

UNITE UNDER THE BANNER OF SACTU

SACTU STATEMENT ON INTERFERENCE BY INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTRES IN THE DEMOCRATIC LABOUR MOVEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Today, there is an intense campaign in Southern Africa of interference by international trade union centres, led by the CIA-sponsored AFL-CIO, African-American Labour Centre, Fredrick Ebert Stiftung and others.

It is necessary for us in Africa, and Southern Africa in particular to remember what happened to trade union movements in Latin America. The Inter-American Regional Organisation (ORIT) set up trade unions and centres in different Latin American countries. Where organisations already existed, they were infiltrated. Where ORIT was opposed, it destroyed or split the unions. It was through the devious work of ORIT and the AFL-CIO that the Arbenz Government in Guatemala was overthrown. The blood coup in 1973 of the progressive Allende Government in Chile and the murder of President Allende was once again the dirty work of the CIA, in collusion with the AFL-CIO and the American Institute of Free Labour Development (AIFLD).

APARTHEID'S FRIENDS

It is against this background that we should view today, the intrigues and interference of the Western trade union centres in South Africa. The same illegal racist regime which has murdered, detained, exiled and banned SACTU and other democratic trade

union leaders, is welcoming foreign trade unionists in South Africa. The regime is trying to prevent us in SACTU from carrying out our struggle, while other trade unionists are allowed to move in and out of our country »assisting» black workers in their struggle. The officials of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and our colleagues in the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) are not allowed into South Africa.

Who are these friends of the illegal apartheid regime who also claim to be friends of the South African working class? It is only in children's stories that you can cross the river on the back of the crocodile's friend!

It is precisely because workers in South Africa do not have the freedom to choose their own friends, to decide whether they should affiliate to the WFTU or ICFTU, that we in SACTU feel that International affiliation should not become an issue at this stage.

POWERFUL WEAPON

Today the workers' struggle in South Africa has reached a crucial stage, with the formation of a national federation becoming a reality. The birth of SACTU on 5 March 1955 was in open defiance to racism. It was a bold declaration of unity. The »Declaration of Principles» on which SACTU was founded, embodies the principles of unity. Ever since, SACTU has regarded the unity of the labour movement on a local, regional and national level, as

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... Our main task as democratic and patriotic forces in South Africa is to spare no effort in ensuring that rural women are mobilised and organised on bread and butter issues into a united force. Making their daily lives a seedbed for powerful resistance against the apartheid regime. We need to cultivate, develop and inflame this force into mass revolutionary activity more than we did in the 50's when 20 000 women were mobilised against the pass laws.

NOMALIZO KOMANI

Bantustan women are the worst victims of apartheid rule. They have to scrape out a living from overgrazed, barren and unproductive lands. To subsidize their in-nutritious foodstuffs, they receive a small portion of their migrant husbands' depleted wage. Part of this slave wage is further reduced by Bantustan puppets in hut, land and livestock taxes, leaving almost nothing for food, clothings, education and medical care.

Given this dreadful position, our main task as democratic and patriotic forces in South Africa is to spare no effort in ensuring that rural women are mobilised and organised on bread and butter issues into a united force. Making their daily lives a seedbed for powerful resistance against the apartheid regime. We need to cultivate, develop, and inflame this force into mass revolutionary activity more than we did in the 50's when 20,000 women were mobilised against the pass laws.

The mass resistance displayed by women in 1956 was not spontaneous. It was an act of conscious mobilisation and organisation of women by the ANC Women's League and other women organisations. A



MOBILISE

task which the Federation of South African Women carried out with continued vigour. The legality of Women's organisations of those days should not be a shield for our complacency. We must always bear in mind that the racist regime and their puppets, to save themselves from destruction, have unleashed a campaign of terror and physical extermination of our people.

When dealing with the plight of rural women, we must also address ourselves to the socio-political situation of these rural communities, running from geographic isolation from one another, illiteracy, intermarried with old-age traditions that have become some of the major



A face of determination