, about feudalism, but by and large, they concentrate on capitalism. They hardly even talk about socialism. Marx's great contribution was his fantastic critique of an existing society, capitalist society. How did it come into being in a particular part of the world? The vast proportion of their literature concerns this question.

But, as I said when I talked about pre-capitalist society, especially feudalism, they talked about some other parts of the world. Occasionally Marx mentions the Asiatic mode of production. Occasionally he came across to look at the data concerning the United States. So he had something of a geographical span and a long time span. But it was so minimal in comparison with the bulk of his work that it is true that a lot of people have taken Marx's method and his conclusions and have seen them as one and the same thing, that marxism is not merely a certain methodology applied to western Europe, but that marxism is itself an ideology about western Europe, about capitalism in the 19th century, and it cannot transcend those boundaries.

When clearly Marx was doing the job he had to do, he was looking at his own society, he was doing it under some of the most adverse conditions, he was doing it by mastering bourgeois knowledge and putting it to the service of change and revolution. I would suggest, then, that the method was independent of time and place. It is implicit in Marx and it becomes explicit in post-Marxian development, using Marxian in the literal sense of the life of Marx himself. After Marx's death you will get the evolution or the development of scientific socialist thought with other individuals recognizing that the methodology can be applied, must be applied to a different time, must be applied to a different place.

Again, presenting our history in a very abbreviated form, we can look at Lenin, at his application of marxist theory to Russian society. That is one of his principal contributions. The young Lenin, the first major thesis which he wrote was the *Development of Capitalism in Russia*. He had to deal with his own society. He had to take those formulations out of the specific cultural and historical context of western Europe and look at eastern Europe, at Russia which was evolving differently, and to apply it to his own society. This he did. He had at the same time to consider the time dimension. That in the 19th century Marx was writing about what has now come to be called the classic period of capitalism, the entrepreneurial version of capitalism, and by the latter 19th century this had given way to monopoly capitalism. It had given way to imperialism. So Lenin had to deal with that method by applying it to a new dimension in time. So he wrote about capitalism in its imperialist stage. So those are the two variants operating: the ideology, the methodology of it (we'll stick to the methodology for the time being) being applied to different societies at different

times. Having made the point for Lenin, I hope it becomes clear for a number of people: Mao tse Tung applying it to Chinese society which was a different society from Russian society. Understanding the inner dynamics of Chinese society, relating to the question of the peasantry in a different and more profound way than any previous writer because that was the nature of Chinese society and he had addressed himself to that. And finally for our purposes, the most important example, the example of Amilcar Cabral because he was dealing with Africa. Cabral, in one of his essays, the one entitled *The Weapon of Theory*, if I recall correctly, one of his most important essays, began by making it clear that the best he could do was to return to the basic methodology of Marx and Engels. But it was not possible for Cabral to begin the analysis of the history of Guinea-Bissau by saying: "I am going to look for classes," for example. He said, "If I say this I will be denying that my people have any history because I do not perceive classes for a long period in the genesis of my own people." Then he referred back to Marx's and Engels' classic statement that "the history of all existing societies is the history of class struggle," to which Engels had appended a note saying that by "all history" we mean "all previously recorded history." It so happens that the history of the people of Guinea-Bissau has not been recorded and Cabral says, "I want to record that history. We will use the marxian method. We will not be tied by the concept which arose historically in western Europe when Marx was studying that society."

Marx uses the method and he discerned the evolution of classes and of the phenomenon of classes itself as being a major determinant, the major determinant in western European history at a particular point in time. Cabral says we

will begin at the beginning. We will not even concern ourselves initially with classes. We will simply look at men in the process of production. We will look at modes of production in the history of Guinea, and we will see how our society evolved. So without much of a fanfare he was showing the relevance of that methodology to African society. If, and when, in the history of Guinea-Bissau, the aspect of class appears to have historical importance then Cabral dealt with it. Until such time, he simply stuck to the basis of marxian methodology which was to look at Guinean people in the process of production, social formations, cultural formations which arose historically and the direction in which the society was tending.

In many respects, when we today ask the question about the relevance of marxism to Black people, we have already reached a minority position, as it were. Many of those engaged in the debate present the debate as though marxism is a European phenomenon and Black people responding to it must of necessity be alienated because the alienation of race must enter into the discussion. They seem not to take into account that already that methodology and that ideology have been utilized, internalized, domesticated in large parts of the world that are not European. That it is already the ideology of eight hundred million Chinese people; that it is already the ideology which guided the Vietnamese people to successful struggle and defeat of imperialism. That it is already the ideology which allows North Korea to transform itself from a backward quasi-feudal, quasi-colonial terrain into an independent, industrial power. That it is already the ideology which has been adopted on the Latin American continent and that serves as the basis for development in the Republic of Cuba. That it is already the ideology which was used

by Cabral, which was used by Samora Machel, which is in use in the African continent itself to underline and underscore struggle and the construction of a new society.

It cannot therefore be termed a European phenomenon and the onus will certainly be on those who argue that this phenomenon which has already universalized itself somehow is inapplicable to some Black people. The onus will be on those individuals, I suggest, to show some reason, perhaps genetic, why the genes of Black people reject this ideological position.

When we investigate and try to centralize or keep central the concept of relevance, we must ask ourselves questions about the present. What kind of society do we live in today? What kind of societies do Black people live in today in different parts of the world? And while of course we as Black people in this country, in the Caribbean and in different parts of Africa have our own independent historical experience, one of the central facts is that we are all in one way or another, located within the capitalist system of production. The society about which Marx wrote, through a process of outgrowth, dominated Africa and the Americas in the era of mercantilism which was the period that capitalism was growing to maturity. It dominated these parts of the world. It created slave society in the Americas. Subsequent to the slave era, capitalism, even more powerful, was able to incorporate the whole world into a global network of production which derived from western Europe and North America, a system which had a metropolitan center or set of metropolitan centers, and a separate set of peripheries, colonies and semi-colonies. So that we have all, historically, been incorporated within the capitalist system of production, and that is another dimension of the relevance of marxism.

Even without the translation in terms of time and place, it seems to me that if we have become part of the capitalist-imperialist world, then we owe it to ourselves to relate to, to follow, to understand and, to hopefully adopt and adapt a critique of that capitalist system because that is essentially what Marx's writing is about. He was criticising that capitalist system. He did it more effectively than any bourgeois writer, and if we want to understand the world in which we live, which is a world dominated by capitalism, then we must understand the center of that system, the motor within that system, types of exploitation which are to be found within the capitalist mode of production. So that is yet another factor.

MARXISM AS REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGY

My second (and I had originally suggested there were two basic things, and one was the methodology) consideration after methodology is to look at marxism as a revolutionary ideology and as a class ideology. In class societies all ideologies are class ideologies. All ideologies derive from and support some particular class. So for all practical purposes we have grown up in capitalist society, and bourgeois ideology is dominant in our society. These institutions in which we function were created to serve the creation of ideas as commodities, ideas which will buttress the capitalist system. Now, I would suggest historically as Marx suggested himself, that the set of ideas we call scientific socialism arose within capitalist society to speak to the interest of the producers in that society, to speak to the interests of those who are exploited and expropriated, to speak to the interest of the oppressed, of the culturally alienated, and we must understand that of the two major sets of ideas before us, idealism

and materialism, bourgeois philosophy and marxist philosophy, that each of the two is representative of a particular class. I don't have the time to go into all the historical roots of the formation of socialism, but, briefly, in the 19th century it was with the rise of capitalist society that conditions were created for the development of socialist ideas. Out of the diverse and unsystematized socialist ideas, Marx was able to formulate a clear and systematic theory-scientific socialism. It had a particular class base and because it had this particular class base, it was revolutionary. It sought to transform and upend the relations in society. Bourgeois ideology is of necessity status quo preserving. It seeks to conserve, it seeks to buttress the given system of production, the relations which flow, the relations which flow from a certain system of production. A scientific socialist position remains revolutionary because it aims, consciously aims, at undermining that system of production and the political relations which flow from it. This is what I mean by revolutionary.

From time to time there are marxists who have arisen, who have attempted to deny or denude marxism of its revolutionary content. That is true. There are marxists who have become legal or arm-chair marxists, who would like to see marxism as merely another variant of philosophy and who treat it in a very eclectic fashion as though one is free to draw from marxism as one draws from Greek thought and their equivalent, without looking at the class base and, without looking whether an ideology is supportive of the status quo or not.

Nevertheless, by and large, we can see marxism and scientific socialism as subversive of and antithetical to the maintenance of the system or production in which we live. Because ideas, let me repeat, do not float in the sky, they do

not float in the atmosphere, they are related to concrete relations of production. Bourgeois ideas derive from bourgeois relations of production. They are intended to conserve and maintain those relations of production. Socialist ideas derive from the same production, but they derive from a different class interest and their aim is to overthrow that system of production.

AFRICA AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

There again I will suggest that African people, like other Third World people, have virtually a vested interest in scientific socialism because it offers itself to them as a weapon of theory. It offers itself to them as that tool, at the level of ideas, which will be utilized for dismantling the capitalist imperialist structure. This is its concern.

What I will attempt to deal with as best I can, are certain questions arising from individuals who might say yes to most of what I've said and then will ask the question, "is there no other alternative? Is there no other ideological system which is neither capitalist nor socialist, but is anti-capitalist, but addresses itself more humanely, if you like, to the interest of African people wherever they are?" These questions are worth looking into because there are Black people asking these questions and we have to try and resolve them. My own formulation will be to suggest that we look at concrete examples of African or Black people who have attempted to devise systems which they consider to be non-capitalist and non-socialist. Systems they consider are valid alternatives to scientific socialism for the emancipation of African people.

In this regard we have a number of pan-Africanists, a number of African nationalists in Africa, in the Caribbean

and in this country, who have taken that road. George Padmore did this at the end of his life, and made a sort of distinction, not a sort, he made a distinction between scientific socialism and pan-Africanism. He said this is the road we will follow: pan-Africanism. We do not want to go that road which is capitalist; we do not want to go the socialist road, we will derive for ourselves something that is pan-African.

In a sense Nkrumah followed up upon this and although at one time he called himself a marxist, he always was careful to qualify this by saying that he was also a protestant. He believed in protestantism at the same time. So simultaneously he was trying to straddle two worlds; the world which says in the beginning was matter and the world which says in the beginning there was the word. And inevitably he fell between these two. It's impossible to straddle these two. But there he was, and we must grant his honesty and we must grant the honesty of many people who have attempted to do this impossible task and follow them to find out why they failed. They failed because their conception of what a variant different from bourgeois thought and different from socialist thought inevitably turned out to be merely another branch of bourgeois thought. And this was the problem, that bourgeois thought and indeed socialist thought, when we get down to it, can have a variety of developments or roads and aspects or paths. Bourgeois thought because of its whimsical nature and because of the way in which it promotes eccentrics, you can have any road in bourgeois thought because, after all, when you are not going any place you can choose any road!

So for bourgeois thought it was possible for these individuals to make what I consider to be a genuine attempt to break with the dominance of bourgeois thought and yet find in the final analysis

that they have merely embraced another manifestation of that which they themselves at the outset had suggested that they were confronting.

There are a number of examples, some more apt than others. Some of the examples actually are Africans who I think, were blatantly dishonest from the beginning. I do think that most of the ideologues of African socialism claiming to find a third path are actually just cheap tricksters who are attempting to hoodwink the majority of the population. I don't think they're out to develop socialism. I don't think they're out to develop anything that addresses itself to the interest of the African people. But, nevertheless, it is part of the necessity of our times that our people no longer are willing to accept anything that is not put to them in the guise of socialism.

And therefore I shan't in fact go on to African socialism. What I'll do is take examples of those who were, in my opinion, being serious, being honest. And certainly Kwame Nkrumah was one of these. Nkrumah spent a number of years during the fifties and right up to when he was overthrown — that would cover at least ten years — in which he was searching for an ideology. He started out with this mixture of marxism and protestantism, he talked about pan-Africanism, he went to consciencism and then Nkrumahism, and, there was everything other than a straight understanding of socialism.

What were the actual consequences of this perception? That is what matters to us. Let us assume that he was searching for something African and that he was trying to avoid the trap of adopting something alien. What were the practical consequences of this attempt to dissociate himself from an international socialist tradition? We saw in Ghana that Nkrumah steadfastly refused to accept

that there were classes, that there were class contradictions in Ghana, that these class contradictions were fundamental. For years Nkrumah went along with this mish-mash of philosophy, which took some socialist premises but in which he refused to pursue to its logical conclusion in which he would accept that one either had a capitalist system based upon the private ownership of the means of production and the alienation of the product of people's labour or one had an alternative system which was completely different and that there was no way of juxtaposing and mixing these two to create anything that was new and viable.

A most significant test of this position was when Nkrumah himself was overthrown! After he was overthrown, he lived in Guinea-Konakry and before he died he wrote a small text, *Class Struggle in Africa*. It is not the greatest philosophical treatise but it is historically important, because it is there Nkrumah himself in effect admits the consequences, the misleading consequences of an ideology which espoused an African cause, but which felt, for reasons which he did not understand, a historical necessity to separate itself from scientific socialism. It indicated quite clearly the disastrous consequences of that position. Because Nkrumah denied the existence of classes in Ghana until the petty bourgeoisie as a class overthrew him. And then, in Guinea, he said it was a terrible mistake. Yes, there are classes in Africa. Yes, the petty bourgeoisie is a class with interests fundamentally opposed to workers and peasants in Africa. Yes, the class interest of the petty bourgeoisie are the same or at least are tied in with the class interest of international monopoly capital and therefore we have in Africa a class struggle within the African continent and a struggle against imperialism. And if we are to aim at transcending these contradictions, of

bringing victory and emancipation to the working peoples, the producers of Africa, we will have to grapple with that ideology, which first of all recognizes and, challenges the existence of exploiting and oppressing classes.

It's a very important historical document. It is the closest that Nkrumah comes to a self-critique. It is the record of a genuine nationalist, African nationalist who wandered for years with this assumption and feeling that somehow he must dissociate himself in one way or another, from scientific socialism because it originated outside the boundaries of his own society and he was afraid of its cultural implications. That is putting it in the most charitable way. But the fear is due, in fact, to aspects of bourgeois ideology. Due to the fact that he made a distinction between social theory and scientific theory, which is not a necessary distinction. That is the distinction which comes out of the history of bourgeois thought.

People seem to have no difficulty in deciding that they are going to use facets of the material culture that originated in the West, whether it originated in capitalist or socialist society. People have no difficulty relating to electricity but they say: "Marx and Engels, that's European!" They don't ask the question, "was Edison a racist?" but they ask the question, "was Marx a racist?" They genuinely believe that they are making a fundamental distinction, whereas, in fact, this is obscuring the totality of social development. And the natural sciences are not to be separated from the social sciences. Our interpretation of the social reality can similarly derive a certain historical law and hence scientific law of society which can be applied irrespective of its origin or its originators. Of course, it is true, and this is the most appropriate note on which to end, that any ideology, when applied, must be applied with a thorough

grasp of the internal realities of a given African society.

Marxism comes to the world as a historical fact, and it comes in a cultural nexus. If, for instance, Africans or, let us go back to Asians; when the Chinese first picked up the marxist texts, they were European texts. They came loaded with conceptions of the historical development of Europe itself. So that method and factual data were interwoven obviously and the conclusions were in fact in a specific historical and cultural setting. It was the task of the Chinese to deal with that and to adapt it and to scrutinize it and see how it was applicable to their society. First and foremost to be scientific it meant having due regard for the specifics of Chinese historical and social development.

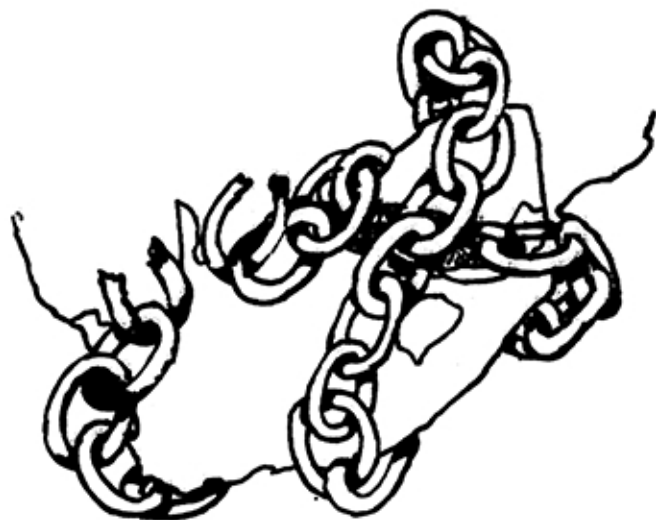
I have already cited Cabral in another context and he reappears in this context. The way in which he is at all times looking at the particularities of class development in contemporary Guinea-Bissau. Looking at the potential of classes in Guinea-Bissau at this point in time. And therefore he is of course, making sure that marxism does not simply appear as the summation of other people's history, but appears as a living force within one's history. And this is a difficult transformation. This is the task of anybody who considers himself or herself a marxist. However, because it is fraught with so many difficulties and obstacles, many people take the easy route, which is to take it as a finished product rather than an ongoing social product which has to be adapted to their own society.

One finds that in looking at this marxist theory, at its relevance to race, looking at the relevance of marxist theory to national emancipation, we come up with a very important paradox. And it is this: that the nationalist, in the strict sense of the word, that is the petty bour-

geois nationalist, who aims merely at the recovery of national independence in our epoch, is incapable of giving the people of Africa or the peoples of the Caribbean any participation in liberal democracy. The petty-bourgeoisie cannot fulfill these historical tasks. For national liberation requires a socialist ideology. We cannot separate the two. Even for national liberation in Africa, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique very clearly demonstrated the necessity for an ideological

development, for consciencization, as they say in Latin America and, the nationalist struggle was won because it came under the rubric of a scientific socialist perspective.

As Cabral said, "there may be revolutions which have had a revolutionary theory and which have failed. But there have certainly been no revolutions which have succeeded without a revolutionary theory."



DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

(1) The National Democratic Revolution is based upon the *minimum demands* of the oppressed masses of Azania, namely, the reconquest of *all our land and its resources* and the attainment of full democratic rights.

(2) The *Black Consciousness Movement* recognises that the national oppression of our people is a direct result of *capitalism and imperialism* and thus our struggle is both anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist.

(3) The *Black Consciousness Movement* consequently adopts the theory and practice of *scientific socialism* to guide it in the struggle.

(4) However, because of the structural and institutionalised nature of racism in the South African social system, the class struggle continues and will continue to manifest itself in colour terms, and for this reason, we continue to believe in the mobilising role of Black Consciousness in the struggle in which the black people rally against their common oppression.

(5) In response to the popular struggles of the masses for political, social and economic emancipation the current strategy of imperialism as represented by the South African regime is shifting emphasis from expressing itself in purely

race terms to a sharper class content, as witnessed by its overtures to the black middle class. This underscores the class essence of the struggle against national oppression.

(6) The *Black Consciousness Movement of Azania* recognises that the black workers are the most oppressed and exploited section of our society, and, therefore, constitute the major force in our struggle. Thus the strategy for the revolution should be based on the historical, political and organisational *experience of the black working class*.

(7) Organisationally, the *Black Consciousness Movement* will be guided in its functions and conduct of the struggle, by a form of *discipline*, which develops out of a consciousness which itself is a product of internalised revolutionary principles: *criticism and self-criticism; democratic centralism; collective leadership; the principles of recall and active participation*.

(8) In order to advance the Azanian struggle against imperialism on a global scale, the *Black Consciousness Movement* will seek to establish and maintain fraternal links internationally with progressive and revolutionary forces, governments, liberation movements and solidarity groups.

OUR BANNING IS NO CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

"In declaring Solidarity, No. 5, first quarter 1981 (Black Consciousness Movement of Azania) undesirable, the Directorate of Publications has also banned every subsequent edition of the publication - Sapa."

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