

The African National Congress
Is our University
The African National Congress
Is our mother
It is our father.

The African National Congress
Is our sky
Which is always blue
The African National Congress
Is the trunk of our tree
Which is evergreen
The accomodator of all
Under the sprawling wings
Of the Freedom Charter.

We are proud to be what we are
We are proud to be doing what we are doing
We are serving the people of South Africa.

-James Pitse

AFRO-ARAB STRUGGLES FOR LIBERATION

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Part 1

The struggle for national liberation in the Middle East and Southern Africa have so much in common that it is only natural for the peoples waging these struggles to join their hands in their efforts. The commonness of these struggles derives not only from the identity of the principles they fight to assert, but also from the similarities, in character, of the regimes they are ranged against - Zionist Israel and apartheid South Africa.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Like the apartheid regime in South Africa, the origins of the Zionist state of Israel is linked to the British imperial history of colonial expansion. In the early part of the 20th century, Britain was interested in securing the two principal routes of access to its domains in the Far East. It was however impossible to do this without controlling the two strategic points along these routes: the Cape of Good Hope at the southern-most tip of the African continent and the Suez Canal and other routes in the Arab East. It was thus not a coincidence that Britain later became the ruling colonial power in these regions.

European settlement in South Africa began in 1652 when the Dutch East India Company set up a halfway station to India, at the Cape. This station soon grew into a colony incorporating land usurped from the local population. Thus in no less than seven years of their arrival at the Cape, the Dutch settlers were already involved in wars, for the possession of land, with the indigenous people.

With the decline of Holland, early in the 19th century, England took over the control of the Cape. British control later spread to Natal and after the Anglo-Boer War it covered the whole of South Africa. Settler colonialism in South Africa was finally consolidated by the South Africa Union Act of 1910 which gave control of the country to the joint British-Boer rule, leaving the colonial status of the black population unchanged.

Calls for a settlement in the Middle East began in the 19th century. It was however not until the emergence of Zionism, a bourgeois Jewish political movement, that a definite programme for a settlement in Palestine began. Zionism was, from the outset, entangled in colonial ideology; no wonder Zionist thinkers spoke the same language as the colonialists. Moses Hess, an early Zionist leader once wrote that after the work on the Suez Canal had been completed, the interests of world commerce (a euphemism for colonial pillage) will require the establishment of depots and settlements along the road to India and China. This, he asserted, can occur only under the military protection of the European powers. In this connection he described the calling of the Jews as that of "a living channel of communication to the primitive people of Asia."

Writing about the involvement of the British imperial government in the destinies of the peoples of South Africa and

Palestine, Richard Stevens had this to say: "Among the various decisions of the Western world which have affected the lives and destinies of the peoples of the so-called Third World, none have revealed more clearly the very essence of western ethnocentrism nor have demonstrated more conclusively the capacity of the western world to transform, translate and legitimise its basic power thrust under the cloak of international law and morality than two decisions reached in London in 1909 and 1917; the first known as the South African Act of Union and second, the Balfour Declaration... Palestine and South Africa - lands some 35 000 miles apart but each the concern of the same Chancery, each sacrificed in the name of western peoples and British imperial interests and the details of the sacrifice arranged by the same statesmen."

General Smuts, then a member of the British Imperial cabinet and Prime Minister of South Africa, played a significant role in the formulation of both the South Africa Union Act and the Balfour Declaration. At the United Nations Smuts argued very strongly for the partition of Palestine and the establishment of a "Jewish homeland." It was thus not surprising that South Africa was among the first countries to recognise the state of Israel in 1948.

ISRAEL AND AFRICA

In the late 50's and throughout the 60's new independent African states were born. The leaders of these young nations having been produced by the anti-colonial struggles were very sensitive to foreign domination and particularly critical and hostile to South Africa's apartheid policies. In the United Nations, these nations states shifted the balance of forces in favour of the developing world, especially the Afro-Arab nations.

Following the denunciation of the establishment of a "Jewish homeland" and affirmation of the rights of the Palestinian people by the Bandung Conference in 1955, and the growing numerical strength of the African states in international forums, Israel embarked on a campaign to cultivate friendly relations with these states.

This effort was aimed at breaking out of the economic boycott of the Arab countries, to exploit the economic opportunities opened up in the young African states, and to drive a wedge between the Arab and African states on the question of Palestine in particular and that of struggles for national liberation in general. With this end in mind, Israel became critical of apartheid. From 1960 to 1970 this caused problems

between Israel and South Africa.

Between 1960 and the early 1970's, Israel built up strong and wide-ranging relations with the sub-Saharan countries. Trade relations between Israel and the African continent rose from almost nothing in the late 50's to \$72-million in 1971. Meanwhile Israel exports rose from \$10,5-million in 1960 to \$47,5-million in 1971. Perhaps the most successful of Israeli efforts were participation in joint African-Israeli companies and projects. Between 1957 and 1963 Israel entered into joint partnership in 40 African companies worth \$200-million. And by 1966 Israel had become involved in nearly 200 companies worth \$500-million. In Israel itself several institutions were created to fit in with this effort of developing rapport with the African states. Prominent among these was the Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies and Co-operation in Tel Aviv.

In furtherance of its new efforts, in 1962 Israel voted in favour of the United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for the severance of all relations with South Africa and the imposition of sanctions against the regime. This annoyed South Africa, and in retaliation the regime rescinded the special concessions in foreign currency regulations which had allowed the South African Jews free transfer of funds to Israel.

In 1966, Israel again supported the United Nations resolution in the General Assembly revoking South Africa's mandate over Namibia, causing further strains in Israeli-South African relations. However, in spite of this apparent misunderstanding and the United Nations General Assembly resolutions, in favour of which Israel voted, Israeli-South African trade and economic relations between 1960 and 1970 grew gradually.

ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA

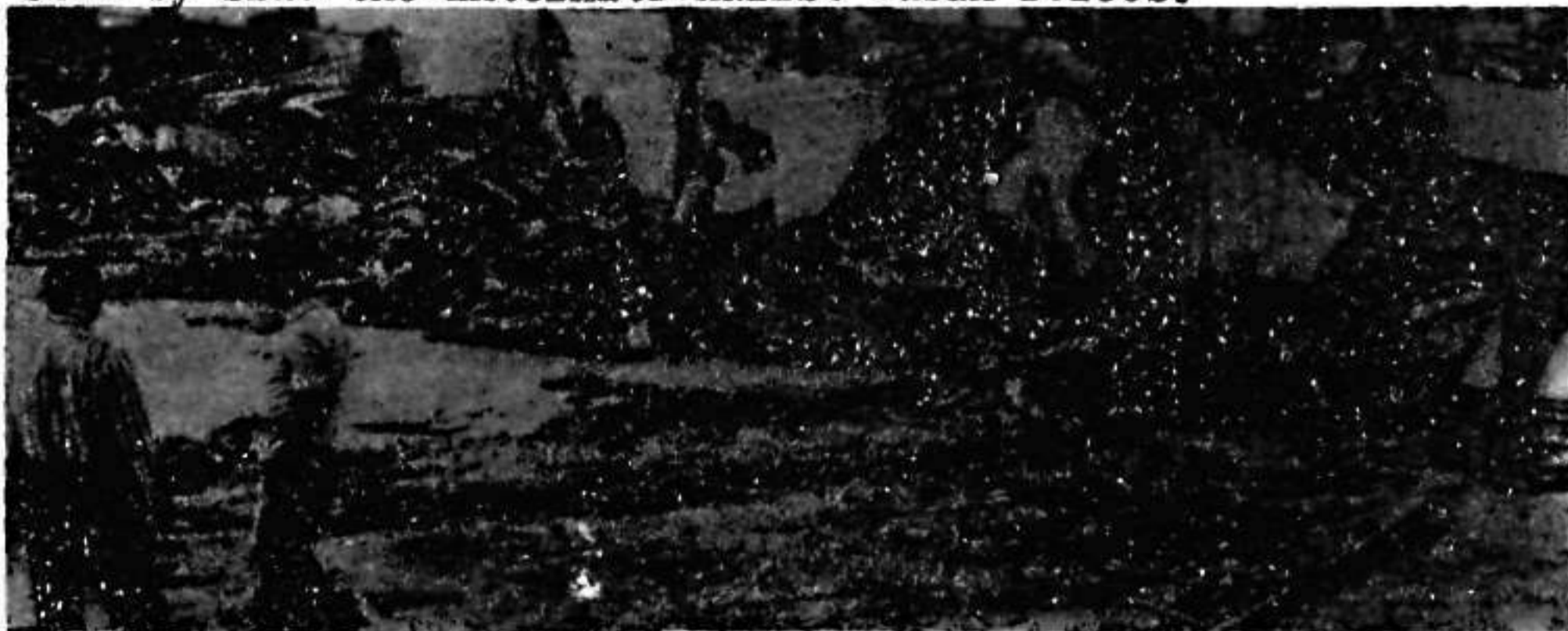
In 1969 the Africa Research Group published an article which revealed the links between the counter-revolutionary and anti-communist efforts of Israel and the United States in Africa. A similar arrangement, perhaps with slight changes, exists between the US and South Africa. South Africa and Israel by virtue of their geo-political positions, play similar roles, within their respective regions, in the world imperialist strategy. Both have been active in the military and intelligence activities against revolutionaries and progressive countries.

In fulfilment of its surrogate role, South Africa has carried out subversive activities aimed at destabilising established governments in Southern Africa. It has intervened in various ways, including military actions in the affairs of these states.

In Zimbabwe it assisted and fought on the side of the white minority regime. After independence it trained renegades and counter-revolutionaries with the aim of overthrowing the new government. In Lesotho it is training and giving military assistance to the reactionary so-called Liberation army of Ntsu Mokhehle.

Besides continuing to provide armaments and logistics to the terrorist group of Mushala, in Zambia the racist regime has been involved in a coup plot which, thanks to the vigilance of the Zambian people, was **uncovered** and foiled.

During the struggle for national liberation in Mozambique and Angola, the racist regime fostered dissident groups to cause confusion among the people so as to weaken support for the genuine liberation movements - MPLA and FRELIMO. Unrelenting in its efforts to fight against the forces of liberation, after the independence of these countries the Pretoria regime threw its weight behind the counter-revolutionary National Resistance Movement in Mozambique and UNITA bandits in Angola. In 1975, encouraged by the US Administration, South Africa invaded the People's Republic of Angola. This invasion was however beaten back by the heroic Angolan forces fighting side by side the internationalist Cuban forces.



Racist South African sabotage in Angola

Again abetted by the US Administration headed by Reagan, the racist regime has invaded Angola. Up to this day racist troops are occupying part of the Angolan soil; they are wreaking havoc and death, destroying factories, schools and hospitals, burning down villages, and killing and maiming innocent people. The aim of the racist regime is not only to disrupt the plans for national reconstruction of Angola, but also to force the Angolan government to abandon the African National Congress and South West Africa People's Organisation.

However, in spite of the difficulties which they have had to bear as a result of these barbarous invasions, the Angolan people and their government are as hard as a rock in their resolve to support the struggle for national liberation in South Africa and Namibia.

ADVANCE BASE FOR IMPERIALISM

Like the racist regime in South Africa, Zionist Israel serves as an advance base for imperialism in the Middle East; it is used against the Arab nations and national liberation movements in the region. This was seen in 1956 when Israel formed a tripartite force, with Britain and France, against Egypt following the nationalisation of the Suez Canal by President Nasser. The 1967 war against Egypt and Syria and the occupation of Arab lands in Palestine exemplified the nature and character of Zionist Israel.

Zionist aggressions on the neighbouring Arab states dates back to the very first year of the establishment of Israel as a state. In less than a year of its creation the state of Israel extended its territory onto the Arab lands. With the passage of years these aggressions have become a constant feature in the lives of the peoples in the neighbouring Arab countries.



Southern Lebanon...remains of a village.

In pursuance of its expansionist policies, Israel has unilaterally declared Jerusalem its capital. This action further shows Israel's determination to deepen the conflict in the Middle East. In Lebanon, Palestinian refugee camps and Lebanese villages have been subjected to almost daily aggressions by the Israeli forces. Besides, in collusion with the imperialists, Israel is co-ordinating isolationist groups, supplying them with all needed military, financial, political and logistical support.

Israel's aims are to suppress and strangle Arab nationalism and liberation movements, and to subject the Arab states to its military hegemony. The dastardly attack on the Iraqi nuclear plant eloquently testifies to this fact. To no lesser degree, as an imperialist outpost, Israel also aims to create conditions that will be favourable to the strategies of US imperialism.

TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE.

NAKED AMONG WOLVES

by

BRUNO APITZ

Chapter 10

Hofel and Krepinski would certainly not be finished off so quickly. But that was just what troubled Bechow the most. He was alone in the wing of his block. Runki was in the clerks' room, and the room attendants were bringing the food containers to the kitchen. Bechow was printing senseless notes for the block fuhrer, with distress in his heart. He pushed away the penholder and supported his head on his fists. The groups must be informed. This could not happen until evening, when the whole camp was in. But what might occur before that? Bechow racked his brain. Maybe there was no reason for all this worry? Maybe Hofel would hold out and rather be beaten to death than... But he was still living, and as long as he lived, there was also the danger... Bechow stared before him at the table.