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COMMUNIST CALL  
TO AFRICA



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## **THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST**

*Published quarterly in the interests of African solidarity, and as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought throughout our Continent, by the South African Communist Party*

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## CONTENTS

### 5 **A Communist Call to Africa**

For the Freedom, Independence, National Revival and Social Progress of the Peoples of Tropical and Southern Africa: Statement issued after a recent meeting of a number of Communist and workers' parties of Africa.

### 34 **Death of Moses Kotane**

Speeches and messages of condolence from people's leaders in all parts of the world.

### 47 *Phineas Malinga* **Prisoners of Fascism**

The international community must make a greater effort to secure the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners in South Africa.

### 53 **The Angolan Revolution: Main Phases in the Development of MPLA**

The concluding section of an interview by Joe Slovo with Lucio Lara, member of the Political Bureau of the MPLA Workers' Party and Central Committee Secretary for Organisation.

### 74 *John Ngara* **The 'Internal Settlement' and the Zimbabwe Revolution**

A Zimbabwean reader analyses the political and class make-up of the African forces taking part in the so-called "internal settlement" in Rhodesia.

### 84 *Vukani Mawethu* **Africa: Notes and Comment**

Zaire: France Insults Africa; Tanzania: Lonrho Expelled;  
Malawi: Elections for the First Time.



## 91 **Book Reviews**

*The Black Homelands of South Africa*, by Jeffrey Butler, Robert I. Rotberg and John Adams; *Biko*, by Donald Woods; *No. 46 — Steve Biko*, by Hilda Bernstein; *The Killing of the Imam*, by Barney Desai and Cardiff Marney; *Secret Weapon in Africa*, by Oleg Ignatiev; *South Africa and US Multinational Corporations*, by Ann and Neva Saidman; *Behind the Scenes in Two Worlds — in the German Democratic Republic and the USA*, by Elaine and Harry Mensh; *Chief Kgama and His Times*, by J. Mutero Chirenje.

# A COMMUNIST CALL TO AFRICA

*A number of Communist and workers' parties of Africa met recently and elaborated the following document. They present it as the synthesis of their collective thought on the situation in Tropical and Southern Africa. It is their belief that this document provides a basis for discussion among all parties, militants, patriots, progressives, revolutionaries and Marxists in Africa.*

## **FOR THE FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE, NATIONAL REVIVAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLES OF TROPICAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

Our day witnesses great historic achievements and revolutionary change. The international influence of the socialist community has become the decisive factor of present-day development. In all continents the pressure of the progressive forces is mounting. The abolition of the last remnants of colonialism and racism is nearing completion. Neocolonialism, the essence of which is to preserve with new forms and methods exploitation of developing countries, is encountering increasingly determined resistance from these countries



and peoples. They are unremittingly fighting to consolidate their freedom and independence. More and more liberated countries are taking the road that can ensure a socialist orientation in their development. They are resolutely defending their historic option and repulsing the interference of reaction and imperialism in their internal affairs. In our continent the same objective laws of social development operating throughout the world manifest themselves but in a form consistent with the national characteristics and historical features in our continent and its islands.

The collapse of colonial empires, the winning of political independence and the formation of independent nation states in Africa is one of the greatest historic gains of the African peoples. This was made possible by the changes in the international correlation of class forces due to the defeat of the Hitlerite fascist coalition and of Japanese militarism, the weakening of international imperialism, the emergence of the world socialist system, the great upsurge of the national liberation movement and the unfailing support given to it by the socialist states and the international working-class and Communist movement.

The peoples that have won political independence are intensifying their efforts to consolidate it and to achieve economic independence. Life, and the logic of the liberation struggle are repeatedly demonstrating tht these objectives are closely related to the struggle for social liberation.

The socialist orientation of the progressive African states is one of the manifestations of the objective laws of the modern epoch, the epoch of transition of a growing number of nations from an exploiting system to socialism.

The glorious victory of the heroic people of Vietnam under the leadership of its Marxist-Leninist Party over US imperialist aggression, represents one of the most inspiring pages of the revolutionary movement of our time. Today under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam a reunified Vietnam is on the road of socialism, progress, peace and democracy. This victory as that of Laos and Kampuchea galvanised revolutionary energies throughout the world.

The victory of the protracted armed liberation struggles of the liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau

were events of outstanding historic significance for the continent of Africa generally and Southern Africa in particular. The victorious liberation movements of Angola and Mozambique have set themselves the task of creating conditions for the building of socialism in their countries. To lay the foundations for their new societies they are creating state forms based on the workers and peasantry led by MPLA and FRELIMO which have begun the process of transforming themselves into vanguard parties of the working class guided by the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The ever-growing solidarity of the forces of socialism and national liberation was recently most strikingly in evidence in the struggle of the Angolan peoples against imperialist and racist aggression and African reaction. The glorious victory won by Angola with the support of the Soviet Union, Cuba, other socialist countries, progressive African states and all democratic forces made a significant contribution to wiping out colonial slavery, racism and neocolonialism in our continent. This victory is an impressive expression of the strength of proletarian internationalism. Now that Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, the republic of Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe have won their independence the African peoples are rising for a decisive assault on the last imperialist strongholds of colonialism and racism in Southern Africa.

## **1. THE PRESENT PHASE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The era of colonial slavery has left a deep imprint on the social structure of the African countries, on their economy and on their political and cultural life. The socio-economic and technical backwardness of the African peoples is the direct result of imperialist plunder and exploitation. The grim consequences of criminal colonial rule in Africa have not yet been overcome. International imperialism and its chief instrument the multi-national monopoly corporations remain the chief enemies of and main obstacle to the progress of the peoples of Africa.

The economy of most African countries is generally dependent on the imperialist monopolies. Monocrop farming, imposed by the



metropolitan countries, is still predominant in agriculture, the occupation of the vast majority of the population. The peasants are brutally exploited, especially by the multi-national corporations, which control the world capitalist agricultural raw materials and food market.

As in colonial times, industry in the countries of Tropical Africa is confined to mining and primary processing of raw materials, and key sectors in it remain in the hands of the imperialist monopolies. Industrialisation on a national basis is deliberately slowed down by neocolonialism.

Utilising new methods such as certain kinds of "aid" and "assistance" under unjust conditions; establishment of puppet regimes and forcing unjust treaties the industrialised capitalist states seek to tie even closer Africa's economy to the world capitalist market and to orient the development of African countries only on the capitalist road.

By means of economic and financial levers of the world capitalist market, the almost excessive monopoly over maritime transport and freight rates, and by dictating the prices of technology international imperialism not only continues to rob substantially the peoples of the fruit of their labour but also increases its economic and financial pressure on them. Under the conditions of the present-day general crisis of the capitalist system imperialism utilises to the utmost the means available to it to impose on the African peoples the harmful consequences of its own crisis.

After the achievement of independence capitalist development in Africa intensified. At the same time, a specific feature of capitalist development in Africa is that the imperialist monopolies remain the predominant force and that national capitalism is developing in backward and often parasitical forms and having numerous links with the modes of production that preceded. It is developing mainly in the services and circulation sphere and not in the sphere of material production. Consequently even the positive effects which could evolve objectively from capitalist development are extremely limited.

After achieving independence the economic development rates of the African countries have grown somewhat. However this limited growth is insufficient to ensure in the foreseeable future a solution to

the pressing problems involved in abolishing economic backwardness. Between 1960 and 1975 the share of non-agricultural output in the gross national product of the African countries grew from approximately 20 per cent to more than 30 per cent. This growth was due mainly to the mining industry, whose annual growth rates averaged 16 per cent, and was to be observed in a small number of countries. With regard to agriculture its rather limited development takes place mainly in the production of export crops. This corresponds to the interests of foreign monopolies and not the African peoples who suffer from a chronic lack of food products.

### **Population Changes**

The changes taking place in the economic basis of the African countries have led to changes in the composition and structure of the population.

Here it is necessary to draw attention to the importance of the problem of demographic growth.

This phenomenon is different in different countries (geographic conditions, higher or lower degree of underdevelopment, etc.).

This problem should be considered with due account for each country's particular conditions. But we are convinced that only socialism can offer a suitable solution to this problem.

In Africa socio-class differentiation is deepening — 17 per cent of Africa's population now receives 70 per cent of the national income.

In the period from 1960 to 1975 the number of wage and salary earners in Africa increased from 20 to 32 million, numbering more than 11 million in the Arab countries of North Africa, about 11 million in the countries of Tropical Africa and approximately 10 million in the countries of Southern Africa.

Some of the Tropical African countries now have a working class and in others it is in the process of formation. In spite of the fact that this class is growing slowly and its development is hindered by backwardness of the productive forces it nevertheless represents a considerable political force. Today the African proletariat, especially in South Africa, is thus a formidable force. In Tropical Africa it still retains numerous links with the countryside. Highly concentrated in the main urban centres, in the ports and at the



relatively few but often rather large industrial enterprises its class militancy is growing swiftly. Its political consciousness and organisational forms are developing. The working class has built its own trade unions and in some countries its own Party. It is essential that the political role of these Parties should be developed and strengthened.

The working class is objectively becoming more and more the defender of the interests of all the working people. From the economic struggle for their own rights and interests many contingents of the proletariat are going over to political actions against neocolonialism, local reactionaries and international imperialism. At the present stage of the national democratic revolution even though the proletariat has certain objective and subjective weaknesses it remains the most consistent revolutionary force in the struggle for national and social liberation, national economic development, industrialisation, the promotion of cooperative forms of the economy, the surmounting of tribalism — that blight of the African peoples — and for universal cultural rejuvenation.

In this struggle the peasantry, which in African countries comprises the majority of the population, is the natural and numerically strongest ally of the working class. It is impossible to ensure real social progress for a long period without taking into account the very serious problems of the peasantry, without responding to the aspirations of the peasant masses for socio-economic progress, without active support of the peasantry.

Profound changes are taking place in the agrarian structures of Tropical Africa. These changes are directly linked to the rapid extension of commodity-production in the village. The penetration of foreign capital and capitalist forms of production (setting of prices, loans and credit), leads to the destruction of the simple forms of productive forces and growing erosion of the pre-capitalist patriarchal and feudal structures, resulting in the take-over of communal land for the purpose of capitalist exploitation by traditional landowners or by the leading segment of bureaucratic bourgeoisie, the emergence of rural bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie alongside with the large masses of landless and impoverished peasants and agricultural workers. This process leads

to the pauperisation of the rural masses; this is the social picture of rural areas in Tropical Africa.

### **Class Struggle**

The rapidity and the depth of these structural agrarian changes differ from one country to another. The growing heterogeneity of the peasantry inevitably means that opposed social and political interests shall emerge and lead to an intensification of the class struggle. Experience shows that the policies of "modernisation" of the rural area, including the cooperative policies, if not accompanied by popular participation, are in favour of rich rural strata and they necessarily entail the pauperisation of the broad peasant masses.

This is why it is so important for progressive forces to ensure the widest democratic participation of the peasant masses in the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle in the countryside and in the struggle for genuine agrarian reform.

The progressive forces share the demands and aspirations of the working and poor peasantry and try to heighten their social and political consciousness. Naturally therefore the working class and other progressive forces encounter not only the active resistance of the local rich and exploiting classes but also that of imperialism and its instrument the multi-national corporations.

As a result of the migration of rural population to the cities a rapid process of urbanisation has taken place. This rapid growth has created tremendous socio-political problems primarily that of spawning large economically unstable and declassed elements.

The process of urbanisation has also led to the marked numerical growth of the middle and some transitional strata which includes elements dislocated from the rural areas, small traders, artisans, office workers and intellectuals. These strata also take part with varying degrees of intensity in the struggle for democracy and national and social progress. It is from these strata that such an influential force as revolutionary democrats more or less clearly shaped is emerging, and which in the socialist oriented countries controls state power.

The intellectuals constitute an active political stratum in African society. They play an important role in African political life,



particularly during the independence struggle. After independence their number constantly grows, due to the expansion of education and the objective needs of economic rejuvenation. Among them the process of social and political differentiation is deepening. Endeavours to corrupt and to attract some sections of the intellectuals, including from the armed forces, to the positions of reaction is a general practice of the internal and external neo-colonial forces. Nevertheless, a growing number of intellectuals closely connected with the popular masses, forms an integral part of the patriotic and revolutionary forces. There is a growing acceptance, especially amongst the large number of revolutionary intellectuals, of many of the basic Marxist postulates of revolutionary theory and a broad commitment to the aims of socialist transformation.

Communists in Africa recognise and welcome the important ideological and political role played by this stratum in the struggle for national and social liberation.

### **The Bourgeoisie**

In African countries where the capitalist oriented elements came to power after independence there is evidence of a strengthening of the economic positions and even the political influence of the domestic bourgeoisie. The place and field of activity of this class in the national economy vary greatly from country to country and so do the nature and degree of its connection with foreign capital. Nevertheless, despite the emergence of industrial capitalists and agricultural entrepreneurs in a number of countries, the commercial and usury bourgeoisie is by far the largest section of African capitalism. The dominant position of foreign capital, the financial weakness and other limitations of the domestic bourgeoisie virtually confine the activity of this class to the service industry, real estate and commodity speculation.

The African bourgeoisie is trying to modify its subordinate position in regard to the monopolies dominating a number of spheres of capitalist activity. It openly solicits government assistance to gain more favourable conditions for expansion. Their various programmes stress in one form or another the need to transfer to

them those privileges previously reserved for foreign companies during colonial times, to give them access to import and export, set up national financial institutions that would deliver them from the discriminatory curbs imposed by the dominant foreign capitalist banks, allocate domestic capitalists an increasing number of public tenders on a priority basis and grant them a share — with government aid — in companies of foreign origin.

These objectives of the domestic bourgeoisie sometimes put them into conflict with the imperialists. Revolutionary forces take into account, not only the contradictions existing or likely to arise between the domestic bourgeoisie and foreign monopolies, but certain objectives of this or that section of domestic capital within the process of the national democratic revolution. However, one must not underrate the fact that the very nature of the African bourgeoisie's demands is fraught with a deeper involvement of African states in the subjugating structures of the international capitalist system.

One of the focal aspects of capitalist development in Tropical Africa is the formation of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie beginning generally with the high and medium-ranking officials of diverse echelons of the state apparatus. In several countries it is the principal social motor of capital development. Being in control of the economic and political levers of the state, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie is carrying on capitalist accumulation at a high rate to the detriment of the national interest. In practising institutionalised corruption and frittering away the natural resources and public property, it combines explicit submission to the imperatives of the neocolonialist policy of imperialism with extensive nationalist demagoguery. The control it exercises over the state apparatus provides this narrow group with powerful means of gearing key economic mechanisms to the development of all the domestic exploiting strata.

The strategic position of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie links it through diverse interests and stratagems with all the forces interested in establishing a society based on the exploitation of man by man. This stratum plays a role of the first importance in the relations between the domestic bourgeoisie and imperialism while performing a regulating function between the diverse groups of domestic exploiters.

The bureaucratic bourgeoisie presents a danger even in socialist-oriented countries. It is only natural, therefore, that the Communists and progressive forces should intensify their struggle against the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which is an ally of imperialism, a vehicle of neocolonialist policy and a representative of the domestic exploiters.

The armed forces in Africa are playing an active political role which finds its expression in numerous coups d'etat and the establishment of military regimes. After seizing power the socio-political contradictions within the armed forces are greatly intensified and in specific ways the army which is not above the class struggle becomes openly involved in it.

Life itself testifies that in this struggle the military regimes are inevitably confronted by two main ways of development, capitalist or socialist oriented. Consequently they are compelled to seek the support of one or other social force. On the one hand some of the officers sooner or later become mainly the instrument of the international and local exploiting classes and use the organised strength and discipline of the armed forces to strike a blow at the developing revolutionary forces. On the other hand democratic officers seek the support of the working people and use the armed forces in the interests of progressive development. Faced with the reality of resolving the tasks of the national democratic revolution these democratic officers in cooperation with other progressive forces have to democratise the military, civilian and state structures, have confidence in the creative energies of the masses and give them a real opportunity to participate in the revolutionary process.

In the struggle for the fulfilment of general tasks of national revival two coalitions of class forces are formed. The basis of the coalition of the anti-imperialist, patriotic and progressive forces is made up of the working class, exploited peasantry, and other categories of working people; the middle strata and patriotic personalities participate in this coalition to an extent to which they remain loyal to the interests of the masses and to the interests of progressive independent development. This coalition is opposed by the bloc of the privileged reactionary feudal and tribal forces, the compradore and bureaucratic bourgeoisie, foreign imperialist agents and generally those who wish to place their countries along the road of capitalist development. The solution of the immediate tasks of



social and economic progress shall be determined by the result of the struggle between these irreconcilable social forces.

## **2. TWO TRENDS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

In Africa two opposite trends of social development are at work — one towards socialism and the other towards capitalism. The specific African environment has made its imprint on each of these two trends.

There were no capitalist relations in precolonial Africa. In fact, in Africa capitalism is the product and legacy of foreign rule, of colonialism. As a social system, capitalism as yet has no deep national roots in most African countries. The capitalist orientation of some African states was born and is sustained by the combined efforts of international imperialism and the pro-imperialist circles of the local bourgeoisie and the traditional aristocracy. Capitalism's historical lack of a future in Africa is predetermined by its general crisis throughout the world which renders it absolutely unable to solve problems of vital significance for the African states.

Needless to say, this does not rule out the possibility and the expediency of making temporary use, under strict state control, of national and foreign capital to promote the productive forces. Given a correct and consistent national policy, the state capitalist sector even in capitalist-oriented countries may acquire an anti-imperialist orientation. In these countries under the pressure of the popular masses it is possible, albeit on a limited scale, to give effect to progressive measures and reforms.

The capitalist tendency of development has become especially manifest in countries such as Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Kenya, Zaire, and others. The positions of foreign monopolies and multinational corporations have become considerably stronger and this poses a grave threat to their political and economic independence. The progressive forces of these countries face the task of creating a broad anti-imperialist, anti-neocolonialist front. The major tasks of this front are to struggle for the consolidation of independence, for the development of national economy, for the defence of democratic rights and freedoms, for the defence and satisfaction of the urgent demands and needs of the working people — higher living standards,

right to education, health service, cultural revival and democratic agrarian reform.

Special conditions have taken shape in the struggle for national and social liberation in the Republic of South Africa. There, capitalist relations hold unchallenged sway and have acquired a monopoly character. Domination by local and foreign, including multi-national monopolies, is being intensified. South African monopoly capitalism which supports and relies upon the racist fascist regime has shown that it is a staunch ally of international, chiefly US imperialism, the sworn enemy of the peoples of South Africa and their most brutal exploiter.

The South African Communist Party characterises South Africa's socio-economic system as "colonialism of a special type", where the colonialists and the colonised peoples live within the same national boundaries. Rhodesia, Namibia and the Republic of South Africa are examples of countries where capitalism has institutionalised racism as the foundation of colonial arbitrary rule and national oppression of the worst kind.

Today, with mass actions against the reactionary and inhuman system of apartheid reaching unprecedented intensity in South Africa and the armed struggle in Zimbabwe and Namibia rising to high tide, the Communists demand an immediate end to the disgraceful racist Vorster and Smith regimes. With imperialist intrigues the different variants of a "phased settlement" of the problems of the South are designed to weaken the liberation struggle and maintain racist supremacy. Repressions and massacres by the racists cannot halt the liberation struggle or break the will of the fighters for freedom and independence.

In the Republic of South Africa the unity of the African working class, the peasantry and the landless unemployed is growing stronger step by step.

The South African working class, which is increasingly concentrated at large mining, industrial and manufacturing enterprises, is the leading force not only in the vitally important spheres of production but also in the liberation struggle. lately, it has repeatedly staged general political strikes and convincingly demonstrated its ability to head the revolutionary struggle and lead it to its victorious consummation. In many rural areas the people have

also taken part in various militant struggles.

It is also in the long-term interests of the non-exploiting sections of the white population to participate in the anti-racist, anti-fascist struggle. The main content of the struggle at the present stage is the national liberation of the African people — a struggle led by a revolutionary alliance headed by the African National Congress and which includes the South African Communist Party. At the same time the national liberation struggle in the Republic of South Africa is inescapably and indivisibly linked with the struggle to abolish capitalism, racism and all forms of exploitation. This plus the fact that the South African working class has its own party can create the objective material prerequisites for the speedy transition to socialism.

### **Stages of Development**

But for the vast majority of the African countries, whose social development has been held up by colonialism, it is not possible to effect a direct transition from pre-capitalist to socialist relations. Before embarking upon socialist construction they have to go through a series of intermediate stages, through a more or less long period of transition. During this transition period spontaneous development gives way to purposeful, conscious policy consistent with the vital interests of the working class, the peasantry and the patriotic intelligentsia, of the broadest national democratic strata. A number of countries of Tropical and Southern Africa have recently chosen the way of socialist orientation. Only during the first half of the seventies Madagascar, Benin, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and some others have been added to the number of such countries and their numbers are growing.

The revolutionary-democratic governments of socialist-oriented countries have to give effect to a large spectrum of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-capitalist reforms and ensure progress in the general direction of socialism, and create the political, material, social and cultural preconditions for the transition to direct socialist construction. Unlike the bourgeois neo-colonialist regimes in capitalist-oriented African countries, which usually have recourse to anti-popular methods or, at best, apply reformist recipes, the revolutionary democrats use revolutionary methods with the support



of the masses against imperialism and against the local exploiting classes and strata.

Given its heterogeneous social basis, the ideological and political struggle going on within their circles and external reactionary pressures the revolutionary democrats are subject to vacillation between the two antagonistic orientations — one to socialism, the other to capitalism. Consequently the possibility that some revolutionary democrats may seriously reverse their progressive social policies is very real. The more resolutely they wage the struggle against imperialism and local reaction, stand up for social progress, move ever closer to the ideology of scientific socialism and have confidence in the working class and poor peasantry, the greater their role as a significant political force in present-day Africa.

The maturing of the external and internal factors ensuring the transition to socialist orientation has in recent years been making faster headway in many African countries. Socialist ideals are becoming a realistic goal of a growing number of African nations; this process will continue to gather momentum because it is in keeping with the character and scale of our epoch's world liberation movement and the growing influence of world socialism and the international working-class and Communist movement.

As the experience of countries applying it in practice shows, socialist orientation means the pursuance of the following objectives: (1) the overthrow of the neocolonialist regime of the exploiters and the establishment of a revolutionary-democratic state having an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist orientation; (2) the abolition of imperialism's political rule, the restriction, and then in the future the abolition of its economic domination, the pursuance of an appropriate policy of nationalising foreign capital, state control of its activities and through gradual removal from the national economy; (3) the abolition of feudal exploitation and the implementation of progressive agrarian policies; (4) the restriction and control of the private capitalist sector; (5) the build-up of a state sector and a cooperative movement, and the creation of the prerequisites for their successful performance in industry and agriculture; (6) a struggle against the ideology of the exploiters which includes all forms and manifestations of anti-communism and the assertion of the ideals of scientific socialism; (7) the enforcement of general democratic

reforms with the active participation of the toiling masses at all levels of decision-making, the acceleration of social and cultural progress; (8) a progressive foreign policy, and the utmost support for the struggle for independence, security and the freedom of nations, for peace and detente, for an alliance with the socialist world, and (9) the creation of prerequisites for the building of socialism.

Life itself demonstrates that these objectives cannot be achieved in a complete and consistent manner in every particular case.

It is in particular because these countries remain in the orbit of the capitalist world. Using economic and financial possibilities of the world capitalist market and new instruments (Lome convention, etc.) imperialism has powerful means to undermine the policy of genuine economic independence.

The preservation of socialist orientation in the face of major obstacles raised by imperialism demands in the first place that progressive forces and broad popular masses should be conscious of the complexities of their long struggle but also of the possibilities available to win it.

The above-mentioned measures have not only an anti-imperialist but also an anti-capitalist and pre-socialist character. They are inevitably at the core of the class struggle between the reactionary forces advocating neo-colonialism and capitalist development and the progressive forces fighting for true national independence and social progress. It is by resolutely giving effect to all these transformations that the possibility opens up in the African countries for expediting progress.

The Communists, with all their forces, stand up for the implementation of the above-mentioned measures as an indispensable stage on the road toward a socialist future. They share these goals with the revolutionary-democratic forces whom they consider to be their comrades-in-arms. Experience shows that these measures can only be realised in the course of fierce class-struggle and that they require a firm alliance of all patriotic, democratic and socialist-oriented forces.

### **Heritage of Colonialism**

The shortage of material resources and trained personnel, the bitter heritage of long colonialist rule, pressure from external

imperialist forces and the resistance put up by the local reactionaries naturally create many difficulties and hindrances for the socialist-oriented countries. In some of these countries embezzlement, corruption, mismanagement and money-grubbing are rife, and there is a dangerous trend towards the formation of an anti-national parasitical stratum of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the revival of tribalist and other negative traditions inherited from the colonial past. Many of these phenomena spring from survivals of the era of foreign rule; others from the continued dependence of these countries on the world capitalist market, from the political instability of developing countries, from the ceaseless intrigues of imperialism and the local reactionaries, and from the subversive activities of imperialist intelligence agencies. Still others from haste in the enforcement of some unprepared or ill-prepared socio-economic reforms that leads to an unjustified deterioration of the conditions of the working people.

In the countries of capitalist orientation the ruling circles are primarily aiming at establishing economic and political structures aimed at expediting the growth of the bourgeoisie. In this context contradictions may appear between these political regimes and imperialism. These differences very often reflect the pressure of the masses for real independence, and of the local bourgeoisie for better economic positions. But the neocolonialist regimes, while demanding concessions from the foreign monopolies, try to restrain and to resolve the contradictions only within the framework of the neocolonial system.

The fact that in socialist-oriented countries there are different and sometimes negative phenomena cannot obscure the basic, fundamentally qualitative distinctions between the two orientations of social development — capitalist and socialist. In the countries of socialist orientation attempts are being made to consolidate the national independence and class positions of the working people.

Nor do such weaknesses justify any hypercritical or doctrinaire condemnations which disorient the revolutionary forces in Africa. The Communists as well as all conscientious patriotic forces are resolutely on the side of these progressive states in their struggle against imperialism and African reaction. But they are conscious of the fact that the consistency of anti-imperialist positions will, in the



long run, be determined by the changing correlation of internal class forces in favour of socialist orientation.

In the vast majority of African countries only socialist orientation opens the door for the oppressed peoples to freedom, independence, prosperity and progress. It is the internationalist duty of African democrats, advocates of social progress, of all convinced Socialists and Communists, of all the anti-imperialist forces to support the socialist-oriented states. The Communists always keep in mind the threat of counter-revolutionary coups that constantly hangs over these countries, of the possibility of regressive development in individual countries.

The mercenary acts of piracy against the progressive states are organised with the complicity of imperialist powers which by using these subversive means seek to restore their lost positions. But the failure of the mercenary expeditions against the Republic of Guinea, Angola, Benin and other countries shows that the popular masses are determined to defend their independence and progressive achievements. It is the right and the duty of African progressive states, acting individually or collectively to take all necessary measures to put an end to these new forms of imperialist gun-boat diplomacy. In this context they emphatically advocate strengthening the unity of all left, democratic and progressive forces on an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist foundation and the utmost consolidation of the socialist-oriented countries.

Revolutionary experience shows that only through the formation of an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist revolutionary organisation based on the support of the working people and other patriotic strata is it possible to consistently carry out and to defend fundamental socio-economic reforms. Already many organisations which began their life as broad revolutionary democratic movements have begun the process of transforming themselves. We hail this tendency and regard them as part of the emerging and growing body of Marxist revolutionary vanguards in our continent.

### **3. AFRICAN COMMUNISTS— ALLIES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATS**

The Communist movement in Africa took shape more than half a century ago. It was broken neither by colonial arbitrary rule, nor by brutal repressions.

The Communists were among the first in the African continent to lay bare the true nature of imperialism, colonialism and racism, and set as the immediate practical goal the realisation of the people's demand for independence and self-determination in their revolutionary struggle against foreign enslavers. The Communists were the first in the continent to show the African peoples that the struggle against imperialism, for democracy and social progress ultimately meant a struggle for socialism.

We see clearly that in this historical epoch it is impossible to overcome the political, economic and social crisis in our countries without resolutely moving towards socialism; that age-old backwardness cannot be abolished and no fundamental socio-economic progress is possible without taking the road of socialist renewal. Today this is acknowledged by many national leaders, who recognise that for the economy of backward African countries there is no road of development more effective than the road of socialism. Together with the revolutionary democrats, the Communists have shown that the socialist-oriented development of the African countries in the direction of socialism is both necessary and possible and indicated the motive forces of this process.

The Communists stand on the same platform as the revolutionary democrats in the struggle to give effect to progressive reforms, rationally develop the national economy, improve the revolutionary democratic state and its organs (the armed forces, the government apparatus and so on), raise the people's living standards and pursue a policy of alliance with countries of the socialist community.

Furthermore over the past few years a growing number of revolutionary democrats have taken a positive stand in relation to Marxism-Leninism. While upholding the principles of scientific socialism common to all countries, the Communists consider that the strictest consideration for the local national features of each country

is the prime condition for applying these principles in practice.

Working together Communists, revolutionary democrats and all progressive forces can solve in an internationalist spirit the important ethnic and national problems. Imperialism and local reaction are using some ethnical differences to destabilise and to disintegrate many African countries, especially progressive ones. African Communists fully support the position of the OAU concerning the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of frontiers and the resolving of disputes by negotiations and not war.

The forces of reaction national and international use anti-communism, chauvinism, tribalism and religious fanaticism in order to confuse the broad masses and to reverse the process of socialist orientation. It is therefore necessary to carry out in an internationalist spirit a consistent and principled fight against all forms of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism.

The philosophy and religious convictions of the revolutionary democrats cannot be an obstacle of their cooperation with the Communists in the joint struggle against the imperialist and racist enemies. The Communists urge the closest possible unity of all democratic forces, irrespective of religion, and condemn religious intolerance and fanaticism. Moreover, the Communists take into account the low development level of the African countries, the weak class differentiation in many of them, the psychology of the different African peoples, their commitment to religion and much else. However, all this does not mean that each country or even the entire continent will have its "own" socialism differing from scientific socialism. Neither is this the view of a large section of the revolutionary democrats, who have practically unanimously opted for scientific socialism against "socialism of a national type".

### **The Road to Socialism**

Some revolutionary African ideologists supported by imperialist circles utilise the doctrine of "African socialism" to divert the African peoples from the road of revolution, the only possible road to socialism, and to isolate them from the world progressive forces especially the international Communist movement on the pretext of "national exclusiveness". The theory of "African socialism" appeared



on the soil of anti-imperialist nationalism in a situation in which revolutionary democracy had not yet taken shape as an independent political force, when Africa was as yet unfamiliar with scientific socialism. At that time "African socialism" represented for broad masses their elementary protest and rejection of capitalism.

Later a number of African patriots who previously proclaimed the theory of "African socialism", rejected it after having understood its utilisation by the neo-colonialists. "African socialism" is used by social democracy to strengthen its influence in Africa. Being the defender of monopoly capital of West Europe it is striving to retain the continent within the framework of the system of imperialist and neo-colonialist exploitation. In the countries following the road of capitalist development they expand collaboration with the parties and organisations that have taken the position of conciliation with imperialism.

To isolate the African states from the socialist community, international working-class and communist movement is one of the major aims of social democracy on the continent. That constitutes a grave danger to political independence and economic and progressive development of the African peoples. The African Communists oppose the attempts to transplant to Africa the reformist doctrines of the Social democrats.

The Communists believe that the road to socialist society lies through the total abolition of imperialist rule and the influence of the reactionaries, through a class struggle and the creation of a national democratic state of workers, peasants and middle strata, and opening the way for its evolution into a socialist state in which the working class will have the leading role. Such is the historical prospect.

Today it is not the socialist but the national-democratic revolution that is on the agenda in most African countries. All the progressive forces must defend it against imperialism and reaction. At the same time there is a need to come out resolutely against ultra-leftish forestalling of developments, against the "infantile disorder" of leaping across historically vital stages, and against neglect of immediate general democratic tasks, whose fulfilment constitutes the essence of the present African revolution and a natural stage of transition on the road to the socialist revolution.

On a wide range of questions the aims of the Communists coincide with those of the revolutionary democrats. These are to consolidate political independence, uncompromisingly fight imperialist exploitation, establish state power of the people, promote the economy, raise the living standards and cultural level of the people, stamp out feudal exploitation, restrict the predatory tendencies of the local capitalists, build up a democratic state apparatus loyal to the people, assure employment for the population, build up the public sector in industry and the cooperative movement in agriculture and apply scientific principles of economic planning. Only socialist orientation will assure success in reaching these objectives through ever closer unity of all democratic and progressive forces.

Communists regard socialism as a historically law-governed stage leading to communism. Communists always recognise and strenuously uphold the vital and crucial role of the working class, its mass organisations and its independent Party in the struggle to profoundly transform society along the path of socialism. In all countries which proclaim a path towards an eventual construction of socialism the successful completion of the process will depend, amongst other things, on whether the working class as an organised force assumes a growing role as the vanguard class force at all levels of society.

The fact that the Communists and the revolutionary democrats have a common platform creates in the African countries the possibility for durable unity of all democratic forces in a broad national democratic anti-imperialist front. Neglect for the common interests of the nation and accentuation of differences of opinion in ideological matters or problems related to the distant future can only harm the unity of the progressive forces.

All the progressive forces within the national democratic alliance and in the first place the Communists and revolutionary democrats should be dependable allies in the common struggle against imperialism, neocolonialism and racism, in the struggle to consolidate independence, for peace and security of nations and for their social progress. In the nationalism of oppressed nations the Communists see and sincerely support democratic anti-imperialist tendencies. They are resolutely opposed to any division of the anti-

imperialist democratic and progressive forces by national or tribal barriers, to the substitution of reactionary bourgeois nationalism or social democratic reformism for scientific socialism.

In the belief that neither the revolutionary democrats nor the Communists hold a monopoly on revolutionism, democracy or socialism, the Communists and revolutionary democrats extend mutual support to each other, to the progressive aspects of their activity. Both have the great obligation and the responsibility of jointly and honestly serving the people, defending the interests of their nation, the interests of workers, peasants, of all working people. History shows that ultimately the revolutionary movement is led by those who have the support of the masses, who resolutely champion their vital interests, who consistently fight imperialism, racism, feudalism, neocolonialism and exploitation of man by man.

The Communists, the revolutionary democrats and all the other forces of the national democratic front constitute the organising forces of the people in the struggle for national and social liberation.

#### **4. AFRICAN COMMUNISTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION**

With the eradication of colonialism the African peoples became active participants and a significant factor in international politics. Many countries have taken the obligations of pursuing the policy of non-alignment which is an anti-imperialist policy and a means of vigorously supporting the liberation movements.

The consistent and principled support of the socialist community for the struggle of the peoples of Africa for freedom and consolidation of national independence proves that the socialist countries are reliable friends of Africa. Moreover, the progressive African states regard the socialist countries as their natural allies.

The Marxist-Leninists and all other progressive forces support the OAU, reserving the right of constructive criticism when its actions are half-hearted or inconsistent with the historical situation and oppose all attempts at undermining this organisation, regardless of who undertakes them or whatever lofty aims are used as a cover.

Following the glorious victory of the MPLA in Angola, world



imperialism started a hysterical anti-communist, anti-Soviet campaign. The imperialists use the so-called threat of a "Soviet-Cuban invasion" of Namibia and Rhodesia and their own myth about the "threat of Soviet imperialism" in a bid to isolate the national liberation movements in Southern Africa from their natural and most dependable allies, from the anti-imperialist African countries and also from the Soviet Union and other socialist states. However, these attempts are doomed to failure. The African peoples have seen for themselves that the socialist countries do not pursue selfish interests and that their actions are permeated solely with the sincere desire to facilitate the liberation of the peoples of Africa.

Africa's Communists join world democratic opinion in strongly protesting against the aid given to the inhuman regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia by imperialist politicians and the monopolies of the USA, Britain, France, the FRG, Japan, Italy and Zionist Israel. There can be no detente and no coexistence with these racist colonialist regimes. Mass, unremitting struggle against them in all forms until complete victory is won by the Southern African peoples with all-African and international support through all-round and effective internationalist solidarity — these are the aims and means of struggle of all African democrats and anti-imperialists. The assault mounted by the freedom fighters of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe makes the abolition of the racist-fascist regimes inevitable.

Today, with the pillars of racism tottering, with the doomed regimes feverishly looking for salvation, the African Communists, who have always been in the forefront of the struggle for the freedom of peoples, believe that anti-imperialists, anti-racists, all true democrats and patriots of Africa, all honest people in our long-suffering continent should increasingly unite in order to put an end once and for all to imperialist and racist domination in Southern Africa and to give material and moral assistance to the genuine revolutionary forces led by the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party, SWAPO (Namibia) and the Patriotic Front (Zimbabwe).

We call upon all progressive forces to express their militant solidarity with the front-line states in their resolute struggle against racist, fascist and imperialist aggression.

## **Two Main Tendencies**

The correlation of forces in Africa is characterised by two main tendencies. On the one hand there is a revolutionary upsurge and on the other hand imperialism is desperately using all the means at its disposal to halt the revolutionary advance in our continent.

In the recent period we have witnessed tremendous successes scored by the peoples of Africa in the struggle for national and social liberation. The revolutionary destruction of Portuguese colonialism and fascism, the heightened struggle in racist and colonialist Southern Africa, the deep revolutionary process going on in Ethiopia, the struggle for self-determination in Western Sahara, the armed resistance against French imperialist troops in Chad and the successes of the progressive forces in the capitalist-oriented states have fundamentally altered the balance of forces in Africa in favour of the revolutionary movements and process.

Of great significance for the world-wide anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist struggle is the increase in the number of progressive states, their maturity and growing links with the socialist community and the adoption by more and more parties and organisations of the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

Given the important place of Africa in the world capitalist system these successes have had a powerful impact on the socio-economic crisis of the imperialist countries.

In order to reverse this process and to shift the balance of forces in their favour in the context of the failure of the local African class allies of imperialism to stabilise the system of neo-colonialism the NATO powers acting in concert are increasingly resorting to open naked military aggression and intervention in Africa. This was clearly demonstrated in Zaire, Chad and Western Sahara. Operating from and through their military bases in Africa and the Indian Ocean, the reactionary French government operating as the gendarme of imperialism arrogantly intervenes in the internal affairs of African states. Its troops have murdered and wounded hundreds of African people.

The attempts by NATO under the tutelage of US imperialism with the full support of the most reactionary African states to form political military blocs pose a grave threat to peace and progress in

our continent. If set up, these blocs — the decision dictated by Giscard d'Estaing to the African countries regrouped under his auspices at the recent conference in Paris is, in this connection, fraught with dangers for the African peoples and world peace — would be completely subordinated to the world-wide military strategy of imperialism and in clear violation of provisions of the OAU Charter. Undoubtedly the main objective of such reactionary aggressive political military blocs shall be to legitimise imperialist aggression, undermine African unity by provoking and fomenting inner-state conflicts and to destabilise progressive and revolutionary trends and development in our continent.

The African Communists condemn in the strongest possible terms NATO warmongers, their African allies, and in particular the aggressive and racist interventionist policy of the French government.

To stop and defeat the imperialist aggression and manoeuvres requires the greatest mobilisation of the popular masses, strengthening the unity of progressive and democratic forces and co-ordination of united action at the country level, of the continent, and former colonial metropolises, deepening the alliances with the socialist community especially the Soviet Union and the internationalist solidarity of working class, democratic and peace-loving forces throughout the world.

International imperialism with the complicity of Arab reaction has, following the profound revolution in Ethiopia, intensified its activities to control the Red Sea, place it in the service of its aggressive military strategy and thus turn it into a hotbed of conflict of truly international dimensions. Furthermore through the "Red Sea Security" plan international imperialism with the support of reactionary regimes in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Sudan seeks to either reverse the revolutionary process or if possible overthrow the progressive governments in that region. The Red Sea is an international waterway available to the ships of all countries and it is in the vital interests of the people of that region, Africa and the world that this waterway remains peaceful.

The Communists declare their full support to the just struggle of the Arab peoples and the Palestinian people. They stand for the complete withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the occupied Arab



territories and for the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to establish their own state. They condemn the presence of US troops in South Korea and support the peaceful unification of the country. The African Communists support the courageous struggle of the peoples living under dictatorships as in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil and other countries. They call for an end to the dictatorial regimes and the respect of human rights and democratic freedoms.

The Communists of Africa devoted to proletarian internationalism express their militant fraternal solidarity with Communist parties and all other anti-imperialist forces struggling in Asia, Latin America and Europe for national independence against monopoly capital, for democracy, peace and socialism.

### **Peaceful Coexistence**

Together with all other democratic and progressive forces, the African Communists actively support the policy of peaceful coexistence and detente between states with different social systems, the mounting struggle of all peoples to achieve disarmament and ban nuclear weapons, and urge Africa's actual conversion into a nuclear-free zone and for the proclamation of the India Ocean a zone of peace and dismantling of all military bases on the continent and the islands. They actively support the Final Act of "An All-European Conference on Security and Cooperation in Helsinki" and call for the broadest possible application of its spirit and principles relative to the independent states of Africa to the continent.

In spite of all efforts of the Soviet Union to achieve general reduction of nuclear stockpiling and to uphold the principles of detente, the NATO countries under the pretext of a "Soviet threat" have escalated to an unprecedented degree the arms race. The stockpiling of nuclear-missile armaments is a threat to the security of every country and people in the world. In an atmosphere of international security it would be possible to divert far greater resources to the promotion of economic development in the developing countries. Thus an end to the arms race is of primary significance for the rapid overcoming of poverty, economic backwardness, misery and ignorance in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The military industrial complex of the imperialist countries is seeking to produce that monstrous weapon, the neutron bomb. Everywhere in the world the people are mounting vigorous campaigns against the production of the neutron bomb. We call upon all peace-loving forces in Africa and the world to redouble efforts and struggle to stop the imperialists' plan of the production of the neutron bomb and for a decrease of military stockpiles.

Together with all other democratic forces, the Communists actively put forward and support the demands for restructuring on a just and equitable basis the entire system of international relations and the establishment of a new world economic order which assures properly acknowledged interests of the people.

The Communists of the African countries are an integral part of their peoples, the vanguard of the African working class, of all working people. By their dedicated struggle in the ranks of the national liberation movement for the dignity, freedom and independence of Africa they have proved that they selflessly and honestly serve the interests of the African peoples, proved their revolutionary resolve and consistency and their fidelity to proletarian internationalism.

For many decades the Communists have been sacrificing their lives in the fight for the happiness of the African peoples. Thousands of them have been executed, flung into prisons and concentration camps and brutally tortured by the colonialists, racists and reactionaries. In some African countries the Communists and democrats are persecuted to this day by the reactionaries with the support of international imperialism only because they place the struggle for the interests of the working people above all else.

The international Communist and workers' movement is the axis of the most important revolutionary changes and is in the forefront of the struggle for the freedom and security of all the peoples. The world socialist system being the most important achievement of the world Communist movement represents the main source of support for all the forces of national and social liberation.

### **Maoist Disruption**

It is precisely due to this dominant aspect of our life that international reaction mobilises its forces against the unity of our

movement. Maoism in alliance with international reaction also seeks to disrupt the unity of the Communist movement. The content of Maoist ideology is alien to Marxism-Leninism.

The disruptive policy of the Maoists which is contrary to the fundamental interests of the peoples finds its clear expression in the subversive activities aimed at dividing and splitting national liberation movements, in the growing support given to the reactionary forces in Angola, Western Sahara, Zaire and Chile, in the support given to the policy of military confrontation pursued by the leaders of Kampuchea against socialist reunified Vietnam, in the attempts aimed at undermining the efforts of progressive and peaceloving forces in the world which favour disarmament. After failing in their attempts to woo the most consistent revolutionary forces in Africa the Maoists are now developing the closest links with the reactionary regimes and counter-revolutionary forces of the continent.

It is evident that certain ruling circles and social strata who fail to consistently implement the tasks of the National democratic revolution, and who retreat from previously declared positions, use the Maoist arsenal of theoretical arguments and demagoguery to justify their drift from the anti-imperialist front, and to disassociate themselves from the alliance with the Soviet Union and other countries of the Socialist Community.

Although suffering serious reverses in Africa, Maoism still poses a potential political and ideological danger. It is therefore the patriotic duty of all revolutionary and democratic forces in our continent to firmly reject the Maoist policy of undermining the fight for national independence, peace, democracy and socialism.

Recently there have been regional conferences of communist parties of countries of the Arab East, Latin America and Europe, which helped to strengthen the unity of the international working class and the world Communist movement.

This first meeting of the Communist parties of Tropical and Southern Africa is of great historical significance both for the world Communist movement and for the struggle for national and social liberation of our continent. We feel that the Communists and revolutionary democrats should hold joint forums, on a bilateral and multilateral basis, which would facilitate the further consolidation



of the unity of the anti-imperialist front of the Communist and revolutionary democrats, as the vanguard of all socialist, revolutionary and democratic forces.

The African Communists solemnly declare that they are part and parcel of the international working class, Communist and national liberation movements, that they are sincere friends of the Soviet Union and all other socialist countries, of all socialist-oriented states, that they have been and will always remain active fighters for a lasting and unbreakable alliance of the liberation movement of Africa with the socialist world, the international working class, Communist and national liberation movements in all continents, that they have been and always will be consistent internationalists and devoted patriots of their peoples and countries.



# **MOSES KOTANE**

August 9, 1905 — May 19, 1978

## **A TRIBUTE BY DR. Y. M. DADOO**

**National Chairman of the  
South African Communist Party**

In the life of every nation there arise men who leave an indelible and eternal stamp on the history of their peoples; men who are both products and makers of history. And when they pass they leave a vision of a new and better life and the tools with which to win and build it.

Moses Kotane was such a man. The S.A. liberation movement has had no better or more original pioneer. He, above all, symbolised the all-round revolutionary whose passion for liberation is combined with a scientific grasp of the true nature of the ruling class and the social energies which have to be mobilised in order to destroy it and to build a worthy social order in its place.

Comrade Kotane hated white domination and aggression, yet he spurned racialism in all its forms whether expressed in white arrogance or black chauvinism. He was one of the foremost champions of the working class and a future socialist South Africa, yet he worked unceasingly to create a unity of all classes and groups,

including revolutionary whites, to confront racist tyranny. He was a foremost patriot who had his feet firmly planted in the national culture and aspirations of his people, yet he remained a shining example of true internationalism and believed passionately in the world-wide bonds of progressive humanity everywhere. He stood at the head of our working-class party for most of its life and was, at the same time, amongst the most respected front-line leaders of the African National Congress. More than any other individual, he helped lay the foundations for the life-giving unity between the working class and national movements which expresses itself in today's firm alliance of liberation forces.

In short, Comrade Kotane was one of South Africa's greatest communist revolutionaries. He gave an indigenous meaning to the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism and through his life won a place as one of the most outstanding working-class and national leaders of our country.

## **Life Story**

Let us recall, in brief, the life of our departed leader.

Moses Kotane was born on August 9, 1905, in the little town of Tamposstad in the Western Transvaal. His early years as a young boy he spent as a cattleherd, afterwards going out to work for a white farmer. It was only at the age of 15, that he was able to go to school for the first time and learnt to read and write. But he only remained at the school for two years, leaving in 1922 at the age of 17 to seek work on the Witwatersrand.

Amongst the jobs he took were those of photographer's assistant, kitchen "boy", miner and bakery worker — jobs which gave him little work satisfaction and little pay. All these years he was slaving for the white man boss, Kotane was reading and studying, asking questions, dissatisfied with the life he was leading and with himself. He read whatever books he could lay hands on, and it was his search for knowledge, his rejection of discrimination and oppression, his thirst for a more meaningful way of life that eventually drove him into the ranks of the bakers' union, the African National Congress and the Communist Party.

The year in which he joined the Communist Party was 1928 — the year of the 6th Congress of the Comintern which adopted the resolution on the national question in South Africa — the so-called Native Republic resolution which called for “an independent native South African republic as a stage towards a workers’ and peasants’ republic, with full and equal rights for all races, black, coloured and white”. This slogan was to form the basis of the policy on the national question developed over the years by the Communist Party and eventually incorporated in the 1962 programme of the Party which is still our guideline today. And no man did more to bring that slogan to life in the South African context than Moses Kotane.

It was Moses Kotane, together with comrades like J. B. Marks, Johannes Nkosi, Edwin Mofutsanyana, Albert Nzula, Johnny Gomas and Jimmy la Guma, to mention only a few, who in the 1920s and 1930s followed in the footsteps of the early Communist pioneers Andrews, Bunting and Ivon Jones and carried the message of Communism to the black masses. Kotane had by this time become a Party functionary, living, working and sleeping in the party office in Johannesburg and active in all the African areas. He studied at the Party’s night school and rapidly absorbed the fundamentals of Marxism.

### **Visit to Moscow**

He progressed so rapidly in his studies that the Party leadership decided to send him for further study at the Lenin School in Moscow, where his teachers included the great Ivan Potekhin, Zusmanowich and the Hungarian Marxist Endre Sik. Kotane wrote many years later: “It was at the Lenin School that I learnt how to think politically. They taught me the logical method of argument, political analysis. From that time onwards I was never at a loss when it came to summing up a situation. I knew what to look for and what had to be done from the point of view of the working class”.

Kotane’s experiences in Moscow made a lifelong impression on him. Not only did they deepen his understanding of Marxism. They also brought to life in his heart a love and comradeship for the Soviet people and the CPSU which was a constant source of strength and encouragement to him throughout his life. His loyalty and faith in the Soviet people, his confidence in the CPSU as a guardian of



proletarian internationalism never wavered. After he was struck down by his illness in 1968 and became hospitalised in the Soviet Union, he was the recipient not only of the very best medical attention, but also of every fraternal service which the CPSU and its functionaries, could lavish on him. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my party and the South African people, of expressing to our Soviet comrades our heartfelt gratitude for everything they did to make the last years of our comrade General Secretary comfortable.

### **With the Masses**

Time does not allow me to chronicle all the achievements of Kotane after his return from Moscow to South Africa in 1933. His main and abiding achievement was to root the party in the masses. In a letter from Cradock in the Cape to the Party leadership, he wrote in 1934: "My first suggestion is that the party becomes Africanised, that the CPSA must pay special attention to South Africa and study the conditions in this country and concretise the demands of the masses from first-hand information, that we must speak the language of the native masses and must know their demands, that while it must not lose its international allegiance, the Party must be Bolshevised, become South African not only theoretically but in reality".

He himself showed the way. His whole political life was dedicated to a translation of the truths of Marxism-Leninism into the realm of practical politics. As the General Secretary of our Party since 1939 until his death he threw himself body and soul into building and strengthening the Party. He also played a vital role in building the organisation which represents the most oppressed section of the black majority — the African National Congress of which he was an elected member of the National Executive.

Moses Kotane was in the thick of every struggle in South Africa — the Defiance Campaign of 1952, the treason trial 1956-60s, underground in the 1960 emergency, one of the main organisers of the liberation movement's army. In the 1950s and 1960s he went on many diplomatic missions for the liberation movement, and won the respect of all the world statesmen with whom he came in contact.

But if there is one quality in Moses Kotane which I would single out before all others, it was that he was incorruptible. He was



ANC General Secretary Alfred Nzo, South African Communist Party Chairman Dr. Yusuf Dadoo and ANC President Oliver Tambo – pall-bearers at the funeral of Moses Kotane in Moscow.

incorruptible not only in his politics but also in his personal life. Moses Kotane was a man you knew could never let you down, never do something behind your back, never deceive you. You always knew where you were with Moses Kotane. Sometimes his words were harsh and hurtful, but they were never dishonest. He was a hard taskmaster, but only because he put the movement above himself, and because he never demanded from others more than he was prepared to do himself. He drove himself to the limit of his endurance, and it is no exaggeration to say that the illness which struck him down was the result of overwork, his refusal to spare himself, his constant and meticulous attention to detail, his willing acceptance of the burden and responsibility of leadership in the great fight for freedom.

Moses Kotane set a high standard for all freedom fighters. We who say "farewell" to him pledge, in the name of our organisations and our people, that we will never forget his contribution, that we will endeavour to live up to his example, that we will never waver in our determination to complete the task to which he devoted his life — the total elimination of the scourge of apartheid and racialism, the translation into reality of the Freedom Charter for national emancipation and social progress and to carry forward the struggle for peace, national independence and socialism.

Hamba Kahle, Comrade Kotane!

Amandla Ngawethu! Maatla Ke Arona!

Power to the People!

(Speech delivered by Dr Dadoo at the Novodevichy Cemetery in Moscow where Moses Kotane was buried on May 26, 1978).

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## **World-Wide Tributes to a Departed Leader**

Moses Kotane, holder of the ANC national award of Isitwalandwe (Hero of the National Liberation Struggle) and the Soviet Order of the Friendship of the Peoples, was honoured at memorial meetings in

many centres throughout the world — in Moscow, London, Lusaka, Toronto and elsewhere — and also in Soweto, where a large number of people attended a meeting in a private house in Diepkloof. There were many references to him in the world press, and messages of condolence were received by the Central Committee of the SACP from all corners of the globe.

We take this opportunity of expressing our deep appreciation of the many messages of condolence we have received. The following are extracts from the many tributes paid to comrade Kotane:

**Oliver Tambo, President of the African National Congress:**

My first contact with Moses Kotane was in 1946, which was the beginning of a period of great political upheavals in our struggle, a period that was to prove most decisive in the general orientation of our political advancement as a movement. If Moses Kotane was the general secretary of the SACP, he was to no lesser degree a highly esteemed and completely devoted leader of the African National Congress.

His rigorous self-discipline enabled him to survive the sophisticated vigilance of the South African fascist police for many years during which he engaged in full-time underground political work in defiance of banning orders and numerous other restrictions imposed on him by the fascist regime. He fought fiercely to inculcate this high level of discipline among all the activists of our movement.

Reflecting the confidence which our movement had in Moses Kotane, Chief Albert Lutuli, the late President-General of the ANC, often consulted him on complex issues calling for wise leadership and delicate decision. It was for similar reasons that, at our request, Comrade Moses left South Africa to join the external ANC leadership in Dar es Salaam in January 1963. Umkhonto we Sizwe was one year old at the time and its members were leaving South Africa in large numbers for training abroad.

In the emergence of Umkhonto we Sizwe Moses Kotane saw the beginnings of the final onslaught on the last stronghold of imperialism — the fascist republic of South Africa. His devotion to the building up of this nucleus of our People's Army was second only to his devotion to the struggle for national and social liberation in South Africa, for the triumph of the socialist cause the world over.



In the arrangements for the political and military training of the cadres of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the maintenance, deployment and the logistic equipment of Umkhonto units, Comrade Moses worked tirelessly from the moment he arrived in Dar es Salaam in 1963 until he suffered a stroke in December 1968.

We shall never forget that during the period of three years ending in December 1968, two political giants of the South African revolutionary struggle, J. B. Marks and Moses Kotane, comrades-in-arms for more than 40 years, operated from a small country town — Morogoro, in Tanzania — sharing a small office and sleeping in two small adjacent rooms, now worthy of preservation as national monuments. It was during these trying years that the supreme qualities of leadership of Moses Kotane and J. B. Marks emerged and made their mark on all the younger men and women who lived, worked or associated with them — all except confirmed and incorrigible counter-revolutionaries.

A valiant, courageous and stubborn fighter has fallen at his post, on the battlefield. Our battle-steeled working class, our death-defying youth, our militant women, our tested peasantry and committed intelligentsia — our entire people, and in particular our national liberation movement headed by the ANC, today pay eternal tribute to the people's leader, Moses Kotane, for his monumental contribution to the great advances made towards the seizure of power by the people in South Africa.

The Soviet Union was Moses Kotane's second and beloved home. He loved the Soviet people dearly and regarded the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as his own Party. It is not surprising that he should have expressed the wish that when his heart ceased to beat he should be laid to rest in the land of Lenin.

(From an oration delivered at the funeral of Moses Kotane in Moscow on May 26.)

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**R. Ulyanovsky, Deputy Head of the International Department of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:**

Death has robbed us of a passionate revolutionary, of an unflinching communist, of a courageous fighter for the liberation of the South

African people from the yoke of racism and colonialism. Under his direct leadership the Communist Party became an organised, mobilised and militant revolutionary vanguard of the working masses, which went through all its trials with honour and continues its courageous struggle for a bright future for the people of South Africa.

Moses Kotane was a close and sincere friend of the Soviet Union. A committed internationalist, he did all he could to promote the development of fraternal relations between our Parties, and helped strengthen friendship between the South African and Soviet peoples. Soviet Communists and all Soviet people will keep the bright memory of Moses Kotane in their hearts forever.

(From a speech delivered at the funeral of Moses Kotane in Moscow on May 26, 1978.)

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**Henry Winston, national chairman, and Gus Hall, general secretary, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States:**

Widely known as a militant fighter and brilliant strategist in the struggle against colonialism, comrade Kotane always endeavoured to have Marxism-Leninism as his guide. He was ever the firm adherent to proletarian internationalism and a constant advocate of strengthening ties between the component forces of the world revolutionary process, namely, the Socialist community of states in whose van stands the Soviet Union, the national liberation movements and the workingclass and nationally oppressed peoples' struggles inside capitalist states.

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**The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:**

Moses Kotane's entire life was an example of dedicated service to the dignified cause of struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism, for the national liberation of the people of South Africa, for the ideals of communism.

A passionate patriot of his country, he was a committed internationalist, made a large contribution to the development of friendly relations between the CPSU, the SACP and the ANC, between the Soviet and South African peoples.

Soviet communists will always cherish the fine memory of this courageous revolutionary.

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**Erich Honecker, General Secretary, Socialist Unity Party of Germany:**

As a prominent functionary of the international communist and workers' movement and of the national liberation movement, as a devoted Marxist-Leninist and a glowing fighter for the liberation of the African peoples from the chains of imperialism, colonialism and racism Moses Mauane Kotane has deserved great and lasting merit.

The Socialist Unity Party of Germany will forever preserve the honourable memory of Moses Mauane Kotane, who as general secretary of the SACP has waged an untiring struggle against colonial and imperialist oppression, for the unity and strengthening of the international communist and workers' movement.

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**Ibrahim Zakaria, Central Committee member of the Communist Party of the Sudan:**

The wave of sorrow and sadness that swept the Communists of the world and the democratic masses of Africa is a reflection of the esteem and regard of the toiling masses for the lofty character and ideals of your prominent deceased leader.

May the memory of Moses Kotane be a flame among all the fighters for freedom on the African continent. May his dedicated life to the Party be a model of courage, tenacity and fidelity to the ideals of your heroic struggle.

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**Iradj Eskandary, First Secretary, Tudeh Party of Iran:**

Comrade Moses Kotane was an outstanding functionary of the international communist and workers' movement, a true Marxist-Leninist and an ardent patriot. He devoted his whole energies and his vast experience to the cause of the liberation of his people and the other peoples of Africa from the yoke of imperialism, colonialism and racial discrimination. He contributed greatly to the development and strengthening of the South African Communist Party. His brilliant memory will always be remembered by his Party, his people and the other freedom-loving peoples of the world.

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**William Kashtan, General Secretary, Communist Party of Canada:**

I last met comrade Kotane in a hospital on the outskirts of Moscow. We had a very lively discussion on developments throughout the world. Inevitably however the discussion centred on the rising struggle in South Africa. I recall how he expressed supreme confidence in the outcome of the struggle, not only in South Africa, but in Africa as a whole.

To us in Canada, faced as we are with the solution of the national question, comrade Kotane's contribution to the application of Marxism-Leninism to the situation in South Africa was an additional source of inspiration. He recognised as comrade Dadoo reminded us that there could be no victory for the working class without black liberation and no black liberation without the destruction of capitalism in all its forms — an approach which is basically ours in Canada.

Comrade Kotane left a legacy and a banner, not only for his Party and the ANC, but for all anti-imperialist fighters in the world. (From a speech at a memorial meeting held in Toronto on May 28.)

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**Janet Jagan, International Secretary, People's Progressive Party of Guyana:**

Comrade Kotane was an outstanding communist, well respected and



admired all over the world. The outstanding contribution he made at every level of the struggle of the South African people has been effective in unifying the struggle and in bringing greater awareness of the terrible conditions of South Africa to peoples all over the world as well as enlarging the solidarity on a world scale.

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**The World Federation of Democratic Youth:**

The WFDY on behalf of millions of young people expresses heartfelt condolences at the death of Moses Kotane, general secretary of the SACP, leader of the liberation struggle in South Africa and gallant fighter for freedom. Kotane's death is a loss to progressive mankind, but his dedication to the cause of freedom, national liberation, peace and democracy will serve as a source of inspiration.

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**ANC Students, German Democratic Republic:**

His spirit and noble aspirations will remain in us.

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**Jack Simons, tribute to Moses Kotane at Memorial meeting in Lusaka on May 28:**

He, more than most of us, succeeded in welding together in a balanced, harmonious union of theory and practice the concepts, principles and aims of Marxist socialism and African nationalism. He saw no contradiction between the two dimensions of our national revolution: the struggle, on the one hand, against white racism and Afrikaner autocracy, and on the other hand, against colonial capitalism and imperialism; the struggle for African majority rule and proletarian socialism.

My association with Moses Kotane goes back to the 1930s. Moses Kotane as general secretary of the Communist Party and leading member of the ANC's national executive committee, had the difficult task of linking the two organisations in an alliance against the common enemy. He, with other Party members holding office in

the ANC or South African Indian Congress — Edwin Mofutsanyana, J. B. Marks and Dr Dadoo — succeeded magnificently in strengthening ties between the two wings of the liberation movement.

Moses Kotane combined a clear political understanding with much patience, tact and organisational efficiency. There were occasions when the Party and ANC appeared to move in contrary directions, but he refused to divide his loyalties or weaken in his attempts to harmonise the two. He never lost faith in their basic unity of purpose and the ultimate triumph of our cause.

A simple, direct and frugal person, Moses Kotane was a shining example of a dedicated revolutionary. While in Cape Town, he lived with his family in a small house in the working class quarter of District Six on a monthly salary of £25, which was all the Party could afford. He never complained.

His passing leaves us the poorer. But his contribution remains in the devoted revolutionaries whom he trained and inspired and in the principles and structures which he helped to establish. The alliance between the ANC and the Communist Party is one of the legacies that oncoming generations will preserve and strengthen in our struggle for freedom.

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**John Pittman, CPUSA representative on *World Marxist Review*:**  
During several weeks of close association with comrade Kotane in the spring of 1971, I got to know something of the clarity of his vision and the sharpness of his intelligence. At that time, although quite ill, he was ever full of sympathy and concern for the health of others. And notwithstanding the variations of pain he must have suffered from time to time, he was ever ready with wit and good humour for all who knew him. During those days I felt drawn to him by feelings of both affection and deep respect. I share your grief at his passing.

# **PRISONERS OF FASCISM**

**by Phineas Malinga**

Nelson Mandela was sixty years old on 18th July 1978. He spent his birthday as he has spent his last fifteen birthdays, in prison on Robben Island. Yet, in spite of these long and weary years of isolation, Nelson Mandela remains linked by an unbreakable bond, not only to his own African people, but to lovers of freedom the world over. This fact was illustrated on 18th July, when his birthday was commemorated as no South African leader's birthday has ever been saluted, not only by his comrades in the underground movement in South Africa and in exile, in Lusaka and elsewhere, but also by friends of the African people throughout the world. Among the public meetings held to mark the occasion was one addressed by Ambassador Leslie Harriman, Chairman of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid, in London. In response to appeals organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the UN Centre Against Apartheid, thousands of birthday cards were sent to Nelson in prison and thousands of messages went to his wife, Nomzamo

Winnie Mandela, in banishment at Brandfort, Orange Free State.

Those who took part in these demonstrations of solidarity were recognising a lifetime of outstanding service to the people's movement. Nelson Mandela was one of the founders of the ANC Youth League. He was Volunteer-in-Chief during the Defiance Campaign of 1952. Though arrested and compelled to endure the infamous "Treason Trial" of 1957-61, he remained in the front rank of the ANC leadership through all the dramatic events of the fifties. When the ANC went underground, and some of its leaders were posted to the external mission, in 1960 Nelson Mandela assumed a key role in organising the underground movement within South Africa.

There followed two heroic years in which, though working underground and continually hunted by the police, he not only contributed to the foundation of Umkhonto We Sizwe and the building of an underground organisation, but also played a public role which attracted the attention of the entire South African nation and the world. With the devoted aid of militants of all racial groups, he evaded capture for so long that the bourgeois Press, both in South Africa and abroad, came to refer to him as "the Black Pimpernel".

Yet those who remembered Nelson Mandela on 18th July were not concerned merely with an individual. Through him, they were expressing their solidarity with all South Africa's political prisoners. On 18th July, Nelson Mandela shared his lot with Walter Sisulu, Denis Goldberg and Ahmed Kathrada — his co-defendants at the Rivonia trial, who have been in prison and almost as long as he has. On that same day, Solomon Mahlangu was in the death cell in Pretoria, awaiting the result of his application for leave to appeal against the sentence passed on him for the part which he played in the armed struggle in 1977. On that day, Tim Jenkin and Stephen Lee had just completed the first month of 12-year and 8-year sentences passed on them for their activities in distributing ANC literature.

But those names represent only a tiny fraction of the total. Arrests, detentions without trial, banishments, trials and sentences of imprisonment, flogging or death have become a daily occurrence and the number of cases involving political elements is increasing by leaps and bounds. The victims range from Umkhonto volunteers



captured in possession of arms to schoolchildren suspected of some trivial attempt at political activity. The number of people imprisoned (that is, sentenced to imprisonment after a trial) under "security" legislation as at the beginning of 1978 has been given in the South African Parliament as 440. Of these, 36 are serving life sentences, six are children under the age of sixteen, who would normally be sent to reformatories but, because of the political nature of their offences, are being held in adult prisons.

Then there are the entirely separate categories of persons detained without trial. Again according to information furnished by South African Ministers in Parliament, there were on 31st December 1977 240 detainees under section 6 of the Terrorism Act and 61 under section 10 of the Internal Security Act. Furthermore, under section 12B of the Internal Security Act, a total of 311 persons were detained for various periods of time during 1977. By the end of the year, the majority of these had either been released or charged but on 2nd February, 1978, there were still 95 detainees under section 12B who had been arrested during 1977 — in one case on 10th August 1977 and on later dates in the remaining cases.

Even these figures do not exhaust the roll-call of the victims of political repression in South Africa. To them must be added an unknown number of individuals arrested and awaiting trial under the ordinary procedures of criminal law. Some clue to the possible number of these can be found in the statement of the South African Minister of Justice in May 1978, that 91 "trained terrorists" and 594 "untrained terrorists" had been arrested. Finally, to them must be added some of the 149 persons who, according to the Minister of Police, were shot dead during 1977 by South African policemen "in the execution of their duties".

Under these circumstances, it is becoming impossible for the world to be kept informed of all the individual cases. The International Defence and Aid Fund continues to do all that can humanly be done in that direction. For example, the July 1978 issue of its bulletin *Focus* contained names and brief particulars of 31 defendants in political trials in South Africa, mentioned 38 others whose names were not available and listed the names of 48 detainees. This information was obtained in the course of the tireless efforts of IDAF

not only to publicise but also to defend as many political cases as possible.

Those efforts have been the object of continual obstruction and harassment by the fascist South African authorities. Their latest and most drastic move was announced in May 1978. Five lawyers, George Bizos, David Soggott, Christopher Nicholson, Shun Chetty and Ismael Ayob, all of whom have defended numerous political cases, were served with orders banning them from visiting convicted prisoners. Announcing this measure, the Minister of Justice made it clear that it was merely the first instalment of a number of major changes in legal procedure, designed specifically to hinder both the defence of political cases and the holding of solidarity demonstrations in connection with them.

Whatever these further measures may turn out to be, they will be met with courage and resourcefulness by South Africa's small band of democratic lawyers, by the various sympathisers from all walks of life who have made IDAF's work possible in South Africa over the years and by the broad masses of the people, who are increasingly determined to demonstrate their solidarity with imprisoned freedom fighters. It cannot, however, be guaranteed that this new fascist onslaught will be successfully rebuffed in the short term. We have to face the likelihood that in the immediate future a smaller proportion of political prisoners than hitherto will be defended and that existing lines of communication for informing the world about their fate may be cut.

Recent events have also shown the increasing imperviousness of the South African government to adverse publicity and to protests from bourgeois democratic standpoints. The death of Steve Biko, though only one of many deaths of detainees under interrogation, attracted an unprecedented degree of publicity. The gruesome methods of the security police were examined in detail at the inquest, reported at length by South African and overseas newspapers and vigorously criticised by Progressive members of the South African Parliament. Such pillars of the Western establishment as the President of the Law Society of England and Wales took part in the protests. The South African Bar Council formally requested the Minister of Justice to introduce safeguards against maltreatment of detainees.

Despite all this publicity and protest, political prisoners continue

to be killed in detention. Following the death of Lugile Tabalaza in Port Elizabeth last July, a few security policemen were shunted about, but for all practical purposes the system remains unchanged. The torture and killing of detainees is not due to the evil nature or carelessness of one or two policemen, but flows from the repressive nature of the apartheid regime, which can only survive by the exercise of force and violence against its opponents. Thus despite the mounting toll of victims of police atrocities, none of the powers of the police have been curtailed. No methods of interrogation have been outlawed. No political prisoners have been released.

The "safeguards" introduced in response to the Bar Council are derisory. Firstly, district surgeons have been instructed to visit detainees once a month (it took the police less than twenty four hours to kill Joseph Mdluli). Secondly, two elderly officials — a retired magistrate and a retired Attorney General — have been appointed "to oversee the welfare of detainees". They are supposed to cover the whole country between them. Their reports will be confidential, for the benefit of the Minister only.

The one point on which the South African Government and the liberation movement are in full agreement is that the size of the underground resistance in South Africa is increasing rapidly. As the struggle intensifies, the number of freedom fighters captured will decline as a proportion of the total number of freedom fighters, but it may still increase as an absolute figure. Normal legal procedures and normal channels of publicity will play a decreasing role. Some bourgeois democratic sympathisers will fall away, while others will find themselves unable to continue in their present spheres of activity.

All these considerations point to the need for new methods of helping our imprisoned comrades. Publicity and information remain essential. If existing channels of information dry up, they must be replaced by new channels within the structure of the underground movement itself. Information must reach all those who are in a position to make use of it: lawyers and opposition M.P.'s in South Africa, relatives of prisoners, militants who may be in a position to organise demonstrations outside courts or prisons, solidarity organisations elsewhere in the world and finally armed units who may be in a position to carry out rescues.

Not all of those to whom such information comes will always be able to act upon it. Our prisoners will understand that. They know that the movement has needs which have to take priority over the needs of individuals. At the same time, they are entitled to know that the movement and its allies, in South Africa and elsewhere, will never do anything less than the utmost which can be done for them.





## THE ANGOLAN REVOLUTION

# MAIN PHASES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MPLA

*This is the concluding section of an interview held by JOE SLOVO with LUCIO LARA, member of the Political Bureau of the MPLA Workers' Party and Central Committee Secretary for Organisation. The first section was published in the last issue of The African Communist, No. 74 Third Quarter 1978.*

**Joe Slovo:** MPLA documents refer to the immediate predecessors of your organisation as being the PLUA, an ephemeral Angolan Communist Party and MIA. Could you say a few words on each, and also deal with the impact of the cultural movement of which *Mensagem* is an example?

**Lucio Lara:** Those organisations and movements were born in the period of the awakening of consciousness of many, many patriots. *Mensagem* was a journal which expressed itself culturally, but which fundamentally had a political content. It is quite clear that because of conditions, it could not express itself otherwise than through culture, through music, through dance, etc. In this awakening of consciousness, many organisations made their appearance, small organisations, some of which grew and joined together while others disappeared. And amongst these organisations, the movement which was most significant was the PLUA, which had some worker participation and already had a clearly proletarian stamp.

The Communist Party which emerged sought to be a more closed and narrower version of PLUA. It was made up above all of intellectuals and did not develop into a real Communist Party. It was much more an ideological study centre which did not have a proletarian base on which to develop, and therefore it disappeared.

Then there was MIA, the Movement for the Independence of Angola, which in fact had a broad vision. It tried to bring together patriots of all tendencies, all regions, patriots who were conscious of the need to concentrate on the struggle for Angola's independence. And it was basically from there that the MPLA went on to develop. It was from those elements that the MPLA was built.

**Joe Slovo:** The Central Committee report to the First Congress states that the task of working clandestinely in Angola and in the other Portuguese colonies was far more complex than in other parts of Africa. Could you elaborate on this?

**Lucio Lara:** Indeed, Angola and the other Portuguese colonies, apart from being subjected to a colonial regime, had the added feature of being subjected to a fascist regime. Therefore we had here an expression of what we regard as colonial fascism. In the other colonies, like Kenya, the Gold Coast, French colonies like Ivory Coast, Guinea, Senegal, the liberation movements had as their origin legal workers' organisations, trade unions especially and other associations of different types, associations of a cultural nature and even of a political nature. In Angola, the position was different. Here, there was absolutely no freedom of association, there was no trade union freedom. There was only one political institution, the so-called National Union, which was typically fascist. It refused membership to Angolans, even to many who belonged to the embryonic Angolan bourgeoisie.

This meant that in Angola there was no experience of association, no political or trade union organisational experience. From the start, the liberation movement of Angola and of the other Portuguese colonies had to be clandestine movements, with all the difficulties presented by clandestinity under a police regime which used corruption, the infiltration of agents etc. Therefore, dozens of MPLA groups collapsed. A group would be formed and some months later it would fail because the political police managed to infiltrate an agent and uncover the organisation. Many MPLA

groups were taken to court. Others did not even reach the courts because they were simply liquidated.

And it is precisely in this respect that we see a big difference between the colonies of other countries and the Portuguese colonies. We had much greater difficulties in organising ourselves. Throughout our history, we were refused the right to struggle openly in our own country. We were illegal almost from the start and that is why, compared to the liberation movements in the other colonies, our leadership had to function for some time from bases outside our countries.

**Joe Slovo:** The MPLA was born in Luanda. It thus began its life as an urban movement in a society in which, according to your Central Committee report, the town population consisted of only about 7 per cent of the total, and a large part of this percentage were settlers. One can speculate that this must have had the advantage of giving MPLA a more advanced ideological content and the disadvantage of developing an armed struggle whose main geographic location would be in the countryside. Could you elaborate on these aspects?

**Lucio Lara:** We can indeed say that the MPLA was founded in Luanda and benefitted from the naturally more developed conditions of life of the urban population. By this I do not mean that the MPLA had the support of any colonial sector. Only after its formation, some Portuguese groups, democrats and Communists, gave some support to the MPLA. It is natural that the advanced ideology of the MPLA should lie precisely in this fact of having come out of an environment where such problems, ideological problems, would naturally be of greater concern than, for example, in rural areas.

Regarding the development of the armed struggle, if we had great difficulties, those difficulties had two causes, which did not have to do with the MPLA having been born in a capital city. We had above all the great obstacle that Zaire constituted in our struggle. Zaire, subjected to American imperialism from the time it became independent, after the death of Lumumba, was indeed a big obstacle. Everything was done to prevent the MPLA forces from having transit facilities. Had this been otherwise, the MPLA could have shown, as it showed in the East, its capacity for organising the rural non-urban masses. In the East, among a population far from

the capital, far from the big urban centres, the people gave, and still give today, extremely strong support to the MPLA.

This proves that basically it is ideas, it is principles, it is methods which mobilise people, which count, and not the fact of belonging to the rural environment or the urban environment. Further, we can say that, despite everything, it was in the city of Luanda that the armed struggle was launched. Despite all the repressive colonial might established in the capital, it was here that on 4th February 1961, men of the MPLA launched the armed struggle.

**Joe Slovo:** The MPLA's first Manifesto, published clandestinely in Luanda in 1956, stated that the Angolan people will only emerge victorious with the achievement of a united front of all Angolan anti-imperialist forces, irrespective of colour, social status, religious beliefs and individual postures. The same Manifesto proclaimed the aim of furthering the struggle to install a democratic and people's government at the head of which will be the working class. It is also stated in your Congress documents that the first Statutes and Programme of the MPLA already contained the seeds of a vanguard Party structure. Those who are familiar with the long years of the MPLA's struggle know that throughout its history it maintained a principled class position. Could you comment on the way in which MPLA maintained such a position without endangering or narrowing the broad national and patriotic front which had to be mobilised against Portuguese imperialism?

**Lucio Lara:** Indeed, we can say that all the work of the MPLA at the start was aimed at uniting all patriots around a given line, given principles, to achieve a broad front capable of advancing rapidly in the process of the struggle. The MPLA itself, as already stated, was the result of a front, a union of patriots from various organisations who joined together in the MPLA. And we always sought to bring into our front the various organisations which emerged from time to time. Right from the start, our problem was to unite the whole people and we were largely successful in this. We can say that when independence came, the MPLA was really the only movement which had roots and support in all regions of the country, irrespective of tribal, ethnic or racial factors.

As regards the ideological definition of our Movement, it is also true that from the time when we adopted our first Statutes, we



sought to give the Movement a structure that would make it possible for follow a given orientation. It was not by accident that such a structure was chosen. It was because a specific structure was needed to enable us to follow the orientation chosen. And it was in this way that the MPLA went through the whole process of liberation, with all its ups and downs. Despite all the attempts against its integrity by the colonialist and imperialist forces, the MPLA managed to arrive at the end of the process of the liberation struggle, always maintaining a consistent line of action, and a consistent political line. Right from the start of our liberation struggle we kept within our sights those objectives of our movement which we would have to implement soon after the winning of independence. In the early stages, these objectives still seemed remote. They began to assume a more immediate reality with the winning of independence. The fact that continuity in the struggle was possible is due precisely to the Party structure the MPLA gave itself from the very start.

### **The Problems of Exile**

**Joe Slovo.** Now from early on, a large section of the MPLA leadership was forced to work in exile, without which the struggle could not have been launched or sustained during vital periods. This, as we know, always brings with it a multitude of special problems, including tensions of varying degrees between external and internal structures. What was the MPLA experience in this regard, and more particularly, has this factor played a part in some of the post-independence difficulties?

**Lucio Lara:** Without any doubt, those problems had some effect. We can say that the MPLA lived in exile, but it was exile with a special purpose. For example, the MPLA had representatives in Brazzaville, in Dar es Salaam and in Lusaka. And those representatives were representatives in the true sense, because their main purpose was to ensure that the struggle should develop inside Angola. The passage of militants through friendly, neighbouring countries, was above all for the purpose of study, to arm themselves with the necessary skills etc. The external structures were always designed to facilitate a return inside the country. Therefore it is not really a question of exile. External presence was an intermediary

between the internal and external life that the MPLA combatants lived.

But of course there were unavoidable differences between the life of those who always lived in clandestinity, those in prisons, those who always lived in combat regions, completely isolated from the rest of the Movement. Naturally, these different ways of life gave rise to some difficulties of adaptation and sometimes of understanding. But it rarely happened that they had really serious effects. Take the factionalist outburst, in 1977, which some had attributed to these different ways of life and experiences. But we can point to other examples of factionalism like that of Chipenda, or the so-called active revolt which had nothing to do with any such experience.

There have of course been difficulties of adaptation, but we can say that those difficulties have been largely solved. Today, all the experiences have virtually come together. There is already a certain adaptation, and such difficulties as may remain will no longer essentially stem from those different experiences, but from present problems, from problems which exist now and which have to be faced today in the present process of the present development of our revolutionary process.

**Joe Slovo:** Now, the MPLA experienced many major divisions within its ranks, to which you have already referred. It was also often the victim of what I would call temporary forced marriages between it and other movements, and even forced dialogue with factions within its own ranks. I refer to the active revolt. Could you briefly trace your experience in this regard, and its general relevance for other movements in Africa?

**Lucio Lara:** The problems which cropped up within the organisation were basically problems of class, of class struggle, sometimes taking a confused form, difficult to understand, but they were really class differences.

We spoke just now of the case of active revolt. The active revolt was a small group of petty bourgeois intellectuals who, at the precise moment when they saw that the fall of fascism in Portugal would hasten the process of liberation in the colonies, wanted to capture the leading positions in the Movement so as to lead the process along petty bourgeois lines, against the truly revolutionary line of the

MPLA. And that is why an active revolt, for example, came into being.

In the Chipenda case, it is also not just the case of an individual; it too is a case of class. Chipenda managed to mislead many of our friends in socialist countries. But basically Chipenda really expressed the aspirations of a future Angolan bourgeoisie. He never really identified with the ideology of the working class. He was always guided by attitudes grounded in bourgeois ideology, and used populism and tribalism to set some peasants against the central nucleus of the Movement.

There were other phenomena of this type, that of Nito Alves, of nitism, which organised the attempted coup in May 1977. This, too, represented a distinct group of the Angolan population, the Angolan petty bourgeoisie, also some intellectuals, who by coincidence had been together, particularly in the prisons, and whose ambition was to guide the revolutionary process as a conspiratorial faction, outside the usual norms of the Movement. They did not bring their ideas to the Movement's organs for analysis, criticism, acceptance or rejection.

In general, all the divisions we experienced were an expression of an internal class struggle within the Movement. Of course, they also have their epilogue in the form of class struggle, with the ideology of the working class remaining in command in the MPLA.

**Joe Slovo:** Yes, but what I am also trying to get at is that from time to time MPLA engaged in dialogue with Chipenda, with the fantoche movements, not because it considered these movements progressive, but because of external factors. Many other liberation movements face the same kind of problem even today. Could you comment on these experiences which perhaps arose from the fact that MPLA was, at one stage, to some extent a prisoner of external forces?

**Lucio Lara:** Yes, that aspect was really predominant in all the development of the MPLA. At certain stages of our struggle, external forces, especially certain neighbouring countries, interfered too much in the movement. They wanted to pressurise the movement to adopt what they thought was right without regard for what we, the real fighters, who really knew the Angolan cause, were building.

The epilogue of those attempts was the so-called Lusaka Congress

(1974), when we definitively said "No" to all this interference. The friendly countries which forced us, which pressurised us, had no real understanding or knowledge of our situation. Today we can see more clearly still that such interference was not only very harmful, but was indulged in by people who did not understand or follow our revolutionary process, and who wanted to impose solutions of this or the other type on fighters who really did know what their problems were and who knew what objectives had to be attained.

### **Causes of the Coup**

**Joe Slovo:** What were the basic causes of the attempted May 27 Coup, and how would you characterise the groupings which participated in it?

**Lucio Lara:** As we have said, the fundamental problem of that attempt resided in a small group of petty bourgeois intellectuals, more or less theoreticians, who wanted to orientate the revolutionary process in other ways, without taking into account all the experience gained by the MPLA over the twenty years of struggle. And we can say that a good part of the leaders of that attempt came from a certain section of the inexperienced youth, which had not really known the whole historical process of the MPLA in the liberation war, and which, either in clandestinity or in prisons, had absorbed new ideas, in many cases through ill-digested reading of some classics of Marxism-Leninism. There was also some foreign influence in the process. Imperialist forces knew how, at the opportune moment, to exploit such elements to launch what could have been a possible coup d'etat. We can say that those who took part in the attempt were essentially a small group of petty bourgeois people, who also succeeded in involving some former fighters, particularly from areas close to Luanda with whom they were identified.

**Joe Slovo:** The question of transforming the MPLA into a Party and the holding of a Congress for this purpose first arose in 1968 and again in 1971, and in the readjustment campaign which began in 1972. Could you briefly trace the history of this process, which culminated in the decisions of the First Congress?

**Lucio Lara:** For a long time, especially after having acquired some experience in the liberation war, including the experience of



life inside the liberated zones, the idea of creating a Party began to emerge strongly. It was increasingly felt that the MPLA must go beyond the character of a Movement and assume the character of a Party. But there were also a number of obstacles. The MPLA was established in the liberated areas, which were quite far from the urban centres, that is, the working class sectors, and at that stage there was not any effective participation by the working class, and the enrichment of the content of our struggle by that class. It is for this reason that the project, which was really born in the guerilla struggle, was postponed. It arose once more, and was again postponed, always in the hope that better conditions would arise for creating a Party.

It was with the winning of independence, and especially in the struggles of the Second Liberation War for independence, that this enrichment needed by the Movement, an enrichment by the working class, the physical participation of the working class, made it possible to envisage more seriously and more immediately the long-felt need to transform the MPLA into a Party. Therefore, the process was concluded precisely at the First Congress.

**Joe Slovo:** What were the options open to you in the method of creating your vanguard Party at the First Congress, and what steps are now in progress to create and consolidate the MPLA Workers' Party?

**Lucio Lara:** We explain in our theses on the Party that various alternatives arose, for the creation of our Party. We analysed the whole history of the MPLA and we noted that it was not, properly speaking, a question of *creating* a Party. And this, because the MPLA itself, the Movement itself, had over the years been undergoing that transformation, and becoming increasingly a party. Starting as a Movement, the MPLA had been increasingly acquiring the structure and content of a Party.

For this very reason, when we arrived at this stage of the process, we thought that it would not be correct for us to *create* a Party, or to announce the *transformation* of the MPLA into a Party. Analysing the whole process, we thought that the correct thing would be to note that the MPLA itself already had all the characteristics of a Party, and therefore we decided to *constitute* the MPLA as a Party, on the

basis of these factors derived from an analysis of the revolutionary process.

### **The Armed Struggle**

**Joe Slovo:** What specific factors led to the launching of the armed struggle in 1961? More particularly, could it be said that conditions for the armed struggle had already been prepared, or were present, then in 1961?

**Lucio Lara:** We can say yes. We can say that in 1961, some of the conditions, some of the premises had been created for the launching of armed struggle. For a long time, the Movement worked at mobilising the people at developing national consciousness, and at a certain moment that national consciousness which existed in every patriot attained a certain level of development, a certain maturity. In May 1960, the patriots in Luanda were already ready to launch armed struggle. But analysing the conditions, it was noted that support for that struggle, and also international understanding of that struggle, had not been sufficiently developed. Therefore, it was decided to give ourselves more time to explain our process more categorically, especially at the international level, so that the rebellion of the Angolan people would be understood. This was at a time when it was thought that Portuguese colonialism was exemplary, that there were no problems. So it was necessary to demystify; all the myths of Portuguese colonialism had to be destroyed. By December 1960, the MPLA announced that since the Portuguese government refused to accept peaceful decolonisation the Angolan people would assume their responsibilities and go over to direct action.

**Joe Slovo:** Were any special problems experienced in asserting the dominant role of the political leadership over the military and to combine the armed struggle with other forms of mass political resistance and organisation? Would you say that there was a conflict between what one would call the military line and the political line?

**Lucio Lara:** In the MPLA we cannot look at the problem like that. All the experience of our struggle can be summed up in a word which we use a lot, which is that the MPLA militant is a politico-military person. This means that an MPLA militant, at the same

time as having to pay attention to his political education, to his political attitude, to all the phenomena of society, is at the same time a fighter with arms in hand. And it is true that during our struggle, in the first liberation war, all the MPLA cadres went through the experience of the guerilla war.

In the MPLA there was never a conflict between a political and military line. Even after the creation of FAPLA, this identity was maintained and the MPLA militant retained his or her character as a political and military cadre.

Now, of course, after independence, the organisation of our new society necessarily leads to a functional separation of political and military tasks. But there are still no fundamental differences between the military and political militants. It does of course arise that in some respects, in certain problems, the analysis made by a comrade who is today essentially in the military sector may be different from that made by a comrade who is in the political sector. But at the level of the party, those analyses always come together and a correct line for their implementation is always found.

**Joe Slovo:** The MPLA has a great deal of experience in the way in which progress in the Angolan armed struggle was influenced, and sometimes dictated, by the changing relationship of forces in Africa, in the OAU and, more especially, in the border regions. Could you say a few words on these external aspects of your revolution, bearing in mind that the external factor continues to play an important role in the struggles in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa?

**Lucio Lara:** Yes, our experience in that respect is quite instructive, and it can be summed up in various stages. In 1963, an OAU committee decided no longer to recognise the MPLA, and tried to force it to join the so-called FNLA. The MPLA ignored that decision of the OAU. It continued its existence, in its struggle, by its own resources, and compelled recognition by the OAU, which shortly afterwards again recognised the MPLA. And, conversely, shortly afterwards the OAU was to abandon the FNLA.

During the confused period, after the fall of fascism in Portugal, the OAU influenced by Angola's neighbours and by forces alien to progressive developments in Africa as a whole, once again interfered in Angolan problems and again tried to pressurise the MPLA to adopt this or that leadership. As I said earlier, at the so-called

Lusaka congress, the MPLA broke with all these attempts at interference in its internal affairs and in the revolutionary process in Angola. Right up to the eve of independence, the OAU sent missions from Idi Amin, its President at the time, to try to seek a formula which suited the OAU but which would not have served the Angolan people.

Yet again, the MPLA maintained its line. We remained firm and did not accept any interference at all, either by the OAU, or by neighbouring countries who sent joint missions here to influence our process at the very last moment when we were on the eve of our independence.

The MPLA resisted this mounting pressure and followed its own policy.

One of the characteristics of the MPLA is precisely that it has always been an independent movement which now continues to be an independent Party. And that seems to us the only correct line to be followed in the case of Zimbabwe. There too, we see the interference of many forces alien to Zimbabwe, to the people of Zimbabwe; forces who do not grasp the nature of the real process in Zimbabwe. We fear that such continuing interference will be prejudicial, not beneficial, to the progress of the Zimbabwean struggle. Therefore our attitude, the attitude of the MPLA, is that it is up to the comrades of the Patriotic Front to solve their problems and to choose the line they must follow. It is *they* who have the sole right to decide, and we must simply support the line which they want to follow. In other words we are opposed to the puppets and we must be guided by the line the Patriotic Front decides to follow.

### **Socialism and the Interim Phase**

**Joe Slovo:** Socialist rhetoric has become very popular in Africa. Even regimes which are busy laying the foundations of capitalism talk of socialist inspiration. We have heard much phrases such as African socialism, Arab socialism, traditional tribal socialism and so on. It is clear that the MPLA recognised only one valid ideology, which is embraced by the phrase Marxism-Leninism. What are your general views about these different roads towards socialism which we have heard about?



**Lucio Lara:** We have been hearing for a long time about all these original species of socialism. Clearly, for the MPLA, there has always been only one expression of socialism, known precisely as scientific socialism. Experience has shown that all that rhetoric, as you have correctly called it, has not led to concrete steps showing a true socialist option. And this is still the position many years after independence and many years after the proclamation of pseudo-socialisms.

Imperialist capital continues to be the real *raison d'être* of these countries. The colonial presence, the presence of neo-colonialism is obvious in all of them. Their capitalist orientation is clear, and really the peoples of these countries feel confused by all that rhetoric promising new kinds of socialism. These "socialisms" are basically disguises for one or other form of colonial exploitation. Therefore, we want our people to understand the real principle, which is relatively simple, i.e. that the road to socialism can only be successfully charted by a movement which is based on Marxism-Leninism. And within the limited possibilities we have in our country today, we are trying to put that policy into practice; in factories, on farms, in organising the Party, in organising the workers.

It is in these concrete aspects that we seek to give emphasis to the true socialist orientation, and we try not to confuse our people with other non-realistic hypotheses about this or that type of non-scientific socialism.

**Joe Slovo:** Now a vitally important question is the nature of the class struggle in the post-independence period, and the type of State form which can become the instrument for an advance towards a socialist option. It has been said, for example, that in Africa there are special conditions: an underdeveloped working class and national bourgeoisie, a backward tribally-influenced peasantry, distorted and low-level development of the forms and relations of production, the dominant leadership role of the middle strata in the independence struggle, the continuing need to mobilise all patriotic elements against the new manoeuvres of imperialism and neocolonialism. These special conditions, it is argued, lead to the creation of a broader, state form usually dominated by a strata described as revolutionary democrats in alliance with workers, peasants, progressive elements of the national bourgeoisie and petty

bourgeoisie etc. What is the approach of the MPLA Workers' Party on this question of the state form during the interim phase in Africa generally, and more specifically in relation to Angola?

**Lucio Lara:** We think that in most African countries, which have attained independence, there are conditions to enable them decisively to choose a socialist orientation and to create conditions for the building of socialism. But in many of these countries, perhaps because of the way in which they attained independence, there may not yet exist the momentum required to embark on an arduous struggle, an extremely difficult struggle to lay the foundations for socialism. Also, the diversity of ways in which each country attained independence has not as yet permitted serious and profound general theorising on how to define one or another stage of development towards socialism. We know that much has been written, and there has been much speculation, on the attempts to define, to clarify, even to establish theoretical generalisations about this process. And although we are part of that process, we feel a little handicapped to theorise generally.

When we were still a Movement, we had already defined the present stage of our struggle as a transitional one which would be based on a state form whose essence is a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of all those forces which have a revolutionary attitude towards the process we are going through, dominated, as I have said earlier, by a worker-peasant alliance.

We aim to create the conditions to attain what we define as people's democracy: a process which falls within the stage of the transition to socialism.

In working for this aim, we know that we face extraordinary difficulties of every kind; shortage of food supplies, of transport, effective occupation of abandoned factories, revitalising many structures which are still paralysed etc; all of which calls for enormous effort. But if we feel optimistic, if we feel capable of solving those problems, we of the MPLA Workers' Party think this is an optimism born of the MPLA's own historical past and our accumulated historical experiences. And it does raise the question whether another movement, faced with the same conditions but without the same experience, would have the same certainty of being capable of building socialism despite all the difficulties, despite

imperialism, despite the hostile attitudes of all the imperialist countries which are continuing to hatch the most varied plots to liquidate the PRA and the MPLA.

Would another party, without our background, faced with these problems have the same attitude as we do? I do not think so. I think that what fundamentally conditions the Party's attitude in the face of all these problems is its own background, its own experience, which is what makes us certain that we will be capable of building socialism, despite all the international plotting. I pose the problem in this way in order to make the point that general theorising at this moment might perhaps be a little risky. In order to theorise one must make a concrete and profound analysis of the process within which our advance to socialism is taking place. Only on the basis of such a profound analysis can one make comparisons with other processes. Comparison based on concrete data, on real facts, would make it possible for us to have a more general theoretical idea of how the process is expressing itself in Africa, including of course Southern Africa.

### **Consolidating Power**

**Joe Slovo:** I think you have already touched on this, but I am going to probe a little further. Most of the special conditions of underdevelopment which have already been mentioned in the case of Africa apply also to Angola. In addition, important sectors of your economy remain partially in the hands of imperialist corporations and you are still very much dependent on the world's capitalist market. In the crucial period ahead, the overall level of economic activity will be below that of the immediate pre-independence phase, and the purely material benefits of the revolution will take some time to show themselves. What is your main strategy for overcoming these obstacles and consolidating the power of the working people?

**Lucio Lara:** As you say, I have already touched on the economic aspects and other obstacles and difficulties. But I would add that the basic answer we give to this question, which is an important one, is that our experience is showing us the indispensability of the fundamental factor, which is that the backbone of the whole process is really the Party. All the difficulties we have so far managed to

overcome have been overcome through MPLA, first as a Movement and now as a Party. Are we preparing a strategy to overcome all these obstacles? Perhaps the simplest answer right now would be that the consolidation of the Party, the organising of the Party is our prime concern. With such a Party we are sure that it will be possible to overcome all these obstacles.

**Joe Slovo:** How far are your perspectives influenced by the new international correlation of forces, especially the existence of the socialist world sector?

**Lucio Lara:** We acknowledge that the victory of the MPLA in Angola is also the result of consolidation and strengthening of the world socialist sector. In the conditions under which our victory took place, in the face of the great aggression to which we were subject in the phase immediately after independence, it was clear that only with the support, the internationalist solidarity of the socialist community, would it be possible to defeat such serious aggression by imperialism against our country.

We believe that the socialist forces are going to continue to grow in strength. And we are confident that the MPLA Workers' Party will be a factor which will contribute to the strengthening of all these forces. We are conscious that the mere existence of a People's Republic of Angola has given fresh momentum to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, has opened up greater possibilities for concrete support for the socialist advance in this part of Africa.

**Joe Slovo:** Now, how will you proceed to consolidate the controlling influence of the vanguard Party, the MPLA Workers' Party, which will consist of a small proportion of people, while avoiding elitist and bureaucratic tendencies?

**Lucio Lara:** This is really a difficult struggle; a struggle which is being waged in our midst, in our own ranks, against the really harmful influences of bureaucracy and elitism. We have not yet found the best way of combating these forces. The struggle against them is made more difficult because those whom we could call members of the national bureaucracy are partly made up of some who have also actively contributed to the Party itself.

Another problem is that the political consciousness of many of our militants has not yet attained a level which makes it possible clearly to distinguish how to stop completely the infiltration of such



bureaucratic and elitist tendencies. Here too, it will be by strengthening the Party structures in all bodies, through denunciation, the use of criticism and self-criticism, that it will be possible, little by little, to eliminate the influence of these harmful ideas. In any event, we have already had good experience of this process, some of it in the current phase of building the Party, in which new cells are beginning to wage a struggle against the pernicious effects of bureaucracy.

**Joe Slovo:** And how will the organs of people's power relate to the vanguard Party? How will these organs develop a life which does not conflict with the MPLA's primacy as the controlling guide of the State and the whole of society, but which at the same time gives them a meaningful role in the governing apparatus? I have in mind the section of the Central Committee's Congress report which warns against both "headstrong concepts of excessive centralisation and improperly understood democracy", and refers to the negative experience in connection with the previous People's Power law.

**Lucio Lara:** As we build the Party, especially in this first stage, we are correcting the erroneous view which previously emerged in connection with the organs of People's Power. At the time we attained legality, we found some organs of people's power had emerged more or less spontaneously. These organs had no ideological or organic content, and did not relate to the reality of power throughout the nation. Because of inexperience, a law was passed to create organs of people's power, before the Party itself was effectively established and functioning in all the areas within the jurisdiction of these organs. The result was that these organs almost instinctively assumed the role of a party and unwittingly transformed themselves into a party outside the MPLA.

This process was exploited by some opportunists and had to be corrected. It was necessary to start again and this meant that we had to make certain that existing organs of people's power would be firmly guided by organs of the Party at the same echelon.

We have already seen some of the beneficial effects of these measures, especially in the towns, where the People's Bairro Commissions are beginning to concern themselves with the problems of the population at Bairro level. We have a more vital, but not yet fully organised, experience in the rural areas where it is the Party

committees, who name people to serve on these organs which deal with the vital problems of the local population in relation to the State organs. That positive experience will shortly enable us to organise the popular power organs in a new way, so that they are at the same time linked with the whole state structure from the base, finally leading to creation of a People's National Assembly, which will be the highest national representative body. In all this process, we must never lose sight of the need for the Party to guide and control these organs, so that they do not degenerate into forms devoid of political content, or assume a political content which deflects them from the main objectives laid down by the Party.

### **Southern Africa**

**Joe Slovo:** Now, a few questions on Southern Africa. For our people and our liberation movement, the defeat of Vorster's troops in Angola was an event of outstanding significance. Could you briefly refer to the main lessons of this defeat for the progressive forces?

**Lucio Lara:** I think it is the South African people themselves who can most directly appreciate what the defeat of the South Africans in our country represented. Few people could foresee that it would be possible to defeat the South African forces. Many did not even believe that the South African forces would dare cross their borders to attack a neighbouring country, notwithstanding the nature of the regime in that country. All this happened. There was an invasion, a combined invasion. We have never forgotten that 20 km from Luanda a South African artillery battery was called in by the Portuguese mercenaries who fought with the puppet forces and the Zairean forces. This was all part of the plot to crush the MPLA and not to allow it to proclaim independence.

But all their plots were smashed, thanks to the determination of the MPLA fighters, thanks to the support received by the MPLA at the last moment from the Cuban forces, and also from socialist countries, particularly the Soviet Union. The lesson that can be drawn from that defeat is clear. Today the oppressed South African people feel much more encouraged in the struggle for their ideals, for the objectives for which they have always struggled.

We observe that the youth of South Africa is today assuming a very

important role, a rebellious attitude, an attitude of clashing directly with the South African forces. At the same time one senses that the racists themselves have lost some of the arrogance they had. Today they are also more worried about their own future, about their practice of apartheid, about their theory of apartheid, and about the establishment of progressive regimes on their borders. All in all, the lessons drawn from that defeat have indeed benefited all the peoples of Southern Africa and all the oppressed peoples of the world, who are more convinced than ever that imperialism is not really invincible.

**Joe Slovo:** Words like liberation, independence, democracy and majority rule are on everybody's lips. Even the imperialists and arch-fascists like Vorster and Smith try to market their neo-colonial scheme in packages on which these words are written. Could you comment on this propaganda drive, particularly in relation to countries like Zimbabwe?

**Lucio Lara:** A little while ago we spoke of the complexity of the social problems in Angola. We feel that with our liberation, certain ills in society are being fought on the basis of truly democratic and truly human principles. We have heard the propaganda put out by the racists and we have heard them use terminology such as "majority rule". We do not accept these concepts. We always try to examine things more deeply and to identify their true meaning.

In the specific case of Zimbabwe, for example, we think that the problem is a colonial one, a problem of colonial liberation. Smith's forces are nothing but English settlers who, it is true, became rebels but who, nonetheless, did not cease to be settlers. Hence the issue is one of colonial liberation. The question of majority rule is not the real issue. What the Zimbabwe people face is a colonial problem, of the same type as in Angola and other areas where the peoples liberated themselves from a colonial regime.

**Joe Slovo:** Everyone agrees that there is a connection between the struggle in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa, but especially in relation to South Africa one sometimes hears the view expressed — it has been called the "domino theory" — that the intensification of the struggle in South Africa should wait until we have settled the problems in Namibia and Zimbabwe. What is your view of the approach that we have got to wait for the liberation of Zimbabwe

and Namibia before intensifying the struggle in South Africa?

**Lucio Lara:** I do not believe in that kind of association of different struggles. I remember that at the time of the late President Nkrumah many people in Ghana, and Nkrumah himself, believed that the liberation of Angola would only be possible after the liberation of South Africa. Therefore, according to this view, it was necessary to concentrate on liberating South Africa first so that after this has been achieved, Angola, Mozambique etc., would be liberated.

We never believed in that thesis. And we think that every people must at every moment do their utmost to develop their own liberation struggle. And after that, circumstantial factors may arise (such as the events of April 25, 1974 in Portugal). But when circumstantial factors arise, the people must have the process of their liberation in their hands. It is they who lead the process. And the people cannot wait for other processes to be solved before solving their own.

**Joe Slovo:** This is the International Year of Action against Apartheid. How do you see the duty of the international community of nations on the question of South Africa?

**Lucio Lara:** I think that in this respect all the people of the world are increasingly committed to, and increasingly conscious of, the need to do everything possible to destroy the South African racist power. We see that even at the level of the United Nations, South Africa has been frequently attacked and condemned. And therefore every effort must be made, through concrete action, to denounce and defeat the power of racist South Africa. The danger is that imperialism, which is on the alert and which does not want again to lose a battle like it did in Angola, would interfere with that process, which is what it is trying to do in Zimbabwe and Namibia; that imperialism will try to seize the reins of the campaign against apartheid, against the apartheid forces in South Africa and manipulate it for its own ends.

It is the anti-imperialist forces which must therefore be the most active and the most effective in the struggle against racism, not allowing the imperialist forces to take this process into their hands for the purpose of serving their own goals. It is in this sense that we, the



MPLA, intend to contribute to this International Year against Apartheid.

**Joe Slovo:** Could you say a few words to the people of South Africa, to the liberation movement, from the MPLA and the people of Angola?

**Lucio Lara:** We can only once again reaffirm our total support for the struggle of the South African people, a struggle that we have followed, that we have lived through in the whole of our liberation process. We express to the people of South Africa our confidence in their victory, our certainty of their victory.

We convey special greetings particularly to the South African youth, who, in recent times, have given fresh momentum to the liberation struggle of the South African people.

In Angola, our people have shown that they too are in solidarity with, and ready to contribute effectively to, the speeding up of the liberation process in Southern Africa as a whole, and therefore follow with interest, but also militantly, all the acts that the South African fighters, the South African people, the ANC and the South African Communist Party, have unleashed to hasten the fall of the apartheid regime.

**Joe Slovo:** Comrade Lara, thank you very much.

*A Zimbabwean reader has sent us the following contribution on*

## **THE "INTERNAL SETTLEMENT" AND THE ZIMBABWE REVOLUTION**

*by John Ngara*

The majority element in Muzorewa's United African National Council are African intellectuals most of whom have only their education but no wealth of their own. They are allied with businessmen, black and white, who have money and jobs to offer. Connections are also forged with large multinationals who look forward to reactivating their massive interests in Rhodesia once the UN sanctions are lifted. The intellectuals and the businessmen need each other; the African intellectuals rationalise the position of the business community to the rest of the African people so that business gains acceptance and respectability. The business community reciprocates by rewarding the intellectuals with good jobs and high wages which the intellectuals use to maintain a life apart from the rest of the African people of Zimbabwe.

The position of Jeremiah Chirau's Zimbabwe United People's Organisation (ZUPO) is also interesting. Being led by chiefs, ZUPO finds itself maintaining a difficult existence. The chiefs never

regained the respect which they lost through collaborating with the settler regime right from its inception. The exception to this is Chief Re kai Tangwena who in recent times has led his people in the fight to regain their land which was seized and given to a tea estate concern. When the nationalist struggles of the 1960s were gaining momentum, the settler regime sought to frustrate them through the formation of a council of chiefs which it was hoped would make the organisation of peasants difficult in the rural areas.

When this tactic failed, the regime decided to introduce another tactic. They elevated the organisation of chiefs to a political party. When ZUPO was formed, it was on the initiative of the Rhodesian government, which suggested to Chief Chirau, a senator in the Rhodesian parliament and at that time a member of the Rhodesian government, that he lay down his portfolio and start a political party. Chirau became president and Chief Kaiser Ndiweni, a man with a long history of collaboration with the settler regime, was made the vice president. The aim of ZUPO was to present a countervailing force to the UANC of Muzorewa which the Rhodesian government at that time feared might use its apparently wide support to advance radical demands.

ZUPO is led by chiefs because very few self-respecting African intellectuals want to be seen having anything to do with a class which has little respect among the people. This largely explains why the chiefs have to come out and champion their own reactionary interests. One of the results of ZUPO's lack of intellectual membership is that its leaders find it difficult to articulate their political position. Not only do they fail to explain coherently their long-standing collaboration with the regime, but they also now cannot even avail themselves of the ready made argument of majority rule which the other two use *ad nauseam* because the chiefs have not been associated with it right from the beginning. Their position is made worse when it is remembered that ZUPO was formed on the initiative of the Rhodesian Front government.

Nevertheless ZUPO has a role to play and that role consists in making certain that a radical challenge does not arise, or if it does within the present context, to contain it in order to safeguard the position of the whites. The leaders of ZUPO however also know that it is important to create other bases of power besides African law and

custom which the whites devalued with their manipulation. ZUPO also counts among its membership those African businessmen who, although they never went far in school, have been able to amass wealth for themselves and constitute the rural bourgeoisie. They are however allied to the other parties in various ways. Some of the intellectuals in the UANC are in fact sons and relatives of members of ZUPO.

Many of the party functionaries in the other parties actually look forward to one day owning a farm and settling down. When this happens, they too will become part of the rural bourgeoisie. In fact this has already happened in the person of the UANC's first vice president, James R. D. Chikerema, who just recently bought a £20,000 farm in Zvimba area. He has not only joined that class which exploits the labour of African peasants, but has effectively become part of the backbone of Rhodesia, the agricultural bourgeoisie.

### **Sithole's Party**

The position of Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole is also interesting. His party, the African National Council-Sithole (ANC-S, later renamed ZANU-Sithole), depends largely on the same class as does that of Muzorewa. What makes the ZANU-Sithole different from the UANC is that the former is composed of people who no longer want to be identified with the articulation of radical views such as one man one vote and so on. Sithole's number two man, Dr. Elliot Gabellah, used to be Bishop Muzorewa's number two man. He belongs to the old guard which was the first to taste the fruits of western education and actually flirted with the principle of majority rule at one time in their lives. This group is now joined by those who say they were involved in the guerrilla war, such as K. Malindi and John Kadzviti. Sithole himself never tires of claiming that he pioneered the guerrilla struggle and is the real leader of ZANU, not Robert Mugabe.

The function of all these people seems to be to invest capitalism with respectability born of so-called real experience. They say to the people that because they "have been through it all", they are qualified to judge that Smith's acceptance of the principle of majority rule is genuine. However, the problem for these 'have beens' is that a rejection of majority rule is difficult, if not impossible, to articulate in Zimbabwe today so that a party such as Sithole's cannot



exist by itself. It has to be in the ring with the others. Sithole knows this and has forged links with British, American, South African and Belgian capitalists, to name only a few.

All the three parties need the present capitalist system because none of the members in the UANC, ZUPO or ZANU-Sithole are involved in production to the extent that they can take charge of the economy and run it themselves. Yet their dependence on nationalism makes it imperative that they present themselves to the African people as true leaders capable of running the whole show themselves. However, if their frequent meetings with the various branches of the Rhodesian Chamber of Commerce are anything to go by, it seems that the UANC, ZUPO and ZANU-S are more interested in assuring the business community than the African people.

The April/May 1978 issue of *Zimbabwe Report*, the official organ of the UANC, contains an address given by its first vice-president, James R. D. Chikerema, to the Bulawayo Chamber of Commerce. In it he "spelt out the economic guidelines for a future independent Zimbabwe under the UANC." The economy, he said, must serve the people and the government would provide directions on how this service could be performed. One of these would be the Council of economic advisers who would advise the government. Its members would be drawn from both the public and private sectors of the economy, for example, from commerce, industry, mining, agriculture, banking and finance, trade unions and so on.

The vice-president was at pains to emphasize the social responsibilities of a majority rule government. The racial aspects of the previous economy would have to go so that everyone could be involved. Everyone should have equal access to credit facilities. Before ending his address, the vice-president left no one in doubt as to what type of economy Zimbabwe's would be.

"Private enterprise," he said, "shall be welcome in Zimbabwe." He then spelt out in no uncertain terms what were the "normal expectations of a UANC government."

"Where the state wishes it (private enterprise) to boost employment, we expect private enterprise to respond accordingly. Where the state wishes to see accelerated development of indigenous manpower, then private enterprise must cooperate."

Chikerema's address was a succinct expose of the mediating role which not just the UANC but any African government would perform in the present circumstances. Its task will consist in transmitting people's demands to capitalism for satisfaction. Chikerema said that while the UANC government would see to it that the people's aspirations were met, it would also ensure that "investors, whether they be government or private... must obtain a fair return on their investment."

Anyone reading Chikerema's address would easily get the impression, obviously intended, that the UANC or any African government would perform the role of a group of neutral referees whose job was to see that the two sides, people v. capitalism, were treated fairly.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. As I have shown, the UANC, ZUPO and the ZANU-Sithole are led by actual or aspiring bourgeoisie as is shown by the case of the UANC first vice-president. The people whom Muzorewa led for instance to the negotiations which resulted in the signing of the internal settlement agreement of March 3, 1978, were all members of the African elite in Rhodesia: James R. D. Chikerema, first vice-president; Ernest Bulle, second vice-president and university lecturer; Edward Mazaiwara, secretary general and former inspector of schools; Enoch Dumbutshena, lawyer; Ahrn Palley, lawyer and doctor; Francis Zindoga, national chairman and businessman; Stanlake Samkange, writer and professor; Solomon Nenguwo, former principal of schools. This is the group which pledges itself to bring about democracy for the struggling masses of Zimbabwe.

### **Neo-colonialism**

In many independent African countries, it is precisely this class which is making possible the existence of a neo-colonial state. Big business shields itself behind this class of indigenous petty bourgeoisie who use state power in defence of capitalism and the furtherance of their own interests. The social responsibilities which Chikerema talked about find expression in the creation of state enterprises which are then held up as evidence of the state's concern with the interests of the people. The truth is that parastatals not only facilitate the exploitation by imperialism of the country's resources, but also help

towards the embourgeoisement of the indigenous elite who usually start off with nothing but their education. As heads of parastatals, they enrich themselves at public expense and when they finally leave their posts, they start their own businesses with the money and experience which they acquired from their previous positions.

If it were in any other African country, the transition to independence through a neo-colonial mechanism in Rhodesia would have been automatic. However, the colonial history of Rhodesia was different from that of many colonies. The decisive factor in Rhodesia is the white settler community, whose opposition to sharing power with even middle class Africans has been the cause for the delay in the coming of so-called majority rule government. Now the African petty bourgeoisie and those aspiring to be the same have allied themselves with the settler regime. The first vice-president of UANC in his chamber of commerce address strongly called for the elimination of racism, in order obviously to make the alliance workable.

The white Rhodesians on the other hand seem reluctant to indicate their willingness to trust the Africans. The internal settlement parties have announced that for the next parliament, the whites are going to elect their own representatives under the usual franchise, while the Africans will elect theirs on the basis that the whole country not covered by the white franchise is one constituency. When that parliament meets, one fact will be abundantly clear: that the members have come from different systems. The whites will want things to remain like that and this will be the first indication of the failure of the Africans to change the system to make it look like majority rule in deed. The African people will from then on begin to see the inability of their black representatives to effect meaningful change in their lives. Being recent arrivals in government, the Africans will never be able to force the whites to move faster than the whites want.

The appearance on the scene of the African members of the internal settlement has given rise to a major operational problem for the liberation forces. When guerrilla war began in the middle 1960s, it was for the aim of regaining the country from the colonialists.

Take ZANU as an example. *Zimbabwe News*, \* the official organ of ZANU, in answer to the question, "Why was ZANU formed?" says:

"ZANU was formed by the people of Zimbabwe out of the realisation that the independence of Zimbabwe would not come out of constitutional conferences but through 'direct confrontation' by our own efforts."

As to "Who is the enemy?" *Zimbabwe News* continues:

"The immediate enemy is imperialism represented in Zimbabwe by British and American interest. The agents of this imperialism are the Rhodesian white settlers who have used their political power to entrench British and American capitalism. To do this effectively, they have introduced racism as a state doctrine. The long-term enemy is the African petty bourgeoisie that has been produced by colonial capitalism, and uses tribalism, sexism, religion and even nationalism to perpetuate capitalism in Zimbabwe."

From the above excerpt, it will be seen that the struggle was conceived in terms of two stages. The first involved the defeat of the whites as agents of colonialism. The second stage appears to have been envisaged as following after the successful completion of the first. It would involve the continuation of the struggle through political and other means, in other words, class struggle. The problem now is that the two stages have coalesced. The white settlers, who are the agents of imperialism, have allied themselves with the African petty bourgeoisie in order to protect themselves and imperialism. It has become imperative therefore that the guerrilla war be waged *pari passu* with the class struggle. When the so-called majority rule government comes after December 31, 1978, it will be defended by the same forces which used to defend the all-white government.

The African members of the internal set-up are presenting themselves as the true leaders of the African people despite their joining a regime which is stepping up its killing of the very people that they claim to lead. The guerrilla war will now have to be waged along with a campaign to expose the class character of the collaborationists. Thus the 'genevas' at which many peasants are given political education, appear destined to play an even wider role in deepening the consciousness of the Zimbabwean people.

\**Zimbabwe News*, vol. 9, nos. 5 & 6, (July-Dec. 1977), p. 46



One of the obstacles militating against waging the dual struggle is that the liberation movements are largely equipped with a structure for waging a nationalist effort. When people speak of the prospect these days of wrecking the Patriotic Front, they do so in the belief that if the proper approaches are made to some of its members, they will realise that their interests do not lie with the Front. These outsiders point to the connections that some Patriotic Front members have with interests inside and outside Rhodesia and advance the argument that the PF cannot last for long.

These efforts at wrecking the PF are signs of a belief in some quarters that the PF may not be well enough equipped to wage the dual struggle. Nevertheless, it would appear to be unwise to initiate a weeding campaign inside the liberation forces with a view to sharpening their fighting capacity. The testing of the PF and its leadership will come about as a result of objective forces. On the one hand a departure from the party line will be evidence of someone showing his true colours. On the other hand the party will be tested by its policies in the liberated areas. As Frelimo discovered in the course of their struggle, it became possible to gauge concretely the commitment of their members to socialism more and more following the creation of Frelimo-run institutions in liberated areas.

Evidence that the guerrillas are controlling more and more territory comes from the Rhodesians themselves. The increasing numbers of people who are massacred every day are precisely those people whose hearts and minds have been won by the guerrillas. In the meantime the African members of the internal deal cannot stop either the daily massacres or the increasing political consciousness of the Zimbabwean people whose wrath is rising.

It should not be assumed from the fact that the Rhodesian Front (RF), UANC, ANC-S and ZUPO signed the March 3 agreement that there are no differences among them. Differences there are, but they are probably not strong enough by themselves to wreck the alliance. The parties are joined together by their fundamental interests and by the common threat which they perceive as emanating from the Patriotic Front.

The differences which plague the internal alliance are many. It has recently become evident for instance that Smith and his RF group are angered at the apparent failure of the Africans to fulfill

their earlier promises of working to bring about support for a ceasefire among the guerrillas. Sithole has been in the forefront in claiming that the guerrillas would be persuaded to lay down their arms once majority rule has been conceded. The mounting casualty figures of the war are part of the testimony that the internal leaders have failed. In desperation, Sithole has even gone to the extent of manufacturing false evidence of guerrilla support.

The reverend was also largely behind the recent unsuccessful move to have the internal deal indirectly legitimized by involving an observer from the British government. The lack of support from the guerrillas has weakened the settlement further by showing that it lacks support where it matters. One result of this is that we shall soon see the resurgence of the tactic of using large rallies in the cities to claim support for the deal.

For their part, the African members of the March 3 agreement have stressed to Smith and the RF the need to eliminate racism so as to make it easier for the Africans to campaign for the internal settlement amongst the African people. Muzorewa's UANC has been most insistent on this point because, having relatively more supporters than the others, the party sees itself as having a bigger onus to discharge to the African population.

Underlying the demand for the elimination of racism is a lingering belief among the African leadership taking part in the internal deal that Smith and his group are not really willing to concede power to Africans. This is probably why Muzorewa and Sithole have recently been to South Africa and Britain to try to persuade the two countries to advise Smith on the advantages of making the task of selling the agreement to the African population easier for the African members of the deal. Signs that success has been met in this regard are yet to come. However, even in the absence of rumours that the RF leadership is assuring white audiences that nothing will change drastically, the fact that the parliament which will be charged with drafting the independence constitution will be elected from different franchise systems will underline the reality of white power in the so-called majority rule environment.

The make-up of the parties' leadership is another source of the differences among them. The relatively large concentration of intellectuals in the UANC is the cause of the party's more frequent

flirtation with radical views which originally led Smith to sponsor the formation of countervailing forces to it. The party however contains a powerful element which has been in nationalist politics since the early 1960s. The core of this element is represented by such people as Chikerema and Nyandoro, who have been in the nationalist business since the 1950s. This element also exists in Sithole's group, and is the source of conservatism in Muzorewa's group as it is in the others. It is clear from various instances that Muzorewa has not bothered to discover the relative strengths represented by the forces within his party. On many occasions, Bishop Muzorewa has made pronouncements which he changed afterwards. Before the Geneva conference, the Bishop had sought to make his attendance conditional upon the release of Edson Sithole, the publicity secretary. Days went by and Edson Sithole was not released. Bishop Muzorewa went to Geneva and in a curious move, sat next to a chair which he said he was leaving empty for Edson Sithole, who has not shown up to this day.

More recently, following the expulsion of Byron Hove from his post as co-minister of justice, law and order, Bishop Muzorewa announced that a meeting of the UANC would be held to decide whether to remain part of the internal deal. For those not used to these happenings, the prospect of the UANC actually leaving the March 3 agreement seemed a definite possibility. The news of the party's decision came: the UANC had decided that it was in the best interests of country to let the agreement stand. What was not revealed was that the powerful conservative element had won the day.

This erratic behaviour on the part of the UANC, itself the cause of the competing forces within it, coupled with the party's unwillingness to exude as much public enthusiasm for the agreement as the other parties, has led to public denunciations from the other leaders to the deal and to the appearance of what the UANC sees as a 'ganging up' against it. However, as has been pointed out above, these differences are dwarfed by the four parties' fundamental interests and by the common threat which they perceive as emanating from the forces represented by the Patriotic Front.

# **AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENT**

**by Vukani Mawethu**

## **ZAIRE: FRANCE INSULTS AFRICA**

Since the criminal murder in 1960 of the Congolese patriot Patrice Lumumba by the imperialists and their Congolese puppets, Zaire (then Congo) has never seen peace. Imperialism has consistently intervened in the Congo. Why?

First, we may mention the economic interests of the imperialist countries. Zaire is rich in mineral resources and Kolwezi is the centre of the Zaire copper industry which provides the only regular source of foreign exchange earnings for the country as a whole. The five open-cast copper mines include one at Kamoto which is the largest of its kind in the world. These produce 84 per cent of Zaire's total production of copper which provide Zaire with 50 per cent of its export earnings. Zaire produces diamonds and uranium which are important for the West's expanding nuclear energy programme.

It is common knowledge that the imperialist countries have a lot of



investments in Zairean mines and related industries. According to statistics, the US leads with 1 billion dollars; then Belgium with 800 million dollars, Britain with 60 million dollars and France with 20 million dollars.

There are also political aspects to the problem. Since the downfall of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, Zaire has become more important for the imperialist countries. Even during the Angolan struggle, Zaire refused MPLA possibilities to wage an anti-colonial war against the Portuguese colonialists: no facilities for transporting military equipment and logistical support were provided by the Mobutu regime to Dr Neto's MPLA. On the contrary, Mobutu allowed Holden Roberto's troops (FNLA) to have bases on Zaire's territory and in 1975/76 they fought against the government of the MPLA and Dr Neto from Zaire. FNLA and UNITA received more than 60 million dollars through Zaire: the money came from American "secret funds" and Kinshasa has the main African centre of the CIA. We also know that since 1965 Zaire received more than 250 million dollars from the USA for military purposes and today more than 50 per cent of the total American military "aid" to Africa goes to Zaire.

### **French Intervention**

France "left" Africa about 20 years ago, but even today one is confronted with the French presence all over Africa. France is involved in wars against Polisario in Western Sahara; against the fighters of Frolinat (Front for National Liberation) in Chad and now against the National Liberation Front of Congo (FNLC). Africa is full of French troops. It is reported that in the Republic of Djibouti there are 4,500 French troops; 4,000 in Reunion and Mayotte Islands; 1,800 troops in Chad; 1,300 in Senegal; 550 troops and advisers in Gabon; 550 in Ivory Coast; Morocco has 250 French troops; Mauritania 100; Togo 80; Niger 60; Malagasy Republic 50; Tunisia 40; Upper Volta 20 and Congo 10. There are 12-27 warships in the Indian Ocean Fleet. The total is 12,340 troops and advisers all over the continent. Now France wants to create a so-called *Pan African Force* to maintain stability and security on the African continent.

The real aim of all this manoeuvre is to undermine African unity and to form pro-imperialist mini blocs: the Red Sea bloc to *unite* the countries of North East Africa with the reactionary Arab regimes and an establishment of a military-political group in West Africa and the *encirclement* of the liberation movements and the front-line states: Zaire to the north and racist South Africa to the south. A real scramble for Africa.

The progressive developments in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and South Yemen have resulted in a sharp reaction on the part of the imperialists. They are flooding Africa with arms — Kenya, Somalia, Zaire and some countries in the Middle East. The criminal acts of aggression recently committed against People's Angola by racist South Africa; the brutal murder of Namibian refugees in Angola and the arrogant misuse of Namibian territory (not an inch of that country belongs to South Africa); South Africa's desire to acquire nuclear weapons — all are part and parcel of this new scramble for Africa. The talk about "Cuban-Soviet threat and penetration" of Africa is meant to camouflage these aims.

No wonder that Vorster saluted this French initiative and expressed his joy about an "apparent change of opinion in the West about the Marxist onslaught against Africa and the rest of the world." But he complained that this "does not go far enough."

The Western powers are deliberately provoking and insulting Africa, President Nyerere said, and he went further to single out France which he said had the "biggest contempt for Africa." The idea of a Pan African Security Force, which emanated from Paris, is reminiscent of the Berlin Conference of 1885 which divided and redivided Africa into spheres of influence. Nyerere hit the nail on the head when he said:

"The peoples of an individual African country have as much right to change their corrupt government in the last half of the 20th century as the British, French and Russian peoples had to overthrow their rotten regimes."

The question arises: what should Africa do at this hour? Let us unite behind and strengthen the OAU; strengthen our economies and political institutions in our individual countries; let us support the liberation struggle in the South; let us strengthen our ties with the socialist countries; intensify the struggle against the multi-national

corporations and declare war on the imperialist penetration of our continent. It is not enough to talk about imperialism in general. Let us call them by their names — USA, France, Britain, West Germany, Belgium, Japan, Canada, Israel, Iran etc. Where does China stand? Is it a friend or foe? The OAU must take a stand on this question.

African independence in the 70's means unity and the liberation of the South. The two go together and are inseparable. They are an aspect of a broader question: declaration of war against neo-colonialism in our individual countries and overthrow of rotten and parasitic cliques and regimes such as Morocco, Egypt, Zaire, Ivory Coast, Senegal and many others.

Our continent is rich in mineral resources: we have a people who are hard-working — who worked for centuries under the most difficult conditions using no modern methods of production, only their muscles. Now that Africa is free, let us change the situation. What we lack are a sufficient number of revolutionary institutions and governments led by revolutionary parties. These we must create.

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## **TANZANIA: LONRHO EXPELLED**

On June 2 the Tanzania government announced the expulsion of Lonrho — the British-based trading and mining multinational, “because of the nature of the company's activities in southern Africa.”

The statement accuses Lonrho of “posing as the friend of Africa” and at the same time engaging “in profit-making activities in Rhodesia inconsistent with the letter and spirit of United Nations mandatory sanctions.” It goes on to state that Tanzania's basic policy, on which there can be no compromise, is the furtherance of freedom in southern Africa:

“Accordingly, it is not possible for Tanzania to permit a business to operate in this country if it is known to have undermined the freedom struggle in southern Africa through its activities elsewhere.”

Therefore Tanzania “cannot continue to play host to a foreign

company which has misconducted itself in this fashion.”

Lonrho made sure that its South African subsidiaries share in the profits generated from the illegal export of copper from Rhodesian mines and Lonrho's chief executive “Tiny” Rowland did not hesitate to meddle in the politics of Southern Africa, particularly Zimbabwe. The Tanzanian document adds:

“A study of the Report of the Department of Trade inspectors shows that since UDI Lonrho has closely supervised the activities of its Rhodesian subsidiaries and

“(i) the Company has taken active steps, to which its management in London was a party, to procure substantial quantities of finance for the development of two copper mines in Rhodesia, Inyati and Shamrocke;

“(ii) through a complex series of transactions, carefully documented in the Report, Lonrho has sought to ensure that, notwithstanding sanctions, it would through its South African subsidiaries share to the maximum extent possible in the profits generated from the illegal export of copper from these mines;

“(iii) the management of Lonrho in London, at a time when the export of copper from Rhodesia was prohibited, were a party to negotiations for the sale of copper or copper concentrates to Japanese interests;

“(iv) before the liberation of Mozambique Lonrho interests in Rhodesia acquired a derelict mine in Mozambique for the purpose of facilitating the illegal export of copper from Rhodesia by the issue of false certificates of origin. The London based joint managing directors of the parent company were informed of this transaction and appear to have acquiesced in it.”

In Tanzania, Lonrho's interests include motor distribution and textiles and the principal companies are: Burus and Blane (Tanganyika); East African Motor Assemblies; Farm Machinery Distributors (Tanganyika); Motor Mart (Tanganyika); Mwananchi Tractor and Vehicle Assemblers; Mufindi Tea Company; National Tours; Neon and General Signs (Tanzania); Riddock Motors; Stationery and Office Supplies (Tanzania); Stone Valley Tea Company; Tanganyika Cotton Company; Tanzania Motor



Corporation; Tanzania Vehicle Finance; the Motor Service Company (Tanzania) and Tantrust.

Lonrho's activities in Tanzania constitute only a limited part of the British multinational's involvement in 15 other African countries, but Tanzania's stand will be a blow to Lonrho, more so as "Tiny" Rowland boasts that he has good personal relations with African leaders. Tanzania has given Lonrho three months in which to sell its assets to the state-run National Development Corporation at a "fair price acceptable to the Government."

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## **MALAWI —** **ELECTIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME**

Malawi is one of the most underdeveloped countries in Africa. The British colonialists left the country with nothing except men who could be recruited for the mines in Rhodesia and South Africa — about 200,000 Malawians are migrant labourers. The country is economically backward — about 90 per cent of the population live in rural areas and 50 per cent of agricultural production is based on the natural economy. Out of this total, 85 per cent belongs to the Chiefs; 12 per cent to the State and the rest to the Europeans who use it as plantations for the export of tobacco, tea, coffee and groundnuts. Industry connected with these agricultural products and mining is still elementary.

At the end of June the first-ever elections since independence in 1964 took place in Malawi. It is said two-thirds of the MPs, who were appointed by the ruling Malawi Congress Party and Hastings Banda himself, lost their seats. The 87 seats were taken by the ruling party — there is no opposition in Malawi. The Malawi Congress Party leads the country on the capitalist path of development. Malawi supports the "internal settlement" between the white racists and black puppets in Zimbabwe. Malawi is the only African independent state and member of the OAU which has diplomatic relations with South Africa.

But the revolutionary changes on the continent and especially the

developments in Mozambique – which is not only a neighbour of Malawi but also a country through which Malawian products pass and where people on both sides of the border speak the same language – have made an impact on all the forces in Africa. Change cannot but come to Malawi too before long.



# BOOK REVIEWS A

## U.S. PROPAGANDA FOR BANTUSTANS

### **The Black Homelands of South Africa: the Political and Economic Development of Bophutatswana and Kwazulu**

by Jeffrey Butler, Robert I. Rotberg & John Adams; 21 of the series "Perspectives on Southern Africa", University of California Press, 1977.

According to the preface, this book sets out to provide "a dispassionate examination of the homeland program" in South Africa. However, before the reader has even completed the preface doubts will have been raised in his or her mind as to exactly how dispassionate this examination really is. In the first place, the book we are told "began as a study commissioned by the Office of External Research of the United States Department of State" — a body not noted for its commitment to "dispassionate" research. Secondly, the authors express a "debt of gratitude" to three Bantustan leaders (Buthelezi, Mangope and Ntsanwisi), officials of the Bantu Investment Corporation, the Bureau for Economic Research and Bantu Development and the South African Consulate-General in New York, as well as groups of white intellectuals inside South

Africa. The reader searches in vain for any indication that the authors might have sought the opinions of a single representative of the liberation movement or of even a black organisation inside the country which is not openly collaborating with the regime.

These doubts are quickly confirmed by a reading of the main body of the book, not so much for what it says but for what it *fails* to say. For instance, at one point (p. 228) the authors mention in passing that: "The homelands have become integral to South Africa's battle for the survival of the core as a white-run bastion", yet at no stage of the book is the crucial question of the way in which the Bantustans are linked to the overall system of repression ever dealt with. How a book purporting to analyse "The Black Homelands of South Africa" can ignore this question, which is of central importance to the subject-matter, is beyond the comprehension of this reviewer. What are the precise functions which the Bantustans fulfil for capital in South Africa? What role does the state play in this process? How have these functions and roles changed over time as South Africa has industrialised? What are the contradictions which these changes have raised and how has the state sought to resolve them? What is the extent of resistance among the African people to these changes? These are surely some of the central questions which any book on this topic should concern itself with. Yet these questions are never even raised and the result inevitably is — distortion.

Distortion in dealing with the role which collaborators like Matanzima played in helping to establish the Bantustans in the early 'sixties. The authors point out that there was considerable social upheaval in the country around 1960 — a fact which not even they could ignore. But there is no analysis of this upheaval, no discussion of the demands the black people, and especially the peasantry in the Transkei, were making at this time. Then suddenly we are informed that Matanzima asked the central government in 1960 to declare the Transkei a locally controlled African state because he felt that "more was to be achieved by supporting separate development than by opposing it". But what was the basis of his decision? Who would achieve more: he and his allies or the masses they oppressed? The authors provide no analysis of conditions at the time which would



help us to find answers to these questions. They provide no information about the very real alternative that was provided by the ANC and its allies and which posed such a threat to the corrupt and privileged position which Matanzima sought to create for himself.

Distortion in dealing with the present role played by the Bantustan leaders. The Bantu Homelands Constitution Act of 1971, according to the authors, "provides a pattern for the constitutional evolution of the homelands and the possible accumulation of power, albeit circumscribed power, by Africans". (p. 39) What the Act in effect does is to grant a limited amount of decentralisation of authority to the Bantustan leadership, which they can then exercise against the masses who are forced to remain in the Bantustans against their will. It is not sufficient to note, as the authors do, that a measure of power is transferred to Africans; one has to ask 'in whose interests and against whom' is this power being employed. At another point the authors argue that the Bantustan leaders have become "major figures in South African politics" because of "their demonstrated determination and magnetism". (p. 74) Surely, whatever political niches these people have been able to secure for themselves has been due to the blessings they have received from the apartheid regime and because the real leaders of the African people have been either jailed or murdered or forced into exile.

### **False Promises**

Distortion in dealing with the question of the Government's approach to the Bantustans. The Government, we are told, is "explicitly dedicating its policies to the development of these backward areas". (p. 179) Evidence is presented of a number of projects, such as Bantu Trust farms and irrigated garden schemes, which are part of the Government's program "to broaden the agricultural base by developing commercial crops". (p. 185) Furthermore, we learn that Government agencies "have thus embarked upon an aggressive program to implant commerce and industry in the townships and rural areas". (p. 209) These vague generalities are hopelessly inadequate as the basis for a serious analysis of the apartheid regime's strategy of Bantustan "development". As pointed out earlier, the starting-point for such an analysis has to be the

relationship between capitalist growth at the centres of production and the reservoirs of labour-power in the reserves or Bantustans. What is the cause of the underdevelopment of the Bantustans in the first place! Is it, as the authors suggest, due to “the long-standing *neglect* of the needs of black farmers by the Union and Republican governments” (p. 179) or is it not rather due to the requirements of capital accumulation — of the need to undermine the subsistence base of African producers so as to provide cheap labour for capital.

Given this more realistic interpretation, can we really suspect, as the authors suggest, that the apartheid Government is seriously intending to develop the reserves — that is, to provide alternative sources of income for its labourers and competition for its industries? Surely not! Surely the real purpose of the Government’s strategy is to provide only limited development in a desperate bid to forestall the upsurge of revolutionary fervour among the masses — to buy off a minority of those in the Bantustans in the hope that they will collaborate in the oppression of the vast majority. As the authors themselves note, these agricultural projects in the Bantustans do not affect the majority of women who have household gardens nor do they affect most small farmers. In other words, these projects are intended, not to alleviate the misery of the oppressed masses in the Bantustans, but to encourage a small minority to participate in intensifying that misery.

There are some further illustrations in the book of the way in which the Bantustan leaders participate in the increasing exploitation of the masses so as to enhance their own position. For instance, the tax increases imposed on the people by the leadership in order to raise internal revenue for the Bantustan Treasury. There are also, here and there, examples of mass opposition to the Bantustan system, such as the 1972 boycott of elections in Bophutatswana (though the authors ascribe the low poll to a *lack* of political awareness by the people rather than to an act of political defiance). There are also illustrations of the tight control which the South African regime exercises over the Bantustan administration (all 153 ranking administrative positions in the Department of the Chief Minister and Finance in Bophutatswana are held by whites) as well as details on

public finance, expenditure, African education, etc. But the book is not a serious academic study of the Bantustans, though it claims to be, and one is forced to ask: what then is its purpose?

The authors make it clear that, in their view, "the homelands have a future both within the context of a gradually changing South Africa and, conceivably, as independent entities". (p. 219) But they acknowledge that the Bantustans lack "credibility" among the masses which poses problems for their leadership. In particular, they are concerned that "a means has not yet been found to put large amounts of capital into African hands." (p. 217) And this clearly is how they see their role — to encourage foreign investment in the Bantustans: This is why emphasis is directed away from the mass struggles which form such an important part of our country's history. The fundamental problem which the Bantustans face, according to these authors, is not their integration into the racist capitalist system in South Africa but "low productivity and stagnation in homeland agriculture". (p. 191) If it is the former then the only solution is the total destruction of that system; but if it is the latter then all that has to be done is overcome the problems of "inadequate modern inputs and poor infrastructure" as well as "obstructive land tenure and labour practices and shortcomings in extension and policy". (p. 191) And how better to do this than through injections of foreign capital! And the authors leave it to Buthelezi to make the actual plea:

"What we need is not disengagement, but full foreign participation in South Africa's overall economic development to create more jobs, higher wages and better training opportunities."  
(p. 98)

The book is perhaps a testament to United States reformism in South Africa. Gone is the lip-service of support for the liberation movement; here in all its crudity is the argument developed of how best to hold back the revolutionary struggle of the masses — to find "the only way of ensuring that the homelands become allies rather than enemies". (p. 231) The book is propaganda for US imperialist policy in South Africa. Propaganda dressed up in academic clothes perhaps — but propaganda nonetheless!

A.D.

## POLITICAL MURDER

**Biko** by Donald Woods. Paddington Press, 1978. £5.95.

**No. 46 — Steve Biko** by Hilda Bernstein. International Defence and Aid Fund, 1978. £1.50.

**The Killing of the Imam** by Barney Desai and Cardiff Marney. Quartet Books, 1978. £1.95.

On 1 September this year, 15 years had passed since the first known victim of South Africa's detention laws died at the hands of his fascist interrogators. Since that time no less than 51 patriots have met their deaths in similar manner, among them many of South Africa's outstanding revolutionaries and leaders: 'Looksmart' Ngudle in 1963, Suliman Saloojee in 1964, Alpheus Maliba in 1967, Ahmed Timol in 1971, Joseph Mdluli in 1976, Elmon Malele and Elijah Loza in 1977, to name but a few.

Over these long years one of the tasks of the liberation movement and its allies has been to expose the torturers; to win an understanding in the international community of the fascist nature of the apartheid regime and thus to step up the isolation of South Africa and strengthen the world-wide campaign of solidarity with our struggle. We would therefore welcome particularly during the UN International Year Against Apartheid, the publication of material which seeks to further this task.

One publication which claims this aim is *Biko* by Donald Woods, former editor of the East London *Daily Dispatch*, who left the country recently after being banned.

The first part of this book attempts to summarise the history of South Africa, from the arrival of white settlers up to the present day. Heavily weighted in favour of constitutional development, Woods' case totally ignores the most momentous events of these times, such as the formation of those political organisations and trade unions which performed the difficult task of preparing the people for the long struggle ahead. No mention is made of mass struggles in the 40's and 50's, of the Defiance Campaign or the Congress of the People, and not surprisingly, the role and history of the Communist Party is ignored.



Woods' distortion of history becomes even more convoluted when he turns his attention to the major turning point of our struggle, the creation of Umkhonto We Sizwe. For Woods this was the key for the "Communist subversion" of South Africa.

"Communist powers needed no second invitation. It had long been a part of Russian Communist strategy to exploit black discontent anywhere in Africa, and particularly in the south, with its fabulous mineral treasury. Mandela's decision therefore suited the communists admirably. An alliance with the black<sup>e</sup> liberation movement for their own special purposes was something they needed, because communists in South Africa initially had a bad name..."

Woods becomes interested in the Communist Party only when he can use his crude anti-communism to attack our movement. Mandela accepted firearms, explosives and money from the socialist community, Woods writes, and this pushed the ANC into an alliance with the Communist party. This alliance and the "socialistic elements in ANC economic policy" frightened younger ANC members (including Sobukwe) who were worried about "the growing influence of whites in the alliance — a trend which (they) saw as diluting the essentially black nature of the struggle. Another foreshadowing, this time of the Black Consciousness movement which Steve Biko helped to launch."

Such is Woods' perspective: one that places him squarely in the camp of those who believe 'Vorster is pushing the blacks into the arms of the communists'. And it is from this vantage point that he observes all else.

Despite his undisguised hostility to the liberation movement Woods permits himself to reprint excerpts from Nelson Mandela's court speeches "because in my opinion his intellectual readiness to seize the initiative against his oppressors was typical of the later Biko style." This initiative seized by Mandela was in fact precisely his role in creating Umkhonto We Sizwe, a development which clearly frightens Woods. But it is not for this or for his outstanding leadership and courage that Mandela has a place in Woods' South African history, but rather because Mandela belongs' "in the authentic line of major black South African leaders culminating in Biko himself".

And here is to be found Woods' perspective of Steve Biko. Mandela's point of reference may be Biko, but Biko's is Donald Woods. After a short (and misleading ) account of Black Consciousness there follow sections entitled: "My Own White World", "My introduction to Steve Biko", "Our First Encounter", "We Become Friends", "Some Personal Memories", "Arguments and Discussions", etc.

Presenting Biko's attitudes and actions as they are seen by Donald Woods tells us little about Biko and much about Woods himself. What it tells us of Biko (according to Woods) is that Woods persuaded Biko to adopt "a less cynical attitude towards the United States in particular and the Western democracies in general".

After using the so-called "white influence" stick to beat the ANC, Woods attempts to influence young blacks to compromise with the very imperialist allies of Vorster who made possible the murder of patriots like Biko. It is not of course the colour of Woods' skin that makes him a danger to those he sought (and seeks) to influence, but his role as apologist for imperialism.

Woods' speculative and highly subjective assessment of the life and contribution of Steve Biko, together with his overriding concern to use the opportunity to attack the liberation movement and its allies in the socialist community, greatly undermine what attempts he does make to "indict Biko's murderers". And here he again discredits himself by his reformist approach. Kruger is ultimately responsible for Biko's murder, according to Woods, because of his "indulgent attitude toward the homicidal tendencies of his Security Police". And: "Kruger cannot validly claim to have known nothing of these matters, because two years previously I had warned him that there were criminal elements in his Security Police". For Woods torture and murder take place not because they flow from the apartheid policies of the Nationalist Government but because Kruger does not reprimand "criminal elements in his Security Police"!

### **Other Sources**

It is to other sources that one must look for an understanding, and explanation of the systematic and sanctioned use of terror and torture by the fascist Vorster regime. Hilda Bernstein in *No 46* —

*Steve Biko* does this in dissecting the events surrounding the murder of Steve Biko, and the involvement of not only the torturers but the doctors, the courts and the entire state machinery. "Sometimes," she writes "it is possible to see the structure of a whole nation through the life and death of one person."

Perhaps inevitably, Bernstein's brief account of the life of Biko and the developments in the 70's concentrates heavily on the black university student movement SASO, and the organisations it fathered, to the exclusion of the larger movement of black school students and working or unemployed youth who proved to be the more significant force during the 1976 uprising. The homogeneity of the Black Consciousness movement is too easily accepted, and the developments within its contingents and their progress towards a deeper understanding of the crucial questions facing them are glossed over.

But this is not the principal concern of the author. Where Woods attempts, and fails, to indict the Vorster regime, Bernstein succeeds with a clear and useful account of events which the fascists themselves made much effort to obscure.

A third publication, *The Killing of the Imam*, by Barney Desai and Cardiff Marney, attempts much the same, though from a different perspective.

The murder of Imam Abdullah Haroun in 1969 is perhaps the one detainee death which received attention and publicity on a similar scale to that which followed the death of Steve Biko. Like Biko he was a well known and influential public figure. As Hilda Bernstein points out in *No 46 — Steve Biko*, the many other victims of Vorster and Kruger's henchmen did not have the influential friends and contacts which made such exposes possible. Unknown young people and underground cadres of the liberation movement who suffer the same fate are all too often ignored by the media.

The deaths of more prominent figures do however compel liberals, and even some reactionary circles, to make some response and enable us to draw public attention to the brutal activities of the Security Police. *The Killing of the Imam*, in portraying the torture and murder of just one victim in a compelling and personal manner, may bring home to those who still doubt it the inhumanity and sadistic cruelty which maintains the apartheid regime.

The authors, however, fail to present these events in the context of the ongoing and accelerating struggle for liberation. Though the book deals with a crucial period of the struggle — the transition to underground and armed struggle — it studiously avoids the clearly evident activities of the ANC and its allies in making this transition. Where the authors do cross the threshold they merely make bold claims for the PAC. One is left with the story of one brave man who went to his death in pursuit of freedom.

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## **THE ANGOLAN WAR**

**Secret Weapon in Africa** by Oleg Ignatiev. Published by Progress Press, Moscow, 1977.

The story of international imperialism's bloody war of intervention against the Angolan people and their vanguard organisation, the MPLA, is only now beginning to emerge in the capitalist press. Thus the Vorster regime has now made public that the invasion of Angola by the South African racist troops was carried out with the full knowledge and backing of the US Administration as well as the major capitalist powers.

And the London *Sunday Times* of May 28, 1978, published the following extract from the book *In Search of Enemies* written by John Stockwell, head of the CIA operations in Angola:

Question: If the CIA had not been involved in this latest operation in Angola, would the Cubans have gone in?

Answer: No, they wouldn't have had to because the MPLA would have won.

The answer is from no less a person than William Colby, director of the CIA during the Angolan people's Second War of Liberation commencing from the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in April, 1974 to May, 1976. The answer reveals more than meets the eye: if



the MPLA 'would have won' without the assistance of Cuba, then the only reason for the CIA having been involved at that time was to ensure that the MPLA was smashed as an organisation, thus paving the way for a neo-colonial regime under the imperialist-backed FNLA and UNITA and the preservation of monopoly capitalism's vast economic stakes in Angola, not to mention the strategic military and political leverage which imperialism would have obtained against the movements of national liberation in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa in particular, and Africa in general.

So much for the Western governments' high-sounding demagoguery of 'purely African solutions to African problems.' The aim of this policy represents nothing less than an attempt by the imperialist powers to drive a wedge between the toiling millions of Africa and their natural allies, the socialist countries; to prevent any bilateral arrangements of support and solidarity between the national liberation movements and the socialist countries, and to leave Africa 'free' for exploitation by monopoly capitalism.

The extent of the planning, preparation and execution of imperialist aggression against the African continent can well be encapsulated in Oleg Ignatiev's finely researched book about imperialism's grand design to preserve Angola as an exclusive enclave of the giant monopolies. It traces the career of one, Jose Guilmore, recruited by the CIA on 100 dollars a month pay in the early sixties and later to become one of its most highly-paid agents in Africa — Holden Roberto. It outlines similarly the opportunist career of Jonas Savimbi; creation of the FNLA and UNITA and the extensive links these reactionary organisations developed with the CIA, PIDE and the South African racists. More importantly, when it became obvious to reactionary circles within the Armed Forces Movement of Portugal (the Movement which forced the overthrow of fascism in Portugal), and the political representatives of monopoly capitalism in Washington, London, Bonn, Paris and Rome that the MPLA would emerge victorious in an independent Angola, secret plans were prepared to launch a war of decimation against the MPLA.

The support, arming and training given to the FNLA and UNITA by the People's Republic of China is equally well researched and documented as is the invasion of Angola by racist South Africa and the extensive cooperation between Savimbi and the invading high

command. It would be very tempting for anti-communists to dismiss the book as 'communist propaganda', except that the main sources of information come from the capitalist press and news agencies themselves! Apart from that Ignatiev had collected and documented through a period of 10 years of covering Portuguese colonialism's anti-popular wars, including numerous trips into guerilla-controlled areas, what he has succeeded in creating is a complete picture of how imperialism plans and prepares for counter-revolution.

Coming at a time when anti-Soviet, anti-Cuban and anti-communist hysteria is being whipped up to mask imperialism's design of consolidating their interests in Africa; of attempting to reverse the tide of revolutionary change in Southern Africa and preparing counter-revolution in the interests of monopoly capitalism, *Secret Weapon in Africa* is compulsory reading for all African democrats.

What new Holden Roberto's and Savimbi's are even now being enrolled into the ranks of the CIA or being educated to take over the reins of power in independent Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa? Of one thing we can be sure — Southern Africa in particular is being discussed in the boardrooms of the major multinationals, and the translation into action, covert and overt, of the policies and decisions arrived at within their walls will undoubtedly become the tasks of the capitalist powers.

Oleg Ignatiev has made a tremendous contribution to the cause of anti-imperialist struggle in Africa. The task for African patriots throughout our continent is to arm themselves with the knowledge he has provided and defeat imperialism, racism and their placement on our continent.

G.S.

## RUTHLESS EXPLOITATION

### **South Africa and US Multinational Corporations**

by Ann and Neva Saidman. Published by Lawrence Hill and Co., Westport, Connecticut, and Tanzania Publishing House, Dar es Salaam.

The scope of this book is wider than the title suggests. A very detailed account of United States investment in South Africa and the resulting links between the ruling classes of the two countries forms Part III of the book. It is preceded by a general account of the South African economic system and the way in which racist oppression grows out of that economic system. Then in Part IV, the authors go on to examine the South African sphere of influence in the southern Africa region and the drive towards economic domination which lies behind Vorster's attempts at 'dialogue' with African states.

The result is an extremely useful politico-economic textbook on the whole southern African situation. For a treatise on such a vast subject, it is short — 250 pages — and it does not attempt any profound political analysis or original insights. Politically speaking, it is a sound but elementary introduction to the subject. Nevertheless, even the most experienced revolutionary will find it useful for the statistical and factual material which the authors have assembled. This includes basic material on wage levels, racial discrimination in employment, trade unions and industrial action, the growth of different sectors of the South African economy, etc.

The section on U.S. involvement contains newly researched details such as lists of directors of the principal American companies interested in South Africa, showing the numerous government appointments which these directors have held at various stages of their careers. The activities of the AFL-CIO leadership in attempting to subvert the African trade union movement (cf *The African Communist* No 73, p 74) are also covered.

For European or American readers requiring an introduction to the economic aspects of the struggle in southern Africa, this is a book to be recommended. For those who need no such introduction, it is a useful work of statistical reference.

P.M.

## A STUDY IN CLASS CONTRASTS

### **Behind the Scenes in Two Worlds . . . . .**

**In the German Democratic Republic and the USA** by Elaine and Harry Mensh (International Publishers, New York).

In the light of present-day propaganda in the Western media relating to the "Human Rights" issue, anti-communist and especially anti-Soviet hysteria and the renewal of cold war-mongering, Elaine and Harry Mensh have produced a book which is both timely and welcome. The authors, both Americans, deal with very important aspects of both American and GDR life based on their experiences in the United States and on their visits and study in the German Democratic Republic.

The objective of the authors was to establish the quality of life in the GDR, namely "materially, culturally, spiritually and humanely." The reason for this, as they themselves explain, is that "the number of US citizens able to go to the GDR adds up to less than a minute fraction of one per cent....." The same can be said of the African continent — thus a field day is had by all the anti-communist opinion-makers of the Western media who thrive on distortions, half truths and outright lies about the socialist societies.

The book deals in some depth with the *performing arts*, with special emphasis on the theatre because "a nation's performance can be seen in its relationship to the performing arts." The American theatre, TV and film industries are owned by a few corporations and thus the industry as a whole is based entirely on profit motive. In other words, the industry plays no positive role in furthering social progress, nor does it help expose problems in society such as those facing the working class, the black American and other oppressed minorities. The authors prove that all progressive ideas are suppressed and actively discouraged. In fact the media nurture and encourage themes which include racism, violence, the degradation of women and the glorification of the corrupt American police force — all outright anti-social themes.

In the GDR the position is the complete reverse. The socialist theatre, cinema and TV are instruments in the development of a new social consciousness amongst the people and from its inception



played a special part in the eradication of racism, anti-semitism and national chauvinism. This is both in the spirit and the law of the GDR. The authors also go into some detail about the role of the actors and management involved in the theatre in both countries. In the GDR the actors assume their rights in the selection of material, the staging of plays and in the making of films. In the USA the actors neither have a say nor enjoy any work security. There are no unemployed actors in the GDR. In the USA the Screen Actors Guild reported 85% of its members out of work and Actors Equity reported 80% unemployment — black actors are even worse off.

Very revealing is the role and status of women in the respective societies. Again, the authors illustrate from a broad spectrum the portrayal of American women in society. The media project women in a degrading fashion and at best in a subservient role — “the great women’s role for the decade, what are they for the most part? Whores, quasi-whores, gilted mistresses, emotional cripples, drunks... sex starved spinsters, psychotics etc.”

A very convincing critique from a Marxist point of view is the section dealing with the fashionable and liberal middle class feminist writers whose perspective is limited to the situation of the white middle class women and who fail to see women’s liberation as indivisible from the struggle of the working class, both men and women, and in the context of a struggle to change capitalist society. These so-called feminists are shown to be actively playing a counter-revolutionary role by encouraging the false belief that *men* are the arch enemies irrespective of class. Thus they cloud the real class antagonisms in capitalist societies. In other words, they further the entrenched positions of the ruling bourgeoisie. The authors take issue with people like Simone de Beauvoir, Germaine Greer, Kate Millet and similar writers. It makes fascinating reading.

In contrast to the women of the USA, the position, role and achievements of women in the GDR, if revealed honestly in the West, would both create envy and act as a spur to change the present situation of the working women in the States.

In the concluding chapters, the authors describe the achievements of the people of the GDR in areas such as housing, health, education and the general upliftment of the population. A further chapter is devoted to the high political and social consciousness of the

population and its internationalist role, discussing solidarity shifts that are worked in factories etc. as an additional contribution to the liberation of the peoples of Africa and elsewhere.

This is an excellent book. It not only deals with the topics mentioned, but is a contrast of two radically different social systems. It also warns of the danger of anti-communism and especially anti-Sovietism as a weapon in the hands of reaction.

S.

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### **CAUGHT IN THE TRAP**

**Chief Kgama and his Times: The Story of a Southern African Ruler** by J. Mutero Chirenje. Rex Collings, £4.25.

Kgama III was chief of the Ngwato people throughout the key period of the nineteenth and early twentieth century when white colonialism was establishing itself in Central Africa. Kgama's rule saw the change from independent Ngwato state to British Protectorate of Bechuanaland, and it was largely due to his skilful strategy in dealing with both Boer and Briton that the territory evaded incorporation either in South Africa or Rhodesia. So he is a figure worth studying.

Professor J. Mutero Chirenje challenged the widespread view of Kgama as 'a paradigm of a Christian ruler', and reveals a more interesting man altogether, who became a Christian for reasons that were probably at least as political as they were religious. He not only accepted but encouraged missionaries. He actually gave assistance to Rhodes' pioneer column on its way to annex Rhodesia. He was, in short, a collaborator. But his collaboration was the collaboration of the diplomat, and its objective was to persuade the British government to extend to Bechuanaland its 'protection' against the claims of the British South Africa Company on the one hand, and the South African boer republics on the other. It is Kgama's policy, the author suggests, that modern Botswana has to thank for the present integrity of its territory.

But the main interest of the book for AC readers is its detailed tracing of the process whereby missionaries, traders and administrators gradually but inevitably entrapped the African leader into surrendering one aspect of his authority after another. Try as he may to defend the principles of traditional custom and law, his plight comes more and more to resemble that of 'an energetic mouse that has fallen into a bowl of cream, which substance the rodent, in trying to escape, turns into butter and seals its own doom.'

R.



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