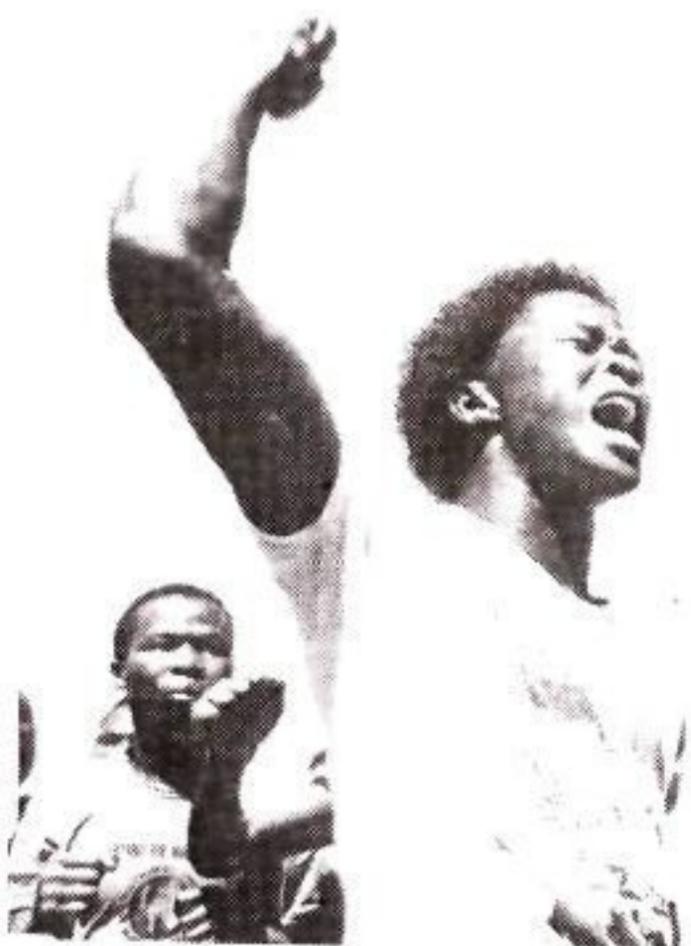


UMSEBENZI

VOICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

THE CHALLENGE AHEAD!

Events of 1987 proved that we are well-set on the road to freedom. During last year the masses were tested as never before in our history and measured up to the challenge. There were some inevitable bruises of conflict. But we enter 1988 ready to take the fight to an enemy which remains knee-deep in its political and economic crisis.



Why do we say this when we know that in 1987:

- ★ The inspiring challenge on the streets to the racist occupation forces disappeared from the front pages and the TV screens.
- ★ The enemy unleashed hordes of black murderous thugs against black patriots in order to spread the falsehood that the struggle is black against black.
- ★ The people's committees were quite badly mauled and the self-defence squads became less active.
- ★ The military launched its counter-offensive against ungovernability by creating their JMCs as a first step towards reimposing the regime's discredited puppet 'councillors'.

★ 30 000 leaders and activists were detained, depriving the trade unions, the mass democratic movement and the communities of some of their most experienced and active militants.

★ The racists abandoned all pretence of reform. State terrorism against the people inside our country and against the bordering black states became the sole order of the day.

Yes, 1987 was such a year.

But it was also a year which showed that the people can no longer be hammered into submission, that they continue to be poised to take the fight to the enemy and to advance towards people's power!

We say that 1987 has shown all this precisely because the enemy's savaging counter-offensive failed to eliminate the main ingredients of revolutionary transformation. On the contrary, the people enter 1988 not only holding their ground but also poised to move forward.

- ★ Some astonishing organisational advances were made at the mass level, despite the scale of repression. COSATU broke through as a veritable giant of organised trade unionism. The youth created its national fighting organ in the shape of SAYCO during the same period.
- ★ The mass democratic movement in general began to find new ways of adjusting to the enemy's assault. Organisations like the UDF successfully used semi-clandestine methods to keep some of their leadership intact and to organise both national and regional get-togethers.
- ★ MK continued and even increased its wounding blows against racist personnel and structures, despite an enormous stepping-up of counter-insurgency measures.
- ★ There are growing signs of disaffection and even mutiny among the black forces on which the regime relies to maintain its power.
- ★ People's power is no longer just an idea; its beginnings were witnessed and experienced by millions in the black ghettos. The impact of this experience is irreversible. Those people's committees and self-defence units which are dormant at the moment are simmering beneath the surface. At the right moment, they will emerge and mushroom as instruments of struggle at an even higher level.
- ★ The people showed a readiness to respond massively at the right moment even where local organs of struggle have been damaged by enemy terror. For example, the grassroots structures in the Eastern Cape were among the hardest hit by enemy action. Yet it is precisely in this region that over 90% of the urban communities answered the calls for political general strikes on May 6th and June 16th.
- ★ Strike actions in 1987 broke all records, exceeding the 1986 figure for man-hours lost by four times. In addition, workers displayed more creativity and staying power than ever before. Victory in the SATS strike was partly assured by workers' action against railway property in the final stages of the dispute. The

mine workers strike in a migrant-dominated sector is a dramatic pointer to the mood and potential of the working class as a whole.

- ★ Political radicalisation reached new heights, especially among the working people. The overwhelming adoption of the Freedom Charter by the COSATU congress immeasurably reinforced this document as the main lode-star of the immediate struggle against racism. The authority and prestige of the ANC-led liberation alliance has, if anything, grown in the past year.

It is for these reasons that the Minister of Law and Order was forced to admit towards the end of 1987 that **'despite security force actions the revolutionary climate is on the increase. We have passed the stage of stone-throwing. We are now moving into a more difficult phase'**. But he also must have been thinking of what was going on in his own camp.

The racist economy remains in a chronic state of recession, aggravated mainly by political factors including international isolation. In addition, the regime has completely failed to break out of its crisis of legitimacy. Its co-optive reform programme has run out of steam. Even the launch of the National Council seems uncertain. Botha fears that it could start a cycle of response from the people similar to the one which followed the tri-cameral fiasco. And the absence of a viable political strategy for emerging from this crisis is leading to growing dissatisfaction and divisions within the power bloc and within its all-white political constituency.

After more than two and a half years of emergency rule and unprecedented repression the people remain unbowed. Their combative spirit remains high even though the search for finding new ways in which it can express itself is not yet complete. The volcanic material continues to accumulate. **Under the umbrella of the ANC-led liberation front let 1988 truly become a year of United Action for People's Power!**



UNITED
ACTION FOR
PEOPLES POWER

ORGANISATION IS THE KEY!

REGIONAL CONFLICTS AND POLITICAL SOLUTIONS

Dear Comrade Gorbachev & Dear Comrades,
The General Secretary of the CPSU in his excellent and refreshing report to the joint Jubilee Meeting spoke, among other things, of unequal trade as one of the factors which is currently essential for the survival of capitalism.

Attention was also drawn to the contradictory nature of the process which contains the potential for a future explosion and is even beginning to cause acute problems within capitalism itself.

Whether capitalism can or cannot function without the proceeds and practices of unequal trade is a profound question which must receive analytical attention. But for the moment the current reality remains that unequal trade provides a great deal of grease for the imperialist accumulation machine. And this motivates imperialism's international policies.

The various levels and techniques of intervention in the developing world is dictated by another connected consideration: the desire to stem the advance of a liberation process which is showing tendencies towards social emancipation. **In other words, the prevention of the growth of the socialist community is regarded by imperialism as both a local and international imperative.** In order to create and maintain a favourable climate for unequal trade and to prevent the flow of the liberation process, imperialism needs, above all, compliant neo-colonial regimes of a comprador nature.

Where such regimes are already in existence they are given support which is of some benefit to the upper crust. Where they are challenged by the people — as in El Salvador — they are provided with the military means to help them meet the challenge. And where the democratic forces are successful — as in Nicaragua, Angola and Mozambique — they organise and launch bandit armies to reverse the victory.

All this brings us to the area of regional conflicts which, as we know, create tensions beyond their immediate borders and which even create the potential for big-power involvement.

Support by the socialist world — and especially the Soviet Union — for liberation forces is unendingly exploited by the capitalist media in order to present regional conflicts as originating in so-called Soviet expansionism and as connected only with the struggles for spheres of influence. **The social issues affecting the people of a country which are at the real foundation of the conflict are invariably pushed into the background.**

It is clear from all this that, whether we like it or not, most regional conflicts have an international context and cannot be ignored in the balance-sheet

of factors which are relevant to the prospects of world peace.

We have special interest in this question because Southern Africa is an area which is punctuated by conflicts falling into this category. Angola and Mozambique are threatened by bandit armies. Zimbabwe, Zambia and all the other Frontline States face regular acts of aggression. **Namibia and our own struggle lie at the very root of our sub-continent's regional conflict.**

In general, both in the interests of advancing world peace and in the interests of minimising the loss of blood in domestic struggles, the prospects of a political solution must never disappear from the agenda of revolutionary movements. But, as we know, abstract desirability is not always the same as concrete feasibility. This is why political settlements and negotiation cannot be elevated to a fetish.



Sam Nujoma, Joe Slovo and Oliver Tambo at the meeting

A political settlement on a world scale has undoubtedly become feasible because, among other reasons, the socialist sector — and especially the Soviet Union — has accumulated sufficient strength to force imperialism to think twice, if not three times, before launching a world adventure.

In the same way there are certain regional conflicts — and our own struggle is one of them — where the prospect of political settlement or real negotiation does not yet depend on diplomatic manoeuvre but rather on the building up of the strength of the liberation forces and escalating blows against the apartheid regime. There are other areas where certain kinds of negotiating schemes are specifically designed to install the counter-revolution. This is the case with Angola and Mozambique which are being pressurised by reaction to negotiate with Pretoria's bandit armies.

In our case, we are not claiming that there is an early possibility of a classical military victory or insurrection against the racist regime. But — as Comrade Tambo has stressed — there does not exist, at the moment, a real prospect of an acceptable political settlement.

HANDS OFF ANGOLA!

DEMOCRATIC COALITION — HOW BROAD?



Broad anti-apartheid unity is today high on the agenda of democratic organisations. Why is this task so important at this moment? Which forces are to take part in the coalition? What is to be the role of existing democratic organisations?

Over the past five years, the UDF and other democratic organisations have activated millions of the oppressed and democratic forces into decisive struggle against the regime. In the process, the mass democratic movement as a whole has undergone changes. The birth of Cosatu and Sayco, the emergence of organs of people's power and the adoption of the Freedom Charter by the UDF and Cosatu are some of the landmarks.

However, in spite of these achievements, the democratic movement still has to reach out to, and activate, the overwhelming majority of the oppressed and democratic people. Some of them — workers, the landless rural population, youth, women, teachers, small businessmen and others — belong to organisations which consider themselves 'apolitical' or 'non-radical', or differ with the progressive movement on some questions of strategy and tactics.

Broad anti-apartheid unity is meant to draw these organisations and their members into active struggle. The forces who will objectively gain from the victory of the national democratic revolution must be pulled into a broad anti-apartheid coalition. In the process of discussion and joint actions, they will begin to better appreciate their positions and role and act in a manner that is consistent with their objective interests.

Broad anti-apartheid unity also aims at those people from among the white population who are breaking with the apartheid system. These forces seek a future without apartheid. They are interested in lasting security and stability. To this extent, the democratic movement has all reason to act jointly (and separately) with them to achieve democratic peace and stability. The democratic movement also has to activate all those who suffer under the effects of repression and the dictatorship of the police and the army. Even those 'liberal' forces who 'simply cannot stand' the carnage and rule by decree have to be drawn into joint and parallel actions on these issues.

A coalition requires some agreement on certain minimum demands as well as a programme of action to realise them. However, the organisations which make up the coalition will certainly differ on many issues: for example forms of action and future goals. These differences cannot be used to break up the coalition; but they must be discussed and debated freely. Components of the coalition do not have to abandon their policies, programmes and forms of struggle as long as they do not go against the objectives of the alliance.

The forces which are interested in decisive victory against the apartheid system — black workers, youth and students, the landless peasantry and others — can certainly win a position at the head of the anti-apartheid coalition. But this is not automatic. Consistent mass actions to achieve their own interests and the interests of the coalition as a whole should earn them the respect of friend and foe alike. To achieve this, they have to be strong — organisationally, politically and ideologically. The organisations to which they belong have to work closely to ensure that the coalition achieves its purpose.

In other words, the extent of co-ordination and joint activity among components of the coalition depends on the extent of agreement on short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. Those who agree on the goal of people's power should not seek to 'swallow' or 'marginalise' each other. If they do this they will weaken the 'core' of anti-apartheid unity and derail the coalition.

The main task of the moment is to isolate the racist ruling clique, weaken it decisively and create conditions for its removal from power. Botha and his generals are enemies of the whole nation. They must be confronted as such. Room must be made in a broad coalition for all forces who support the objective of one united, democratic South Africa.

UNITE ALL ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES!

WHAT TO DO IF ARRESTED



PART TWO



There are two ways in which the police can use what a person says to them in order to get him found guilty in court.

First, let us take the case of a person who denies that he is guilty and makes up a story to explain things away. For instance, Amos is caught climbing over the fence of a power station at three o'clock in the morning. 'What were you doing there?', ask the police. Amos makes up a long story about wanting to see his brother who works the night shift at the power station. The police then prove that he has no brother working there. So they can say to the judge: 'This man told us a lot of lies, which goes to show he really was planting bombs in the power station'. Many a person has helped the police to strengthen the case against him by telling a story that can be proved to be false. The moral is: 'Don't try to be too clever'.

A story which sounds good when you think of it can turn into a total disaster when the police have had a chance to tear it to pieces. It is much better to say nothing. The police are lying if they say 'It will be better for you if you tell us what happened'. In a court case, they can make very little use of the fact that when you were questioned you said nothing.

The second case is that of the person who admits to the

police that he has committed a crime. This is obviously a big success for the police and they will try all sorts of ways of getting a person to admit the charge against him. But they still have some problems after this. The law says that a confession — that is a statement by a person in which he admits that he has committed a crime — can be laid before the court only if it was freely made. The law also recognises that a person under arrest or in detention is subject to all sorts of pressures and is not very likely to admit freely to the police that he is guilty. Before a confession made to a policeman can be put before the court, the police must prove that they did not force the accused person to speak, or to offer him any payment or reward for speaking. He has a chance to dispute this question and tell the court how the police really behaved.



The police sometimes fail to prove that something said to them was said freely, so that a person gets off in court, even though he has admitted the charge to the police. So remember this: if the police have forced you to admit something, it does not mean that the battle is over. Tell your lawyer how the police forced you. Then tell the judge. You may still win in the end.

If you do say something to the police, they will write it

down and ask you to sign it, or even swear to it. They do this because a signed or sworn statement is more useful to them than one simply made by word of mouth. Therefore you should refuse to sign or swear. There is no law which says you must sign. By refusing to sign, you may be able to put right your mistake in speaking.

Another thing the police are likely to do if you admit something is to ask you to repeat before a magistrate what you have said to them. They will not tell you why they are asking this. The reason is that once a statement is made to a magistrate and written down by him, it is regarded as being freely made. It may therefore be used in the court which later tries the charge.

The magistrate is supposed to be independent and is supposed to go into the question whether the police forced or persuaded you to speak. If you are brought before a magistrate, you **must** tell him what went on when you were being questioned. Tell him if the police beat you. Tell him if they tried to deal with you. Tell him if they offered you money. If he is an honest magistrate he should then refuse to write down your confession and the police are back to square one.



FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!

SANCTIONS BEGIN TO BITE

Despite various claims to the contrary by the South African racists, their imperialist allies and certain academics, sanctions against apartheid are beginning to bite.

A study by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement showed that even the limited measures introduced in the past year have had effects:

- Coal exports (which accounted for 10% of total export earnings in 1986) have fallen by 10%.
- Iron and steel exports to the European Community (valued at \$324-m in 1985) have declined dramatically.
- Exports to the US were down by 52% during the first half of 1987, while those to Britain (whose government is steadfastly opposed to sanctions, but which has an active and increasingly effective anti-apartheid movement), declined by 20%.
- The country is experiencing a huge outflow of funds (R15-bn in 1985/6) while domestic investment is falling.

The 1987 annual report of the Reserve Bank said that the low level of investment (both domestic and foreign) was the main reason for the failure to achieve the 3.5% growth target in 1987 despite the substantial rise in gold price. The report said that 'lack of confidence' as well as 'disinvestment ... and exclusion from international capital markets' were the main factors behind the low level of investment. The difficulties in raising loans abroad are also placing strains on the regime's capacity to maintain its existing levels of state expenditure — the biggest items of which are 'defence' and 'law and order'. In the absence of external loans, the escalating military and police expenditure is leading to a widening deficit in the state budget. The deficit is expected to reach R10-bn during the year 1987-88 — R1.6-bn more than anticipated. One senior treasury official recently said that the situation was 'getting out of control'.

Even the existing limited sanctions measures currently in force have thus had some impact on the apartheid economy and the racist regime's capacity to sustain its repressive apparatus. This was acknowledged by the regime's Finance Minister, Barend du Plessis, who said in October **'The negative economic effects of sanctions should not be underestimated'**.

Our movement has never believed that sanctions are sufficient on their own to end apartheid. We have always seen our people's struggle waged inside the country, involving armed

struggle and mass action, as decisive. However, international action, including sanctions, can be an important complement to our struggle. The experience of sanctions against the Rhodesian regime is instructive. For ten years after UDI, the settler regime was largely able to withstand the effect of sanctions because it could rely on the support both of the South African racists and the Portuguese colonial regime in Mozambique. After Mozambican independence the Rhodesian regime was deprived of some of its most important sanctions-busting facilities. Recent studies have shown that the tightening of sanctions at the same time as the armed struggle of the Zimbabwean liberation forces was escalating contributed significantly to the eventual downfall of the settler regime.



The existing sanctions measures in force against apartheid are limited, selective and full of loopholes. Comprehensive and mandatory sanctions would have much more profound effects than the limited measures currently in force. That is why the recent ANC Arusha International Conference called for sanctions to be tightened. Moreover, the conference felt it was important for anti-apartheid supporters to take action now and not wait for governmental action. Particular emphasis was thus placed on peoples' sanctions — actions that can be taken immediately by local groups and communities in situations where their governments are opposed to sanctions. They include consumer boycotts and various forms of direct action, such as that taken by French trade unionists who refused to unload South African coal and even dumped a consignment at sea. **Our demands are clear:**

Isolate Apartheid!

Impose Comprehensive and Mandatory Sanctions Now!

DEFEAT THE LABOUR RELATIONS BILL!

WELCOME HOME, COMRADE!

SACP Statement on the Release of Govan Mbeki



The South African Communist Party warmly greets Comrade Govan Mbeki on his release from prison after 24 years' incarceration.

We salute his courage and commitment which enabled him to withstand the pressures to which he was subjected behind bars, and wish him well in all his future undertakings. We commend his life as a demonstration that the fight for socialism is inextricably linked with the struggle for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa on the lines laid down in the Freedom Charter.

The release of Comrade Mbeki throws a glaring light on the continued imprisonment of Comrade Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners who continue to suffer because of their opposition to the hated system of apartheid. We urge the people of our country and the world community to redouble their efforts to secure the unconditional release of all South African and Namibian political prisoners forthwith, and ensure that no restrictions are allowed on their right to speech, movement, association and assembly.

The release of Govan Mbeki must be regarded as not the end but the beginning of a mighty movement to empty South Africa's jails of all victims of apartheid.



LET COMRADE GOVAN SPEAK!



DI Jones was born in the Welsh industrial town of Aberystwyth in 1883. He contracted TB at an early age and emigrated to New Zealand for health reasons. There he hunted rabbits for a living. He moved to the Transvaal in 1909, working as a clerk for the Victoria Falls Power Company. He lived in South Africa only until 1920, but left an indelible imprint. A great theorist and publicist, he joined the socialist movement and was elected general secretary of the Labour Party in 1914. He denounced the government's pro-war policy, was one of the founders of the War-on-War Movement, and in 1915 broke from the Labour Party to form the International Socialist League, of which he became the first Secretary-editor, responsible for producing the weekly newspaper, *The International*.

With remarkable insight, Jones hailed the February phase of the Russian Revolution of 1917 as 'a bourgeois revolution, but arriving when the night of capitalism is far spent'. Wasting away with TB, Jones left South Africa in November 1920, never to return. While on his way to Moscow he wrote a long report on South Africa for the Communist International, stating that although Africans were no more than cheap sources of labour in the colonial system, they soon became good trade unionists and loyal agitators for their class. National interests could not be distinguished from class interests, and formed the basis of 'a revolutionary nationalist movement in the fullest meaning of Lenin's term'.

While in Moscow, DI Jones did a great deal of writing, and was one of the first people to translate some of Lenin's works into English. In his last letter to Bill Andrews, written shortly before he died in Yalta on 13 April, 1924, he argued that the struggle of South Africa took the form of a 'colonial national movement of liberation'. The appropriate standards to apply were set out in the Theses on the National and Colonial Question. 'We stand for Bolshevism, and in all minds Bolshevism stands for the native worker', he proudly affirmed.

PEN PICTURES OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS

NKULULO NJONGWE — ('BRYCE MOTSAMAI')

Nkululo Njongwe was the son of the late Dr Njongwe, leader of the ANC in the Eastern Cape, and lies buried alongside him at Qumbu in the Transkei. He is an example of the new generation of young communist heroes who have added fresh glory to our Party's history.

Nkululo, a true soldier of Umkhonto we Sizwe, together with his comrade in arms Eldridge Yakithi, died in a ferocious gun battle when they refused to surrender to enemy forces when ambushed near East London. Also known as Bryce Motsamai and Joe Congo, he was a fighter, a poet and a teacher.

To say *Hamba Kahle, Xhego*, we can do no better than quote from his article in *Dawn*, the journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe, entitled *Open*

Wounds of Memory:

'Let us accompany you to the peace valley of the fallen. Allow us to intrude upon your world of silent summers with a message from the living. Take us, for we believe there are messages you left unsaid. Accept us in your midst for we believe we have done you no wrong. Give us messages to carry to those still making the world and in turn pass our word to those that went before. Perhaps there is still something we do not understand, a piece of knowledge that could make things all the easier, a comforting handshake that shall make less pain of your sudden departure ... What becomes of us without you? ... Make us believe that even in your absence the journey is still ours'.

AN END TO VIGILANTES!

EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION



begun to put enormous obstacles in the way of strategies aimed at setting up and strengthening popular organs of control in the schools, and implementing alternative teaching programmes.

Furthermore, the emergency created the space for big capital and, indeed, the state through the Joint Management Committees, to intensify programmes of socio-economic reforms, whose main purpose it is to push aside the question of state power. Education will, undoubtedly, be a prime target for such reforms which are intended to serve as an instrument for co-option and as a means of attempting to dampen the mass demands for political as well as social transformation.

The emergency and the reformist moves are the regime's tactics to defeat the popular struggles for a radical restructuring of the control and content of education within the schools. It is clear that the outcome depends above all on the ability of the student movement to organise, in the new conditions, the active support of the mass of the students for a radical transformation of education.

This can only be achieved by rebuilding the student movement, a task that has already begun, by developing new, semi-legal forms of organisation, by adopting new tactics capable of mobilising the students and sustaining their opposition to apartheid and bantu education, and by linking the education struggle ever more closely with the mass democratic and trade union movement.

developed.

For the same reason the struggle to build organs of people's power in the schools could not succeed. Therefore, while the boycott lasted it was not possible to begin the struggle to create new, democratic forms of education as part of the revolutionary struggle for a national democratic state.

The slogan, **People's Education for People's Power** was raised by the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) in March 1986. The slogan was intended to adjust the educational struggle to the new situation. It meant that the struggle for 'people's education' had to begin immediately with the fight for democratisation and new syllabuses.

Even though 'people's education' could only be fully implemented after the overthrow of apartheid, nevertheless many of these demands could be won immediately. The NECC's decision to call for the return to the schools was certainly not an acceptance of bantu education, but rather a recognition of the fact that the schools provided the fundamental terrain for the struggle towards people's power in education.

The boycott virtually ended in January 1987. But by that time the state of emergency had

The student uprising of 1976 demonstrated the complete failure of the apartheid regime's plan to produce, by means of bantu education, generations of young African people permanently prepared to accept white domination.

The student struggles took a variety of forms after Soweto, but between 1983 and 1986 the boycott of the schools became the main tactic. The boycott won considerable support with about 650 000 students participating in 1984 and 1985. During this period, the demand for educational reform gave way to a struggle for democratic control of education. To some, this struggle revolved around the slogan **liberation first, education later**. The boycott, in fact, made the schools ungovernable by the regime.

Through the boycott the students played a major role in the community struggles, particularly after October 1984. But it became clear with the development of the struggle for people's power and the organisation of street and block committees that, at least for the time being, the boycott was no longer the correct tactic. In fact, the wide support for the boycott raised new problems in this new situation for, with the students out, the schools could not serve as the place in which organisational continuity could be sustained and

DOWN WITH WHITE STATE TERRORISM!

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND



At 9.20 am, sharp, comrade 'Sophie' turns the corner. 'Here comes a true communist,' I think to myself, 'she's always exactly on time!' Without breaking her stride 'Sophie' looks into the shop window and walks on. From inside the shop I heave a quiet sigh of relief. A few minutes later, with some groceries under my arm, I emerge onto the street and head off in the opposite direction.

We arranged yesterday to make this brief visual contact with each other, just to be sure we had both returned from last night's Party task. The task was mailing hundreds of photocopied *Umsebenzis*. We had each taken a different posting route.

That's how it is in underground Party work. Hundreds of small tasks, brief meetings, and the close comradeship with people whose real names, perhaps, you may never know.

Despite the dangers and losses, for all South African revolutionaries the last years of struggle have been inspiring. I think this has been especially the case for comrades working quietly in the underground over many years.

From our own underground work we can see that it is possible now to speak of a big shift. Just a few years ago we would distribute Party and ANC publications without being really able to check on their usefulness. Did they provide concrete guidance to actual problems? We were sometimes not even sure if they reached their addresses.

But now, with the growth of our struggle, we are able to distribute our publications in many different ways. We also get a lot of comments coming back from readers. It is inspiring when the comments are positive. But it is even more useful when there are helpful criticisms — that an article is unclear; or that the language is too difficult; or the photocopies we have made are too small.

Because underground work can be dangerous, you might think we would prefer not having Party tasks too often. But no, all my

comrades in the underground agree we are happiest when working flat out. We are glad to report that in the last years we have had very few gaps indeed! And it is not by chance.

As Lenin always insisted, a vanguard communist party is not a small band of conspirators operating in isolation. Our underground Party members are actively present in the legal mass democratic organisations. It is our duty to be amongst the people. With the huge growth of the national democratic and trade union movements in our country, never before have the challenges and responsibilities for our Party been so great.

One important side of our underground work is ideological. Interest in socialism is beginning to have a mass character within our country. Our people are hungry for every scrap of information on scientific socialism. Youth and workers want to hear about the experiences of socialist countries. What is education like in Cuba? What role do trade unions play in the Soviet Union? Information on these topics is passed around and intensely discussed. Our Party's underground does everything to promote this process. We use every opportunity, legal and illegal, to ensure that scientific socialism takes deep root amongst the working masses of our country.

For us communists this growth of a socialist outlook is not in contradiction with our wholehearted commitment to the national liberation alliance led by the ANC. As more and more working people adopt a socialist outlook in their daily struggles, so they realise the correctness of the national democratic strategy. We have not committed ourselves to national democratic struggle because of 'ideological backwardness' of the masses. No, in South African conditions the national democratic revolution is for workers both a vital goal in itself and the most direct line of advance to the longer-term goal of socialism.

BUILD THE UNDERGROUND!

Perhaps you think I am just repeating points made by the SACP many times before? Maybe, but we still encounter serious confusions about these key questions. Let me take one example. The day before yesterday, during a break in our township area committee meeting, I listened to some Sayco comrades discussing. One of them was saying he supported the SACP 'rather than' the ANC, because he was a 'socialist'. The truth is, no actual member of the SACP would ever talk like that. An important part of the work of most of our underground SACP members is to help build the ANC and MK.

The present period has also brought organisational challenges for our SACP underground. Priority is given to ensuring that workers take up a strong presence on all fronts — within the legal mass democratic organisations, within ANC and MK, and within our Party itself. This does not happen automatically. At all times we need to approach recruitment and organisation with a carefully planned, working class orientation.

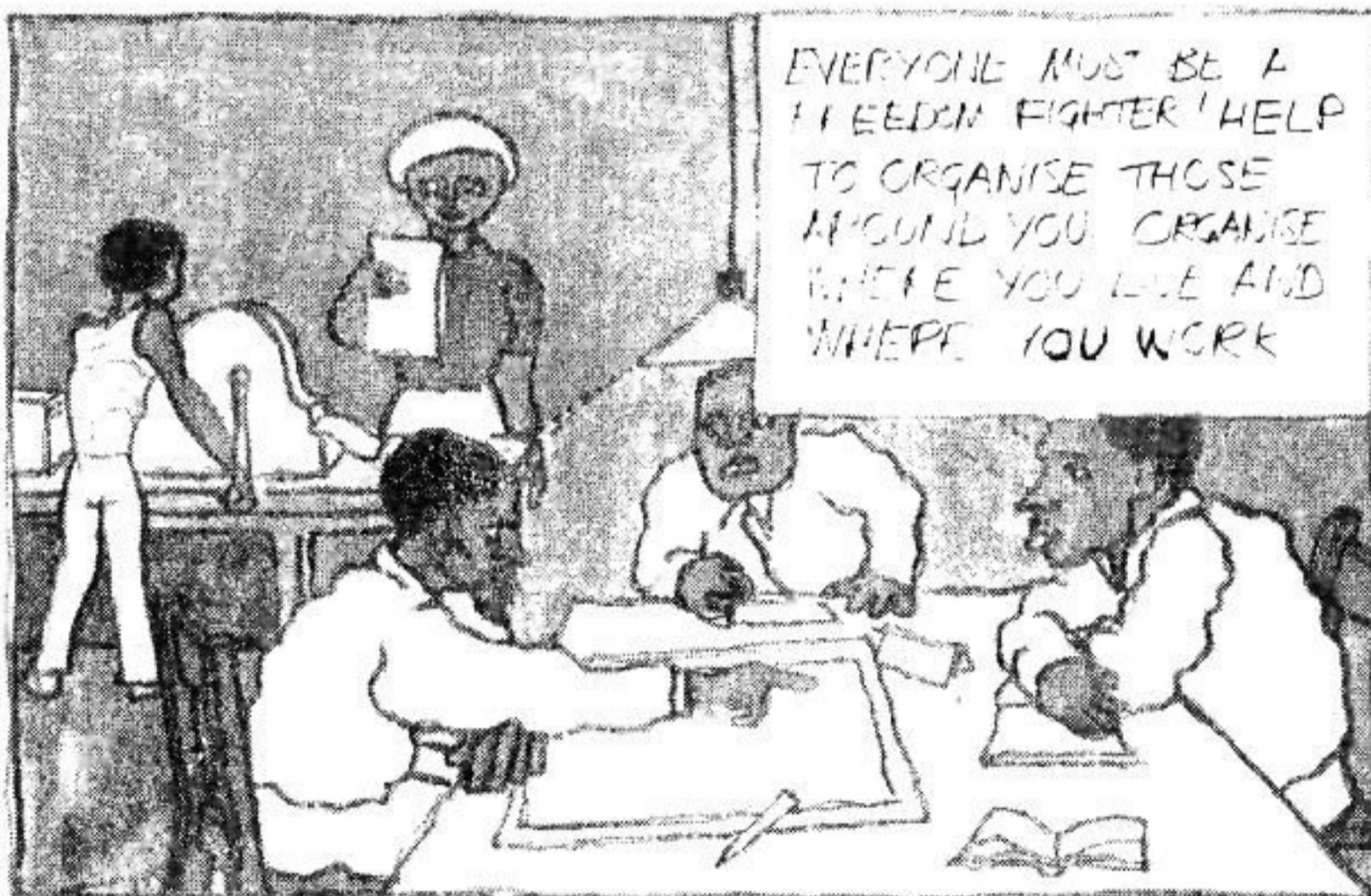
There is one other pressing organisational task that underground Party cadres are having to fulfil in the present. The apartheid regime is going flat out to crush the mass democratic movement. There are tens of thousands of comrades whose entire political experience

has been within legal organisations. Suddenly in the last year and a half they are having to learn some of the skills of the underground.

If there is something South African communists should know, it is how to operate underground. We have the unfortunate distinction of being the longest banned organisation in South Africa. Since 1950 our Party militants have learnt to outwit the enemy, operating under the very noses of the apartheid police. This brings me back to comrade 'Sophie'.

To be honest, I am not sure exactly what tasks my comrade went on to after our brief contact this morning. I do know she is on night shift at her factory later. In the meantime, before clocking in, if I were to guess I would say she is sitting down secretly with two or three other comrades from our township local. At this very moment, like many, many other communists throughout our country she is, perhaps, passing on methods of outwitting police surveillance. Or perhaps she is discussing ideological problems. Or helping with organisational planning.

Whatever she is now doing, comrade 'Sophie' is one more communist devoting her life to our people, our country and our worldwide struggle for liberation, peace, and socialism.



DEFEND THE MASS DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT! 11

OWNERS OF WEALTH RULE SOCIETY

Socialism means more than a change of state personnel, equal democratic rights and a good wage. A socialist transformation also involves a fundamental shift in the class that rules: a transition from the owners of capital to the new owners of the social wealth; the working class and the dispossessed majority.

Socialism means a fundamental change in the property relations that govern our lives; a transfer to the majority, of the ownership of the factories, mines, machines, land, resources etc; a change in the motives for production; in the distribution of wealth; in the legal and political relations that determine our lives. Under socialism, the working class are no longer mere wage slaves, unequal recipients of crumbs from the rich man's table. They own and control the social wealth; determine the direction, pace, politics and character of social change.

All except a handful of society has much to gain from the transition to socialism. That is why the working class, in liberating itself from capitalist exploitation also liberates **all** of society. The SACP, the revolutionary party of the proletariat, is the party best equipped to fight for a socialist future. It is guided by scientific revolutionary theory and wages a relentless war against national oppression as well as wage slavery.

National liberation, itself a revolutionary process, will help to advance the aims of socialism by defeating the vicious system of apartheid and releasing the creative opportunities of the whole people. The Party, however, says that we must go further: we must put an end to the whole system of capitalist property relations. That is why the Communist Party is historically among the first to be attacked by the capitalist ruling class. The Party threatens not just the whole ugly edifice of apartheid, but also the very foundations of capitalism with its wage slavery.

Capitalist social relations are everywhere the root cause of exploitation, poverty, landlessness and glaring inequalities in the distribution of wealth. That is why workers can only complete their economic emancipation when the source of capitalist oppression is lifted.

Capitalism is by its very nature exploitative. Even if the trade union movement secured a living wage for all its workers, capitalism would continue to exploit. As owners of the means of production, capitalists hire labour power in

order to increase their capital; to accumulate. **As Marx said: their prophet is not Moses, Mohammed or Jesus, but Profit!**

The secret of capital wealth is that workers are not paid for all they produce. Capitalist exploitation means that workers are not paid the full product of their labour. No amount of pressure from trade unions, no working class (i.e. trade union) 'politics' can alter that social fact. It is the baseline of capitalist existence. It is their reason for being!

That is why communists say that the interests of the workers and the bosses are irreconcilable. No amount of improvement in wages and work can undo capitalist relations of production. To do this, workers have to lead the forces for change. The mass political instrument of the proletariat is the Communist Party, which is a vital pillar of the workers' liberation alliance.



SOCIALISM IS FREEDOM!

HOW TO MASTER SECRET WORK



12. Secret Communication

Communication is vital to any form of human activity. When people become involved in secret work they must master secret forms of communication in order to survive detection and succeed in their aims. Without efficient secret communication no underground revolutionary movement can function. In fact effective communication is a pillar of underground work. Yet communication between underground activists is their most vulnerable point.

The enemy, his police, informers and agents are intently watching known and suspect activists. They are looking for the links and contact points between such activists which will give them away. It is often at the point when such activists attempt to contact or communicate with one another that they are observed and their would-be secrets are uncovered. The enemy watches, sees who contacts whom, then pounces, rounding up a whole network of activists and their supporters. But there are many methods and techniques of secret work, simple but special forms of communication, available to revolutionaries to overcome this key problem.

In the next few issues of this series we will be discussing these, in order to improve and perfect secret forms of communication. These are used worldwide, including by state security organs, so we are giving nothing away to the enemy. Rather we are attempting to arm our people. These methods are designed to outwit the enemy and to assure continuity of work. The qualities required are reliability, discipline, punctuality, continuity and vigilance — which spells out **efficiency** in communication.

Before proceeding, however, let us illustrate what we are talking about with an example: C — a member of an underground unit — is meant to meet A and B at a secret venue. C is late and the two others have left. C rushes around town trying to find them at their homes, work place, favourite haunts. C tries phoning them and leaves messages. C is particularly anxious because he has urgent information for them. People start wondering why C is in such a panic and why he is so desperate to contact A and B who are two individuals whom they had never

before associated with C. When C finally contacts A and B they are angry with him for two reasons. Firstly, that he came late for the appointment. Secondly, that he violated the rules of secrecy by openly trying to contact them. C offers an acceptable reason for his late-coming (he could prove that his car broke down) and argues that he had urgent information for them. He states that they had failed to make alternative arrangements for a situation such as one of them missing a meeting. Hence, he argues, he had no alternative but to search for them.

The above example is familiar to most activists. It creates two problems for the conduct of secret work. It creates the obvious security danger as well as leading to a breakdown in the continuity of work.

What methods are open to such a unit, or between two activists?

To answer this we will be studying two main areas of **communication**. There are **personal** and **non-personal** forms of communication. **Personal** are when two or more persons meet under special conditions of secrecy. There are various forms of **personal** meetings, such as **regular, reserve, emergency, blind, check** and **accidental**. Then there are various **non-personal** forms of communication designed to reduce the frequency of personal meetings. Amongst these are such methods as using newspaper columns, public phone boxes, postal system, radios and the method made famous in spy novels and films, the so-called dead-letter-box or DLB, where messages are passed through secret hiding places. Coding, invisible ink and special terms are used to conceal the true or hidden meaning in messages or conversations.

From this we can immediately see a solution to C's failed meeting with A and B. All they needed to arrange was a **reserve** meeting place in the event of one or more of them failing to turn up at the initial venue. This is usually at a different time and place to the earlier meeting. The other forms of meetings cover all possibilities.

Next Issue: Personal Meetings & Their Conditions.

**COMMUNICATION —
LIFEBLOOD OF THE UNDERGROUND!**



PROBLEMS OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD

5. People's Culture



The battle to develop a progressive, people's culture is an important part of our revolutionary struggle. We are guided by three basic principles for the transition period.

★ Our immediate objective is a national democratic revolution. In this struggle we have a very important strategic asset. In factories, on township barricades, in the countryside our people are able to draw daily upon the elements of an already deeply-rooted common culture.

★ While the struggle for a united South Africa of people's power is also a struggle for cultural unity, this does not mean abolishing all cultural differences. But this unity will not be built by ignoring the cultural diversity of our country. This is why the Freedom Charter insists that *All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs*. It is only in this way that a true unity will be achieved, in which each language and culture becomes a valuable component part of our overall, common national culture.

★ The winning of the national democratic revolution, the moulding of the South African nation, and the longer-term socialist transformation of our country depend crucially on the working class assuming its leading role in struggle. On the cultural front, the working class must also exercise its leadership. Our emerging national culture must be a culture that enables workers to deepen their own organisation and ideological unity as a class. It must enable the working class to place its imprint on the whole people's camp. In short, it must be a culture that enables workers to play the fullest role in society, winning over broad sectors of our people to a working class, democratic, internationalist outlook.

But how in practice will we consolidate these three basic principles? The fullest answer to this question can only be provided by wide-scale debate and discussion, and by ongoing lessons of organisation and struggle. Here are some of the cultural policies we believe will have to be considered in a post-apartheid South Africa.

Languages: While we may have to use one language for official, national communication, everything must be done to develop all South African languages and cultures. Among other things, this means the establishment of a

publishing industry whose major thrust will be the translation of all important publications. Clearly cultural programmes will have to be based both on local and regional as well as on national levels to ensure that every constituency is harnessed into building a new national consciousness.

Anti-imperialism: Commercial culture plays a major role in international imperialist domination and destabilisation. While promoting our people's access to the best of world culture, we will have to overcome the corrupting effects of cultural imperialism. In part, this will mean deepening the cultural exchange between our people and the countries of the socialist bloc, and of the developing world. In particular, South Africa will also have to become culturally truly part of the African continent.

A Balanced Attitude to the Past: The dangers of unrealistic cultural expectations resulting from people's power must also be taken into account. While the cultural monuments of racism must be destroyed, there is need to preserve and reform national institutions such as libraries, museums, architecture, archives and education. At the same time we will be creating cultural monuments to commemorate the achievements of our revolution.

Local Cultural Centres: It will be necessary to establish state-financed community cultural centres at local level in order to correct the present inequalities between different communities, and between the urban and rural areas. Trade unions, other mass democratic organisations and the grassroots organs of people's power will have a key role to play in these reconstruction efforts. At the local level the minimum facilities for every town, village and rural area should include a cinema, sports facilities, library and community hall with trained cultural and sports administrators and workers.

Education: Our future state Education and Cultural Ministries will have to co-operate closely to ensure that formal school programmes have a core cultural syllabus.

Women: None of the above can be achieved without the genuine emancipation of women. It is women who are the primary transmitters of language and culture.

BLACK SOLDIERS — REMEMBER OSHAKATI!



UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY ECONOMICS

7. GOLD

More than a hundred years ago, the discovery and development of gold was the driving force behind the establishment of capitalism on a large scale in South Africa. Between then and now the country's economy has changed a lot. But all its changes have been influenced by the gold industry and, even now, what happens to gold affects all industries and jobs in South Africa.

Why is gold so important for the South African economy?

There are two reasons. One is gold's **international** role which causes gold to be the most important influence on South Africa's international economic strength. The other is the gold industry's links with other industries inside South Africa which makes the gold industry the largest **internal** influence on the economy. Let us look at both the **international** and **internal** side of gold.

Gold is bought by firms, people and governments all over the world, but it is only produced in a few places. South Africa is the largest producer of gold in the Western world. The only other major producer of gold in the world is the Soviet Union. Although South Africa is the only significant Western source of gold, the demand for gold is worldwide. **But why do people want to buy gold?** After all, gold does not have many practical uses apart from such things as dentistry and jewellery. The other main demand for gold by rich private people and firms is as an investment, a way of holding wealth, for they believe that it will not lose its value over the long term. Gold is bought for this purpose in the form of refined gold bars, or as documents (contracts) entitling the purchaser to an amount of gold even if he or she doesn't actually see the gold. In recent years South Africa developed another form in which gold is bought and sold — the Krugerrand — which is a medallion made of gold and now other countries such as Canada and the UK also produce similar medallions.

The belief that gold will keep its value over the long term is linked to gold's use as money in previous ages. Gold is not used as money now. It is not even the hidden basis of the money we do use. But it did have those roles in the past. From the early stages of capitalism in Europe, over three hundred years ago, until this century

gold was especially important as international money used to pay for foreign trade and debts.

Now governments everywhere still hold some reserves of gold to settle foreign debts, but gold is not important any more as international money. Dollars, pounds and other currencies have replaced it in normal use.

All these uses of gold lead to a wide demand for the output of South African mines. It makes gold the main export of South Africa. Gold is the largest single export and accounts for about half of all the country's revenue from abroad.

The world price of gold goes up and down. Because it is South Africa's main export, increases in the price of gold strengthen the economy's international position and price falls weaken it.

Inside South Africa the gold industry is as important as its effect on the country's external trade. Because it is a huge labour-intensive enterprise, gold production has historically drawn labour in from the whole country (and neighbouring countries) and been a most significant source of wage employment. It still has a powerful impact on total employment, but work in gold mining has become relatively less important. This is because the mining companies invested in new machinery to economise on labour in the 1970s and because employment in other industries has grown.

One of the most powerful internal effects of gold mining is that the huge profits made by the mining companies are used to finance manufacturing and other industries.

The solidarity movements abroad press for sanctions. If sanctions affect the sale of gold, the regime will undoubtedly be significantly hurt.





MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

7. Marxism and Morality

There is no area of debate in which communists are more fiercely attacked and more distortions of Marxism-Leninism are hawked about than in the field of morality. Communists, say our enemies, have no morals. All the opponents of socialism, from the liberals to the far-right, claim that communists believe that 'the end justifies the means', and are prepared to commit any crime so long as it serves their revolutionary aims.

As we said in the previous article in this series, great philosophical debates are always intensely relevant to current phases in revolutionary struggles. In the present phase of the struggle for socialism, world peace and national liberation, there is probably no philosophical debate more crucial to our struggle than the debate on this question of morality. We can see this from the way the Soviet Union is constantly under attack on the issue of 'human rights' and from the way the Botha regime constantly tries to portray South African communists as grey, faceless agents of Moscow.

The branch of philosophy which deals with moral issues is called *Ethics*, and it is striking that in their attacks on Marxism our enemies accuse us of believing things which are, in fact, part of their own ethical theories. For instance, the idea that we are justified in doing any sort of evil thing for a good end really originates in an ethical theory called Utilitarianism, worked out by the British liberal philosophers Jeremy Bentham (1748-1842) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). According to Mill's 'principle of utility' an act is only good insofar as it tends to promote 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' of people. Actions are not objectively good or evil in themselves. They are to be judged only in terms of their consequences. Modern versions of this theory are sometimes called *Consequentialist* theories of ethics.

Now, clearly, if this theory are correct, it would follow that we could, in certain circumstances, like those which arise in an armed revolutionary struggle, perform actions which are absolutely model cases of what is evil or unjust. We could, for instance, condemn innocent people to death and then try to justify the act on the grounds that thousands of struggling workers and peasants

would benefit from the death because it was (for some or other reason) necessary to the struggle.

Obviously communists do not hold with the kind of ethics which could lead to this sort of thing happening. We can see that they do not from the fact that our movement, despite enemy provocations, expressly forbids deliberate attacks on innocent civilians. Such unjust actions are forbidden because communists, although they recognise that changing circumstances of struggle may compel us to do some things which would be wrong in normal circumstances, also realise that the aims of a revolutionary process can be perverted if unjust means are made part of that process.

A deeper reason underlies Marxist thinking on this point: unlike many bourgeois philosophers, Marxists are realists in ethics, just as they are in epistemology. We believe that history is an objective social process, and that moral values are part of that process. In Article 4 of this series, we considered the theory of *Historical Materialism* which explains how this process works. We saw that the mainsprings of revolutionary change lie in the constantly developing productive forces. Now these forces must include our powers of reasoning, without which the development of scientific theory would be impossible. But in a world without moral values, i.e. in a society which did not distinguish truthfulness from lying and in which there was no justice or respect for persons and their ideas, reasoning would become impossible.

So we see that, far from ignoring moral values, communists find the need to respect such values at the very core of the theory which moulds their whole outlook on political life.

Read the AFRICAN COMMUNIST
The theoretical quarterly journal of the
South African Communist Party
Available from Inkululeko Publications
39 Goodge Street, London W1P 1FD, UK

AN END TO BOTHA'S GALLOWS!



PARTY LIFE 2. Democracy and Centralism

A vanguard Party has to pay special attention to the correct organisation of its forces. It must focus its organisational work where the masses of our working people are concentrated; where it is easiest to organise. Rooted among the people we can obstruct the enemy's efforts to infiltrate and destroy our Party.

Lenin pointed out that 'the main strength of our movement lies in the organisation of the workers at the large factories ... Every factory must be our fortress'. In other words a **network** of units must be built in the very midst of the working people — in the **factories and townships**. Particularly in conditions of cruel persecution and repression our Party structures must combine the principle of organisation at a '**territorial and production level**'.

Individual cells must be formed at the factories, on the mines and farms and in the townships at street level across the length and breadth of our land. Units must be small, completely unknown to all but the members of the unit and the comrade to whom they report and they must observe strict secrecy in all their work. Units have a variety of tasks to perform — they must recruit to the Party's ranks the best and most committed militant fighters; they must work to build and strengthen the trade unions and the mass democratic movement; they must spread the ideas of socialism and they must be active in our people's army, MK.

Obviously many of these units will differ in size, function and scope of tasks. Acting alone, their strength is diminished. Their collective strength has to be harnessed and co-ordinated by leadership structures. These leadership structures operate at a section, township, city or regional level in a chain reaching up to the highest level of our Party — the Central Committee and its organs.

This co-ordinated activity needs very strict use of Leninist rules and principles of secret work. The first and most important of these, which guides the entire life and activity of the Party, is the principle of **Democratic Centralism** — the living tissue which binds our Party together — organisationally and ideologically. Democratic Centralism ensures not only strict discipline but also the broadest possible participation of all members in the life and direction of the Party. Even in conditions of fascist persecution, democracy ensures that the Party is linked to the masses and their practical experience

of day to day struggle.

Democracy does not mean endless discussion and debate but rather serious examination of burning problems of the day. Nor does democracy mean that the secrets of our Party are known to all members. On the contrary, democracy recognises the need for very strict secrecy and division of responsibility in practical tasks. Discussion and debate of all questions guarantees the ideological education of members who must have knowledge of revolutionary theory and practice.

Democracy ensures that party discipline is a voluntary response by revolutionaries who are conscious and ready to fight selflessly for the Party's cause and decisions. A history of the working class struggle shows that parties which ignored the democratic principle in party life may sometimes create a gap between themselves and their mass base, or at worst commit crimes in the name of socialism. Stalin is a tragic example of this kind of distortion.

Stressing the need for constant discussion and examination of party policy and direction Engels stated: 'The working class movement is based on the sharpest critique of the existing society; criticism is its vital element, so how can it itself avoid criticism and seek to prohibit discussion'.

In a Party which truly conforms to the Leninist principles, there should be no antagonistic contradiction between democracy and centralism. Centralism means that all majority decisions democratically adopted by our Party, the constitution and rules, the broad parameters of its theoretical standpoint and instructions given to members and units by higher collectives, are binding and compulsory. Our Party, fighting in conditions of repression and underground struggle, cannot afford the luxury of non-implementation of decisions, factionalising or destructive criticism. It must act as a united, cohesive whole. Centralism also ensures that the vital secrets of our Party, its membership, structures and operational plans are hidden and safeguarded from the security police.

Thus we can see that democracy and centralism go hand in glove and together they ensure that our Party is ideologically and organisationally united. This **ideological and organisational unity** is the backbone of our Party — unity is not a spontaneous process. It must be fought for and maintained as a necessary condition for our inevitable victory.

ORGANISATION IS THE KEY!

HISTORY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

11. THE 1970 CC AUGMENTED MEETING

The 1970 Augmented Central Committee meeting was an important milestone in the history of the SACP. The last National Conference of the Party was held under conditions of illegality in South Africa in 1962. Since then several full Central Committee meetings had been held. A regularly functioning and active Executive had been appointed to direct and intensify the activities of the Party.

But the particularly difficult conditions facing our Party, especially the widespread dispersion of our cadres, hitherto made it impossible to convene a meeting sufficiently representative in character, which could in the democratic tradition of our Party, review the activities of the Executive, assess the lessons of our successes and failures and decide the future policy and leadership of our Party.

Heavy blows had been struck by the fascist police at the Party and other revolutionaries in the 'Rivonia', 'Fischer' and other trials of the sixties, many members of the Party including leading cadres, suffering lifetime and other severe prison sentences. The Party's internal organisation had suffered serious setbacks; its cadres were widely scattered, some in exile on Party duties, others serving in the national liberation army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Formidable tasks therefore faced the Augmented Meeting. Following widespread discussion at all levels of the Party, the Meeting — comprising a majority of non-members of the Executive, including a number of Party members who had already participated in armed struggle — was called to review comprehensive organisational and political reports from the Executive.

Far-reaching developments in South Africa, on the African continent and in the international situation faced the Party with new problems and tasks. The hard and dangerous work of rebuilding the Party's organisational structure under conditions of ferocious terror; the unfolding of the armed struggle for the advance of the South African revolution; the mobilisation of the working class and rural masses, and the various strata of oppressed people; the strengthening of the national liberation movement headed by the ANC; the unfolding of a

broad people's alliance in Southern Africa against the combined forces of South African imperialism, Portuguese colonialism and the illegal Smith regime — backed by international finance capital — these and related problems occupied the focus of the meeting's deliberations.

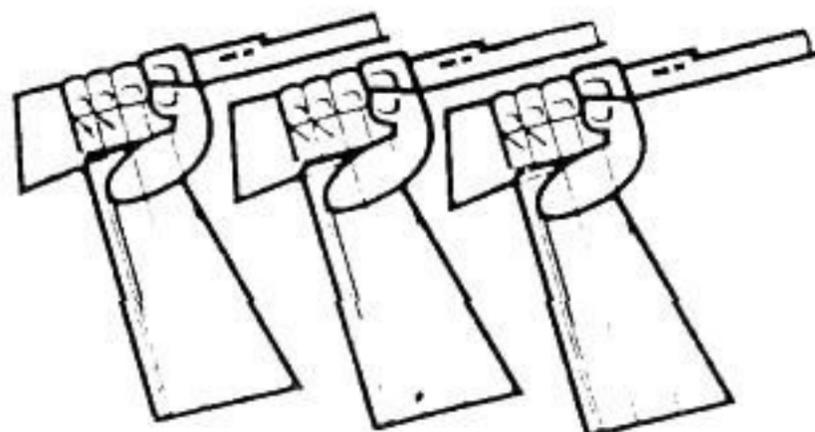
In addition, the meeting reviewed and assessed the Party's international policy. It endorsed the policy and activities of the Executive in relation to the international communist movement, and decided upon measures to strengthen our activities in this field.

The Party and the Armed Struggle

A good deal of the discussion at the meeting focused on the strategy and perspectives of armed struggle under South African conditions, on the basis of a document on this theme circulated by the executive and in the light of the combat experience already gained.

The meeting adopted a resolution setting forth a number of guidelines on this question, pointing out that the armed struggle was not to be approached as a purely military question, but that operations must be planned to arouse and organise the masses. The theory that localised operation of full-time guerrillas would themselves generate revolution was rejected. Organised armed activity should not be postponed until we have achieved complete political mobilisation and advanced nationwide organisation.

Emphasis was laid on the character of the fighting force as one of political cadres, subordinate to the political movement, and based on conviction and commitment rather than traditional bourgeois-type army discipline. Political and military leadership must be co-ordinated and eventually integrated.



STOCK MARKET CRASH

In October 1987 stock markets in every capitalist country crashed. The three largest (in New York, Tokyo and London) collapsed and the smaller ones went down with them. That included the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Nothing like it had been seen before except for the Wall Street crisis (on the New York Stock Exchange) in 1929.

The stock market events of October 1987 set alarm bells ringing for capitalists and shocked bankers and governments throughout the West. But what is a stock market crash? What caused the 1987 collapse? And what effect will it have on production, jobs and living standards?

The stock market experiences a very sharp and very sudden fall in the prices of the shares that are bought and sold on the stock exchange. (Remember, the words 'stock market' and 'stock exchange' mean the same. We explained how the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and others work in a previous issue).

On most ordinary days the price of shares in some companies go up because more people want to buy than sell them; the price of other shares go down, and the prices of many are unchanged. Overall, these changes balance out to a large extent so that the average change is a small upward or downward movement. When a crash occurs, the prices of almost all shares fall. They fall by a large amount because many people suddenly decide they only want to sell shares and no one wants to buy shares.

That happened suddenly on Monday 16th October 1987 on the London Stock Exchange and it was repeated over the following days. Share prices fell further and further. What was happening in London was also happening in New York, Tokyo and other stock markets. At the lowest point, the prices of shares in London were almost as low as half their initial price.

Why did the crash happen? For eight years the prices of shares had been rising steadily, so why did they suddenly collapse? There are two reasons. One is that the rich people and financiers who buy and sell shares became worried about the profitability of the economy. Capitalist economies always go through periods of crisis as well as booms and then company profits decline. After some years of rising profits in factories, shops and other enterprises, it seemed as if production, trade and firms' profits may soon turn down in a new crisis. That would mean that the dividends (profit payments) people

could get on the shares they own would fall, so they decided to sell their shares before that happened. When they all tried to sell their shares and there were no buyers, share prices fell.

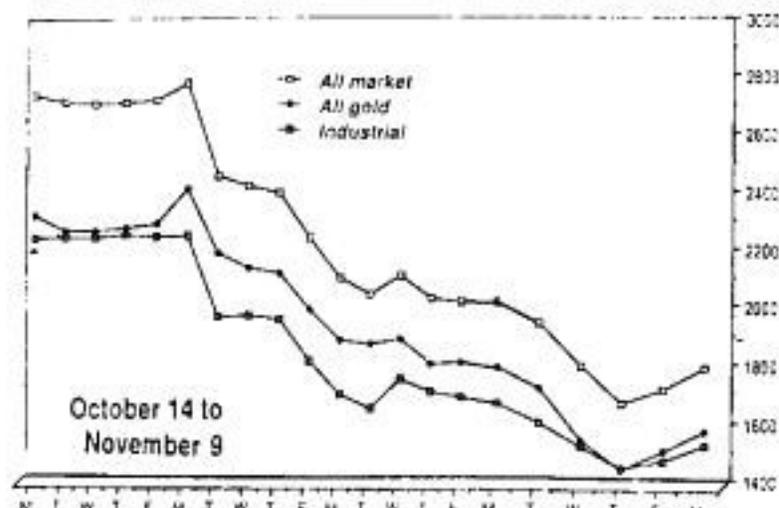
The second reason is that the stock exchange is basically a casino and the people who buy and sell shares think and act like gamblers. They don't have deep or careful thoughts about the prospects for production and trade or for the profits of companies. If they did, they would gradually consider the prospect of a crisis in the economy and adjust their shareholdings. But, instead, they panicked.

Each person's gambling instinct took over. Since he or she thought that other people would sell shares, they decided to sell their own before prices fell further. It was a case of each person gambling on what they thought other people would do and then just following the herd.

Does it matter? The Wall Street Crash of 1929 sparked off a chain of events over the next four years that led to the Great Depression of the 1930s. Millions were made unemployed and poor in the major capitalist countries. Nobody knows if the 1987 crash will have the same effect. There will no doubt be an economic crisis in the advanced capitalist countries and it will cause an increased burden for their working class and for people in Africa, Asia and Latin America. But this will be due to fundamental problems, not just to stock market crashes.

One of the serious dangers the stock market crash poses for capitalism is that it could lead to the collapse of some banks and finance houses (as happened in the after-effects of the 1929 crash). If that happened, it would disrupt the financing of production and trade and have a real effect on jobs.

The JSE crash is represented graphically below by the various indices. Between October 19 and November 5 1987 the Overall Index dropped by 41%, the biggest fall on all stock exchanges except Sydney's.



NO COLLABORATION WITH JMC'S!

CUBA — ISLAND OF FREEDOM



One of the most significant events of this century took place on a small archipelago in the Caribbean Sea on the 1st January 1959. Like the 'ten days which shook the world' heralding the Great October Revolution, the successful conclusion of the revolutionary war from the Sierra Maestra mountains in Cuba has remained to haunt the most powerful capitalist countries — especially the United States of America.

This nearby neighbour, lying only 90 miles north of Havana, has from the outset used every device to isolate and destroy Cuba both economically and militarily. That she has not succeeded in doing so is due to two main factors — the great heroism of the whole Cuban nation and the solidarity of the socialist countries to protect the independence of their beleaguered ally.

In the 28 years which have elapsed since then, Cuba has gained the respect and admiration of the many liberation organisations and countries fighting for freedom throughout the world.

Africa in particular has received unstinting and selfless help from Cuba in its efforts to rid itself of colonialism. If it were not for the help from Cuba, the revolutions in both Ethiopia and Angola might well have been smashed by renegade Somalia and racist South Africa, working on behalf of the USA.

But military help is only a small part of this support. Today thirty seven countries throughout the world receive help from over 50 000 Cuban volunteers. These include doctors, dentists, builders, teachers and technicians as well as soldiers. Such help, in most cases, is given free of charge from a country which itself is relatively poor, but whose people have been taught and inspired by such great leaders as Marti, Fidel and Raul Castro, Camilo Cienfuegos, Che Guevara and many others.

When Christopher Columbus saw Cuba on the 27th October 1492, he thought that it was the mainland of America. His Spanish sponsors ruled over and plundered it for four hundred years.

It was really in 1868 that the struggle for independence began. The Spaniards were soon overthrown only to be replaced by a neo-colonialist type of oligarchy. Many heroic uprisings took place in the following 90 years, but it was the defeat of the fascist Batista's forces and the triumphant entry into Havana by Fidel Castro which finally brought about a definitive independence for the people of Cuba.

Up to this point Cuba was virtually an American colony. US companies and businessmen owned 90% of the mineral wealth and practically all its industry and cattle ranches, as well as over half the sugar production. Havana was a cesspool of gambling and prostitution, a captive playground for the local rich and their tourist counterparts. The greater part of the indigenous people were illiterate and poverty-stricken.

In the relatively short span in which socialism has guided the destinies of the ten million inhabitants of this island, great changes have taken place.

They have done away completely with unemployment and have introduced a highly efficient agrarian policy with a more diversified agricultural method as opposed to the one-crop sugar economy of the past. Their infant mortality is one of the lowest in the world and life expectancy one of the highest, standing at over 70 years of age. They are confident that it will be over 80 years before the turn of the century. Their education system is easily the best in Latin America and indeed stands comparison with any part of the world. Today, 3½ million, young and old, are actively participating in educational classes. Women have advanced swiftly in all spheres of life; art and sport thrives; their ballet is unique; racism has been completely eradicated. Every year more universities and technical colleges are built and even accommodate overseas students as guests of the government. Writers, poets and scientists are highly honoured; heroes of labour are revered by all.

The Cubans are a proud and confident people with a deep and sincere internationalist outlook. They know that the collective spirit which has brought about their freedom must be applied to all exploited nations to work collectively for their liberation as well. And they have shown in very concrete terms the will and ability to help bring about this historical event.

But perhaps of outstanding significance for us is what a veteran of our movement said on her return from Cuba. She said she had seen a country which mirrored the type of non-racial society she envisaged for South Africa, where black and white can live together in harmony unaware of the pigmentation of the other's skin!

CHE LIVES!