

APARTHEID—THE END APPROACHES

APARTHEID—as readers of this journal will hardly need reminding, and as the United Nations has repeatedly and all-but-unanimously resolved—is one of the most diabolical and unjust forms of rule ever imposed upon any people, an intolerable danger and affront to the spirit of free Africa. It is also terribly profitable. One of the foremost objects of the structure of white supremacy is to squeeze the last drop of profit out of African resources, African land and African labour. For this, our people have been driven from their ancient lands, herded into the cruelly crowded and eroded ‘reserves’ (which Verwoerd’s propagandists now, with inconceivable effrontery, claim are the ‘Bantu homelands’ and shining examples of self-determination). Africans are forced by hunger and taxation to labour at starvation wage-rates on the white man’s ‘green pastures’, the rich mealielands and vineyards, the gold-fields and the diamond-fields, the flourishing industries and cities, all built out of African sweat and skill.

Apartheid is certainly cruel and unjust; it is also, in its essence, a vast system of robbery and slavery, yielding millions every year in profits, profits that flow not only to the gold and diamond emperors, the wealthy farmers and industrialists of South Africa itself, but also to millionaire investors in Britain, the United States and other imperialist countries. That is fundamentally why the imperialists shelter apartheid at the United Nations and elsewhere. As P. Tlalé shows so ably, elsewhere in this issue, they are in effect sleeping partners in the Nazi Verwoerd régime; they hamstring and sabotage every resolution for sanctions and isolation of the Republic of South Africa, and shamefully betray the interests of peoples of South-West Africa, Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, as well as of South Africa itself.

Often the outside world misunderstands the significance of the call for boycotts and sanctions, raised in the first instance by the African National Congress and other patriotic organizations of the South African people. Some of our friends are under the impression that, finding the task beyond their capacity, our people have called our brothers in Free Africa and elsewhere in the world, to liberate us from the tyranny of apartheid. One even hears of far-fetched schemes to raise an army of liberation to march down Africa across the Limpopo. Such ideas, however well-meaning, reveal a major misconception of the nature and significance of the South African situation. Certainly, that situation is one of world significance and calls for world solidarity with the South African people. But the nature of that solidarity action is not in the form of intervention. Quite the reverse; it is Britain, the

United States, France and the other imperialist countries who are *intervening* in South Africa. They are investing vast sums in apartheid, supplying Verwoerd with the armaments and the armament factories he needs to sustain his inhuman rule, sustaining those diplomatic, commercial and other links which nourish apartheid and enable it to continue.

The future and destiny of South Africa must and will be settled by the South African people themselves, on the soil of the motherland. What we are demanding, with the effective and deeply-appreciated support of the freedom-loving peoples of Africa and the rest of the world, is that apartheid's backers in the imperialist countries should be compelled to break off their military and diplomatic alliances, their financial and trading partnerships, with the arrogant Nazi clique masquerading as the government of 'South Africa'. Dr. Verwoerd and his gang are completely and utterly dependent on their friends and backers, concealed and open, in the 'West', on the stream of money, weapons, oil, and other forms of aid constantly arriving at South Africa's harbours and airports. And they know it. This is the vulnerable point of the frightened men in Pretoria; the nightmare that haunts their uneasy slumbers. The issue of apartheid is raised by South Africa's tireless and faithful friends at every session of the United Nations and its agencies, at meetings of African and Asian statesmen, at the International Labour Office, the Olympic Games Committee, the World Peace Movement, Trade Union conferences . . . the list is endless. And at every debate and discussion the questions are sharper and more pertinent. Verwoerd's apologists are in full retreat, his concealed backers are being forced into the open. The day is not far off when the Western imperialists will have, once and for all, to choose. It is becoming clearer by the day that in continuing to back Verwoerd and apartheid, Britain, the United States and their NATO partners are forfeiting whatever good will and prestige they may still retain or hope to gain in the vast continents of Africa and Asia, comprising the majority of the world's inhabitants. Already the United States has had to cut short its arms supplies to South Africa; Harold Wilson, probably Britain's next Prime Minister, has promised to do the same. Under insistent and unrelenting pressure from the governments and people of Africa, Asia and the socialist commonwealth—and from the labour and progressive movements in the imperialist countries themselves, horrified at the murderous barbarity of apartheid—the world movement to quarantine the moral leprosy of apartheid has become a great and irresistible crusade, uniting the finest and noblest people of all countries. Verwoerd's supporters abroad care nothing for him or for South Africa; they are men without principle, concerned solely with their

advantage and their profit. He cannot hope that this crew of international financiers upon whom he depends will show any loyalty to his régime once it has served its purpose. Once they can see that their stake in South Africa is outweighed by the dangers it causes to their huge investments elsewhere; even more, once the current high yields on their South African investments are threatened by mounting unrest and instability in that country—they will abandon and betray Verwoerd with as little compunction as he himself once showed to his former colleagues in his upward climb to the Premiership.

The day is not far off when the Verwoerd-Vorster clique will find themselves alone in the world, deserted by their imperialist partners—and also by a substantial proportion of the whites in South Africa itself, who are by no means all indoctrinated Nazi fanatics, and who will be quick to prefer the preservation of a whole skin to the privileges of a fair one, once it becomes clear that the Nationalist Party is the losing side. That day, the frightened men of Pretoria will find themselves face to face with the wrath of the people whom they have so long oppressed, persecuted, robbed and humiliated. They will receive the mercy they have extended to their victims.

Though they are perfectly well aware, in their hearts, of all these realities, the high-priests of apartheid and *baasskap* do their best to conceal this knowledge both from themselves and the public at home and abroad. They dismiss with arrogant disdain the solemn appeal of the one hundred and six nations at the General Assembly to stop the 'Rivonia' proceedings and to release all political prisoners. They claim the grotesque Transkei 'Bantustan' farce as a shining example of 'self-determination'. South Africa, they say, is flourishing, indeed, enjoying boom conditions; all the agitators and saboteurs have been caught and destroyed by the brilliant special branch; never has the country enjoyed such tranquillity and prosperity. None of these claims can stand up to any serious examination.

BANTUSTAN FIASCO

Every precaution was taken to see that the elections for the Transkei 'Parliament' would result in the return as 'Prime Minister' of the Government's chosen quisling, Kaiser Matanzima. Although the 'Parliament' itself will enjoy little authority and no power (all the main functions of state power will be reserved for the all-white Parliament, and even in the little area left for local government any proposals by the 'Bunga', the Transkei puppet parliament, will be subject to a veto by Verwoerd) it would be embarrassing to Pretoria if the much-boasted 'Bantustan' should clash too sharply with Pretoria. Therefore the constitution provides that more than half (60 out of 109) the Bunga

members should be chiefs, appointed by and subject to dismissal by the white government. The elections took place in a 'state of emergency' in the Transkei, which has existed since 1960, and under which all outspoken opponents of apartheid have long been in prison or in hiding, their huts burnt down, their property confiscated and their womenfolk violated by the savage 'home guards' appointed by Commissioner Hans Abraham and his running dogs such as Matanzima and others. Despite this reign of terror and confusion, Matanzima's supporters were badly beaten for the elected seats. Even among the chiefs they were hard put to it to secure a majority. Outspoken and courageous chiefs like Sabata Dalindyebo and Victor Poto did not hesitate to denounce the whole scheme, and demand equal rights for all, white and black, in the Transkei and in South Africa as a whole. 'We are being offered the freedom of a fowl run', said Sabata. The only man Matanzima could find for 'Minister of Justice' was an attorney who had been disbarred for fraud; the resulting scandal makes it likely that a vote of no confidence will be passed at the very first session.

The more advanced people of the Transkei are finding that, instead of a total absence from anything to do with the so-called 'Legislative Assembly', it can be made use of to embarrass the Government, and to bear out the conclusion of the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid that: 'The creation of Bantustans may be regarded as designed to reinforce white supremacy in the Republic by strengthening the position of tribal chiefs, dividing the African people through the offer of opportunities for a limited number of Africans, and deceiving public opinion.' Whether Matanzima survives as 'Prime Minister' or not, it seems clear that Verwoerd and his 'Minister of Bantu Affairs', de Wet Nel, have embarked on a perilous adventure. They cannot now avoid the growth of Transkei political parties and organizations which will either force Matanzima to demand a fuller reality for local self-government or do so themselves. Nel told Parliament last March that white officials would in time be replaced by Africans, but only 'gradually', 'always beginning at the lowest grade and progressively advancing to the top so that white officials would never work under Bantu'. This soothing soporific may have pleased the Honourable Members at Cape Town; it certainly won't please their counterparts at Umtata. They have already eaten dirt for the sake of their personal ambitions. If there is one thing they are likely to put up a fight over it is to get rid of Hans Abraham's swarm of arrogant and incompetent white officials in order to make place for their own nominees.

The 'Bantustan' bluff has been a total failure in its main intention: to impress the public at home and abroad. It has solved no problems for its authors. Instead it has created a number of new ones to which they

can see so solution at all. Not the least of these may turn out to be their cynical encouragement of Matanzima's 'nationalist' demagoguery: he may be riding a wild horse he is unable to control.

'PROSPERITY'—FOR WHOM?

The celebrated 'prosperity' of South Africa also needs a closer look. Certainly, higher gold production has set in train some feverish economic activity, highly gratifying to investors and speculators at home and abroad, though the masses of the people have seen very little of the so-called prosperity. The built-in cheap labour system means that ever-increasing commodity prices find the masses of workers worse off than ever. Normal trade union activity is all but outlawed—it is notable that one of Vorster's most vicious drives in recent months has been against the leaders of the South African Congress of Trade Unions and its affiliates. The National President, Mr. Stephen Dhlamini, has spent long months in solitary confinement under repeated spells of ninety-day detention without charge; so have the noted Cape Town trade unionist, Mr. Elijah Loza and many other trade union militants. Scarcely a week passes without some new ban. Now General Secretary John Gaetsewe (whose predecessor, Mark Shope, was banned) has been served with an order confining him to his house, day and night, for the next four years. Assistant general secretary Edward Davoren (whose predecessor, Phyllis Altman was banned) has been deported to Britain, where he was born. Innumerable officials of SACTU local committees and affiliated trade unions are in prison or arbitrarily banned from trade union or political work.

With wages thus artificially pegged to a level below the minimum needed to sustain family life, economic hardship and mass discontent is mounting. The stifling apartheid régime has further negative effects on the development of the country. The only sector of the economy capable of rapid expansion under present conditions is manufacture of consumer goods. But the low-wage structure imposed by apartheid limits severely the home market, and the natural outlet to the North of the Continent is being blocked more and more effectively by the boycott. The country—to a much greater extent even than other capitalist countries at a similar phase of development—finds it extremely difficult to adapt itself to the changing patterns of economic development. The rigid requirements of apartheid, job reservation, top-heavy militarization, and the deliberate stultifying of mass education—all these make it impossible for the country to measure up to the challenge of technology in the 1960's.

Thus the economic development made possible by the exceptionally favourable circumstances of nature has taken place in spite of and not

because of apartheid; it is made lopsided by the markedly colonialist deformities of the political economy of South Africa. So far from being attributable to the Nationalist Party régime and its policies, the 'boom' conditions expose even more glaringly its gigantic flaws and contradictions, and add to the fundamental instability of the situation as a whole.

DECEPTIVE PLACIDITY

The Nationalist government boasts that peace and tranquillity reign in South Africa. Certainly, the tourist of today will find none of the mass demonstrations and campaigns that marked the 'fifties; the defiance of unjust laws, the Congress of the People, the repeated nation-wide general strikes. But this outward placidity is deceptive indeed. With the whole country in the grip of Vorster's police state dictatorship, the rule of law abandoned, arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention in solitary confinement, gruesome tortures learnt by the special branch sadists from the O.A.S. scum who have drifted to South Africa from Algeria via the Congo, thousands of political prisoners now cram South Africa's jails.

Beneath the surface of this 'desert that they call peace', the spirit of the resistance movement is seething as never before. For the brave patriots of South Africa who are in jail many more have stepped into the breach. The tourist shepherded around the country by the information department does not see the thousands of resisters herded in the prisons, nor does he hear the cries of anguish as they are tortured and mutilated by floggings, electric shocks, suffocation in wet canvas bags and other 'refinements' of the special branch, described so tellingly by the African National Congress in the pamphlet 'Brute Force', issued by its London office. The newspapers deliberately suppress the reports of constant explosions due to sabotage continually taking place all over the country.

It is true that brutal methods and the treachery of Judases like Bruno Ntole (the notorious 'Mr. X' of the Rivonia trial) have brought some 'success' to the special branch. Many of the most outstanding leaders of the South African people have fallen into the clutches of the special branch. Some, like Mandela, Sisulu and the other accused in the Rivonia trial, face possible death sentences; and there are many other trials proceeding in all the main centres of South Africa under the notorious Sabotage Act (the General Law Amendment Act of 1962)—many of which are scarcely heard of, and many of which are conducted without legal defence because there is no money available to pay lawyers. Already a number of death sentences have been passed, and men have already been hanged.

Hardly a day goes past with news of some fresh arbitrary ban or arrest. Apart from outright banning of organizations such as the African National Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the Communist Party (banned since 1950), the police state systematically bans officials of organizations which are formally legal, making it virtually impossible for them to function. For example, practically every national or local official of the South African Indian Congress and its provincial affiliates has been prohibited from any political activity and victimized in his personal life.

No doubt all these fascist attacks have been heavy blows to the liberation forces in South Africa. It has become virtually impossible to carry on legal public activities, especially for non-whites, in all the main urban centres which are the traditional strongholds of resistance to apartheid. And many of the most capable and experienced leaders of the resistance have been driven out of activity, imprisoned or sent out of the country on missions abroad for their organizations.

Nevertheless there are ample signs that the unconquerable and inexhaustible forces of the South African movements of national liberation are withstanding these attacks, continuing their activities, regrouping for fresh advances, and fruitfully studying the lessons of setbacks and errors of the past period. Casualties of the struggle have been needlessly heavy; some of our leaders showed insufficient appreciation of the fact that, particularly with the Nazi 'no trial' detention law, South Africa had moved decisively into a full-fledged police state period. As a result mistakes were made for which a heavy penalty has been and will be exacted. Clearly some chosen for important tasks in the liberation struggle were ill-suited to their responsibilities. Sometimes recklessness was mistaken for courage. Cadres were not adequately studied, nor were they properly prepared for the ordeals which they might have to undergo. On the whole the freedom-fighters of South Africa have stood up to the barbaric tortures of Vorster's Nazi special branch with a fortitude and heroism of which our people will always be proud. But a few have broken down; made 'confessions' and even betrayed their comrades. Of these last, let it be said that even if they escape the traitor's fate at the hands of the people, their lives will no longer be worth living.

In the long run, the 'victories' of the special branch will prove hollow. Our people and our organizations will learn from past mistakes and find the answer to all the terror tactics of the contemptible fascist torturers. For every leader captured on the battlefield or put out of action, new militants will come forth from among the indestructible and creative ranks of the masses. Our movements, purged of weak and unsuitable elements, and strengthened immeasurably by new and

vital cadres called into struggle by the very atrocities and unbearable evils of apartheid, will become even more steeled, mature, determined and victorious.

Verwoerd and the Frightened Men of Pretoria are living a precarious existence, on top of a volcano, and they know it. They have turned South Africa into a prison—and the result is that they themselves have become prisoners. There is something deeply symbolic in this Reuter report from Pretoria on January 26, 1964:

‘A 7-ft. high fence two miles long is under construction around the homes of senior Government leaders and the British Ambassador here. The fence, topped with barbed wire, will completely enclose the Pretoria suburb in which President Swart, Dr. Verwoerd the Prime Minister and nine other cabinet members all live. The fence is designed to increase security in the area after recent sabotage incidents.’

Everything is quiet and normal, everything is fine and under control: this is Verwoerd’s repeated propaganda message to prospective investors and immigrants abroad and to the anxious public at home. There is nothing stable and normal in a country with over 5,000 political prisoners, where everywhere political opponents are being executed, tortured and faced with death sentences, where sabotage explosions mount every month, where the cabinet has to live behind a fence like animals in a zoo.

The struggle for South African freedom is taking place and will be decided on South African soil. It will be a grim and a hard one, but Dr. Verwoerd and his gang cannot win it. How much longer it will go on depends only in part upon the brave leaders and supporters of the fight against apartheid, who are sworn to win freedom at whatever cost. It will be cheaper and less costly if the friends of South African freedom beyond our borders act now to isolate the fascist administration from its source of support, by insisting on the application of solemn resolutions on boycotts and sanctions already taken.

There is a most disturbing tendency on the part of certain self-styled opponents of apartheid to sidetrack this plain straightforward issue and duty by playing with ‘compromise’ plans for the ‘South African problem’. Certain Scandinavian statesmen have been manoeuvring at the United Nations to promote such an idea; and a so-called Committee of Experts has been appointed to go into it; despite the existence of the highly competent and expert Special Committee on Apartheid which has already been functioning most effectively since April 1963. A Mr. John Hatch, supposed to be the Africa expert of the British Labour Party, writes along similar lines in the Right-wing Labour weekly the *New Statesman*. He calls on the Labour Party to seek an alternative

policy, other than apartheid or democracy, both of which he says are 'unacceptable'. On examination the 'alternative' turns out to be nothing but a new variety of apartheid; South Africa to be carved up into racial ghettos for whites and Africans: for the latter purpose Hatch proposes to hand over the High Commission territories and South-West Africa. It's about time everyone realized that there is no alternative or middle path between apartheid and democracy. They are mutually exclusive. It is particularly important that the African and Asian leaders should refuse to be pressured out of their very clear stand which they have hitherto taken on this matter. The imperialists must not be allowed to hide behind some cloudy formula which would enable them to continue the lucrative business of supporting Verwoerd while pretending to be doing something about the acknowledged scandal of apartheid.

BRIEF COMMENTS

CHOU EN-LAI'S AFRICAN TOUR

A number of African countries were glad to welcome a distinguished visitor, Premier Chou En-lai of the Chinese People's Republic, and it is unfortunate indeed that the difficulties referred to earlier in these Notes prevented the planned extension of this historic tour to several East African countries as well. This visit will have done much to improve Chinese-African relations and to create a better understanding on both sides of each other's viewpoint. All reports confirm that the unfortunate divergencies within the socialist commonwealth and the Afro-Asian group were not raised during this successful visit to Africa; this gives ground for firm hopes that the visit will serve a further and most important service in helping to resolve these divergencies. This is certainly the ardent desire of Africans in all parts of our continent.

A JOURNALISTS' CONFERENCE

Journalists from all parts of our continent came to Accra last November to attend the second conference of African journalists. President Nkrumah had some pertinent things to say about the role of journalists in our continent; those 'purposefully and unreservedly devoted to the cause of the African Revolution'—and those who, serving private capital or foreign interests, are not.

For some unexplained reason, however, those responsible omitted completely to invite the fighting anti-apartheid journalists of South Africa. A strange 'South African' delegation made its appearance, consisting of members of the Pan-Africanist Congress like Mr. Matthew Nkoane, whose main journalistic activities appear to have