

# **SOUTH AFRICA IS AT WAR**

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*Lerumo*

THE VERWOERD-VORSTER DICTATORSHIP is already at war. It has declared war on the people of our country and it increasingly menaces the whole of Free Africa beyond our borders. Under the leadership of Umkonto We Sizwe, our people have already taken the path of resistance and revolt; they are acting, arming, training and preparing for victory in our war of liberation.

Without full consciousness of this essential fact we cannot properly assess either the present or the future of developments in South Africa. For this fact changes and modifies everything. Violent struggle has its own laws and its own logic, and although these are similar and analogous to those of non-violent struggle, they are different from them in important respects.

It is the purpose of this article to deal with one aspect only of the far-reaching implications and consequences of the South African War of National Liberation: that is, the international aspect.

From its very nature, origins and aims, the South African struggle is not and cannot be confined to the borders of our country alone.

The aggressive apartheid regime is, and has been declared by the United Nations to be, a threat to world peace. It is dependent upon and closely linked with the international forces of imperialism and colonialism. It threatens, in the first place, the peace, unity, progress and independence of the African Continent. And, as stated in *The Road to South African Freedom*:

*In fighting against White supremacy, for the democratic revolution in South Africa, the people of our country are fighting for the cause of the African Revolution as a whole.*

## **WHO ARE OUR FRIENDS—AND WHO ARMS OUR ENEMIES?**

War is a great clarifier of issues and destroyer of illusions. And in this war—a war which we did not choose and which was forced upon

us because we prefer death to slavery—the people of South Africa are learning very rapidly and sharply to distinguish who are our friends and who are our enemies. It is a lesson the rest of Africa will be quick to appreciate as well. In the many debates which are an inevitable part of the process of achieving African unity, one point is clear and beyond discussion: those who ally themselves with Verwoerd are the enemies of Africa.

What is it that has thus far enabled the criminal apartheid regime in South Africa, supported by less than three million Whites, successfully to hold down 12 million non-Whites and defy the feelings of the whole of Africa and the overwhelming majority of mankind?

The answer is clear. **The Verwoerd regime is maintained in power by the assistance, economic, political, diplomatic and military, of the imperialist powers, of N.A.T.O.** Who invests in South Africa and has a stake in the maintenance of apartheid? Who trades with South Africa? Who supplies armaments and military equipment to South Africa? Let us look at some of the facts.

White South Africa today is virtually on a war basis. Military expenditure has increased from R36 million\* in 1961 to R156 million for 1963—and to this must be added a further R200 million for the militarised police and security services. Between 1962 and 1963 the quantity of aircraft, bombs and ammunition acquired by South Africa was more than doubled.

The chief culprit assisting White South Africa to arm against the people of our country is *Britain*.

## **ARMS FACTORIES**

In 1962, with the blessing of the United Kingdom Government, Imperial Chemical Industries contributed a capital investment of £10 million sterling, plus its considerable technical assistance and knowledge, for the building of new armament factories in South Africa. The Verwoerd regime is preparing feverishly to accelerate local weapons production.

Yet, although it is the most highly-industrialised part of Africa, South Africa remains dependent on imports for modern armaments. From Britain she has received, or is receiving, military aircraft (including *Buccaneer* Naval Bombers, *Canberra Mark 12* Jet Bombers, *Westland Wasp* and *Auster* helicopters, and *Vampire*, *Shackleton*, *Dove*, *Heron* and *Viscount* aircraft), armoured cars (including the notorious *Saracens* used by S.A. police at Sharpeville

\* R2 (two rands) in South African currency = £1 sterling.

and elsewhere) and naval vessels (including *President* class warships).

Britain also helps South Africa in other ways. She is training South African paratroopers and supplying Verwoerd with espionage and 'security' information, including reports on the movement of South African freedom-fighters outside the Republic.

Sir Hugh Stephenson, the new British Ambassador to South Africa, declared in May 1963 soon after his arrival: 'We have mutual strategic links which are very important.' The nature of these 'strategic links' became very apparent in June 1963, a month later, when Britain applied for and was immediately granted permission to fly troops from Kenya over the Republic to suppress African strikers and demonstrators in Swaziland.

### **OTHER NATO ARMS**

Not only Britain but also the other NATO powers are active in supplying military equipment to South Africa. The *United States* supplies *Lockheed Hercules* and *Cessna* aircraft, as well as other important items. Recently the State Department queried certain military supplies to Verwoerd, but withdrew its objection on the absurd 'assurance' that the arms were not for attack but defence. *France* has furnished *Mirage* jet fighters, air-to-ground missiles and other weapons. *La Carbone*, French armament firm, is setting up a factory in South Africa to make rocket missile equipment.

Belgium has granted Verwoerd licence rights to manufacture the F.N. automatic rifle, which is standard equipment for NATO troops. West Germany has recently supplied 63 troop carriers for the S.A. army. NATO powers have supplied a variety of light and heavy tanks to South Africa.

These facts show very clearly from whom Verwoerd is getting the weapons with which to suppress the South African people, and conduct an aggressive policy against Africa and world peace.

Recently, an attempt was made by the colonialist powers to use the old technique of a thief shouting 'stop thief!' to distract attention from himself. Inspired reports were spread in the Western press that Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic had entered into agreements to supply arms to South Africa. The Governments of both countries issued official and categorical denials. A.D.N., official German news agency, issued a statement on June 22, 1963, describing the reports as 'completely untrue', and cited the Foreign Trade Ministry as declaring: 'The German Democratic Republic has not delivered military equipment such as arms to South Africa at

any time. No official contracts or agreements on the goods existed between the two countries, nor was it intended to conclude any.'

### **AID AND COMFORT**

The imperialist powers, in addition to flagrant and direct military assistance, amounting to intervention, also provide aid and comfort to the bloodstained Verwoerd regime in a number of other ways.

It is no longer possible for them openly and directly to support and excuse apartheid at the United Nations and other international gatherings. Attending the United Nations Trusteeship Committee last year, Mr. Patrick Wall of Britain said apartheid was 'morally abominable, intellectually grotesque and spiritually indefensible'. Similar high-sounding condemnations came from United States and other imperialist representatives.

The hypocrisy of such talk was exposed for all to see, however, when the crucial 'sanctions' resolution was placed before the General Assembly. This historic resolution was passed by 67 votes to 16. It called on all U.N. members to break diplomatic relations with and to end the passage of ships and aircraft to and from South Africa; to cut off trade, including arms and ammunition supply. It asked the Security Council to impose sanctions to compel South Africa's compliance with U.N. resolutions and to consider her expulsion.

Britain, the United States and France opposed the resolution. (The rest of the 'sixteen' were: Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Greece, Spain, Ireland—all European Common Market countries; Australia, Canada, New Zealand—of the British Commonwealth; and disgracefully two 'non-white' countries whose representatives bowed down to lick Verwoerd's boots—Turkey and Japan. And of course the representative from 'South Africa'.) That was the line-up at Lake Success last November.

And, though soundly beaten on the vote by 67—16, these Western gentlemen, who are always giving us sermons on 'democracy', 'fair play' and so forth, have continued to ignore, defy and sabotage the solemn United Nations Resolution ever since.

They continue to harbour Verwoerd ambassadors and diplomats and maintain their representatives in Pretoria and Cape Town.

Britain, the United States, France, Italy, West Germany, Japan and other capitalist countries are not only keeping up their thriving trade with South Africa, but even expanding it. Their ships and planes throng South African seaports and airports, and their own ports welcome craft from the Verwoerd Republic.

Above all, as we have seen, they continue to deliver into the hands

of Fouché, Verwoerd's Defence Minister, the very weapons, planes, tanks, bombs and firearms to murder African patriots and freedom-fighters and innocent African men, women and children.

### **WE ARE NOT ALONE**

The Nationalist Party Government of South Africa relies very heavily on its imperialist friends abroad—not only the shaky and tottering regimes of Welensky and Salazar, but also, and behind them, too, the powerful forces of Britain, the United States and the NATO military alliance. 'Look,' boasts Verwoerd, 'we are not isolated. We are a part of the "free world" [save the mark!] and they will not let us down.' There is some truth in this boast—but it is not the whole truth.

**For we, the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa, are also not alone. We have staunch and true friends beyond our borders, friends ready to fight with us and die with us in the cause of African freedom. Our friends are in every continent and in every country, even in the countries that are ruled by the allies and partners of Verwoerd. And—while Verwoerd's friends are interested only in money they get from the profits of apartheid and will rat on him as soon as his ship begins to leak—ours are true allies and comrades who will stand by our side through thick and thin until victory is won for freedom.**

First and closest among our friends are the people of the whole Continent of Africa ; both our comrades-in-arms on our borders, in South-West, the High Commission and Rhodesian and Portuguese-occupied lands of Africa, joined with us in the common struggle for independence from White rule, and also our brothers and sisters of Free Africa, the independent sovereign states of our continent, to whom our bondage in the Slave South is an intolerable insult and an ever-increasing threat.

The hundreds of millions of the nations of Asia are also on our side. Though they may have unfortunate and deep differences among themselves they are truly united at least on one point: apartheid is an insufferable affront to human dignity. South Africans will always remember with gratitude that newly-independent India brought this country's rulers before the dock of the United Nations for the first time when she raised the treatment of persons of Indian origin in what was then General Smuts's South Africa, and Asian countries have consistently supported resolutions and measures against apart-

heid at Afro-Asian and other world forums. In all of Asia, only the monopoly-capitalist rulers of Japan have sunk so low as to drag the national dignity of their country in the dust for the sake of doing business with South Africa's anti-Asian racists.

The one-third of humanity within the socialist camp, together with millions of Communists and class-conscious workers of other countries, remain loyal to the 1960 Statement of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties that their meeting:

*'... indignantly condemns apartheid, the inhuman system of racial persecution and tyranny in South Africa, and urges democrats throughout the world actively to support the people of South Africa in their struggle for freedom and equality.'*

The socialist countries vigorously supported the United Nations resolution on sanctions, and similar resolutions and measures at Afro-Asian, international labour and other conferences. Neither Verwoerd nor his opponents stand in the slightest doubt where communists, socialists and the entire labour movement stand in relation to the epic struggle for the liberation of South Africa.

## **AFRICA AND THE SLAVE SOUTH**

Non-Africans, including some progressives, often underestimate and fail to understand the passion and depth with which every African patriot feels on the subject of South Africa. They imagine it is mainly a matter of sympathy with victims of oppression, and when, for example, Africans stage a walk-out from a conference in protest against the presence of a Verwoerd spokesman, they perhaps think they are 'going too far'.

Of course, it *is* a question of sympathy with victims of oppression. The mad-dog tyranny of Pretoria has thrown caution and appearances to the winds; it is hunting tens of thousands of Africans and other non-whites from their homes as if they were animals; it is jailing scores of freedom-fighters, as well as their wives and children, without charge or trial; its filthy racialistic theories and practices are an intolerable insult to human dignity and freedom everywhere.

But it is also *more* than a question of sympathy and protest against a brutal tyranny. The apartheid regime is not only at war with the people of South Africa itself; it is at war with the whole of Africa. In the words of *South Africa's Road to Freedom*:

*'The struggle of the peoples of the rest of Africa and those of South Africa . . . is one and indivisible. White colonialism in the Republic*

*of South Africa threatens the independence, peace and progress of the whole of Africa. [South Africa] is a stronghold and a refuge of imperialism, threatening the gains of the African Revolution; a breeding-ground for plots and activities designed to restore colonialism throughout the continent. . . .*

South Africa has already illegally annexed South-West Africa. It supports and upholds British rule in Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland; white minority domination in 'Rhodesia'; Portuguese fascist domination in Mozambique and Angola. But that is not all. The massive military build-up in South Africa creates a military unbalance which cannot be ignored anywhere on the Continent. Verwoerd's long-range bombers and naval development pose both an immediate and a potential threat to the peace, security and independence of every state in Free Africa.

### **A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH**

Nor is this a military question alone. In a most profound sense the liberation of South Africa is a matter of life and death for African survival and the African Revolution, as a whole.

We, the people of Africa, have set ourselves some most important goals, from which there is no turning backwards; goals which we must achieve in the lifetime of the present generation if our motherland and our peoples are to take their rightful place in the world, and not to be thrust back again into the living death of servitude and foreign conquest.

Among these goals are: the eradication of colonialism and its resulting backwardness, poverty and weakness, from every corner of our Mother Africa; unity, political, economic, military, cultural, in a vast common creative effort to feed, house and clothe all our people, to open to all the doors of learning and culture so that all may rise to their full stature, to harness our rivers and water our deserts so we may make Africa a garden for her sons and daughters; to secure peace, happiness and freedom for our people and for all humanity.

But none of these goals can be secured while the iron heel of the oppressor remains in Southern Africa.

How can we think of a United Africa while so large a part of the body is severed from the rest? Plans for economic integration and development must lag and be distorted while the great natural wealth and the rich development created by African labour are held under alien control in the South. There can never be peace or

security, there can never be assured and complete independence, so long as the colonialist régime in Pretoria, armed, militarized and mobilised for aggression plans and intrigues to restore colonialism and White domination.

**So long as that régime endures there can be no peace in Africa and the world. So long as the people of the South are enslaved, no African anywhere is truly free.**

### **ACCOMPLICES AND PARTNERS**

These are the profoundly important reasons which led the Heads of State at the recent Addis Ababa meeting to decide upon resolute practical assistance to the freedom-fighters of Southern Africa and Portuguese-occupied Africa. The whole African people know that they are involved and committed in South Africa's War of National Liberation, that our struggle is theirs.

This new and powerful understanding is a factor that Verwoerd's colonialist backers will ignore at their peril. For as the war in South Africa mounts in intensity and bitterness, their position will become more and more untenable. The logic of warfare is simple and straightforward: if you help the enemy, you are also an enemy.

Why, let us ask, do Britain, the U.S. and their NATO partners support Verwoerd? Why do they resist sanctions and other collective action against South Africa and when even they cannot defend its abominable crimes talk soothingly about 'methods of persuasion' and hide behind legal quibbles about the United Nations Charter? Why do they traffic with Verwoerd and send him arms to kill our people?

The blunt and simple truth is that these great and hypocritical Powers who are always blathering about the 'free world' have *a vested interest in apartheid*. What, after all, is the essence of this hated apartheid? It is the blatant robbery of African wealth and the merciless exploitation of 'cheap' African labour. *And British, American and other imperialists are profiting hugely by this robbery and slavery*. British capitalists have £1,000 million invested in South Africa's mines and other businesses; U.S. financiers about £400 million—more than in the rest of Africa combined. They earn handsome profits—up to 27 per cent. a year. And while Verwoerd does his dirty work of smashing the liberation and trade union movements to make these huge profits possible, U.K. and U.S. spokesmen get up at international congresses and make pious speeches deploring the 'excesses' of apartheid!



No, gentlemen, it won't work any longer. You are sharing and profiting from the 'excesses'; you are accomplices and partners in apartheid.

### **ANOTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE**

There is another side to this picture. Not all the people of Britain and other imperialist countries—indeed, only a minority section of the capitalists—have investments in the Witwatersrand gold mines. And more and more of the people of these countries are raising their voices in protest against their Governments' policies of aiding and arming Verwoerd. Many of them protest because they feel genuine human sympathy with the suffering and oppressed masses of our people. Others object because they realise that the present policies are fatally injuring and undermining the prestige of 'the West' in Africa and throughout the world.

Recently, Chief A. J. Lutuli, outstanding South African patriot, issued from the little farm where he is confined in Groutville, Natal, a heart-stirring appeal 'to the nations and governments of the world, particularly those giving aid and encouragement to this contemptible Nationalist régime:

**'Cast aside your hypocrisy and deceit; declare yourself on the side of oppression if that is your secret design. Do not think we will be deceived by your pious protestations as long as you are prepared to condone, assist and actively support the tyranny in our land. The test is your stand on the principle: NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.'**

Already there are signs that Lutuli's great appeal has not fallen on deaf ears. Mr. Harold Wilson, leader of the Labour Party, has undertaken to stop the traffic in arms to Verwoerd when he becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain, which seems probable in the near future. In France, a country which has not apparently been very conscious of the South African issue, the famous writer Jean-Paul Sartre has launched a new movement for solidarity with our people. The U.S. leading representative at the I.L.O., suddenly awakened to the violence of African feelings about apartheid, has undertaken to press for U.S. support for the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations.

A brilliant team of African National Congress leaders is now hard at work forcefully pleading the cause of their fellow-countrymen before the nations of the world, and with powerful effect. But, to those pleas, we may add a different note at this time.

## **HANDS OFF SOUTH AFRICA!**

We South Africans are fully capable of dealing with Verwoerd and his South African supporters.

They may have arms and aircraft ; but they are outnumbered and inwardly corrupt ; they lack conviction and a cause worth dying for. As Lutuli has said:

*'The Nationalist juggernaut, top heavy with its crushing weight of military might, is crumbling and rotting at the base. Its present show of strength is a façade to hide its hastening decay and doom. . . . We are steeled by oppression and the daily sight of human values being ground underfoot only makes us cherish even more those values.'*

**The steeled freedom-fighters of our country, whatever the cost in blood and sacrifice, will send this rotten regime crashing to its foundations. What we are asking is that the nations of the world who claim to be our friends should stop helping Verwoerd, thus prolonging our struggle and our agony and increasing that cost of blood and sacrifice. We demand they stop intervening in South Africa.**

We are asking for international action to stop the imperialists helping Verwoerd to kill us.

We are not asking for charity. We should like the world to know that we are at war—and we warn that *those who aid the enemy will not escape justice.*

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What matters in the class struggle is not the colour of one's skin, but one's ideological and class position. In the countries which have freed themselves from colonial oppression, the struggle will intensify, and it is only with the victory of labour, with the elimination of exploitation of man by man, that the genuine prosperity of the young states will be ensured.

—Nikita S. Khrushchov.