

5TH NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Fifth National Congress of AZAPO at Retreat, Cape Town on Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 December 1985 saw content being given to the theme "Resist, Defend, Advance" and a clear commitment being made towards systematically developing the infrastructure for a socialist Azania.

Theme

The outgoing President, Comrade Lybon Tiyani Mabasa, remarked in his State of the Nation Address: "There is no doubt in our minds that this government is under the grip of fear and what we are watching and experiencing is its final stages of disintegration and we are more than ever convinced that the future of this country definitely lies in the hands of the exploited, oppressed and dispossessed."

Mabasa clarified the 1985 theme by adding: "We have chosen and followed a revolutionary path. Today our battle-cry is *resist* all efforts of the *status quo*, *defend* and *advance* the Cause of the people and the Revolution. Our struggle should cease to be passive and reactive. . . . Our clear understanding of the forces in constant action and interaction in our society will lead us to understand the role we have to play in our society to bring about change. **We have to understand that the Revolution . . . requires the escalation of demands and actions, stage by stage, in the conflict with the enemy, utilizing the whip of the counter-revolution to deepen the conflict and to drive the Revolution forward, without stopping at the most extreme actions required to win.**

"... One also needs to point out that as much as the Revolution has to have a life and beat of its own it cannot be merely left to chance. As much as spontaneous eruptions are both essential and necessary in that no Revolution is successful without them, it is our duty as leaders and members of the Movement to give decisive leadership, using whatever agitation and propaganda available to us to organise the struggle and to create the momentum of a continuous offensive towards Revolutionary objectives. **Over the years there have been spontaneous eruptions and these will continue, while the Counter-Revolution is developing its method of containment and repression. This containment and repression should be vigilantly resisted by the forces of revolution . . .**

"... We have to wilfully subject ourselves for the sake of the struggle, to vigorous tests of self-criticism and

self-assessment . . . We should move beyond our own rhetoric into practical revolutionary action. . . . no strategy should be too old and pure to be reassessed. The older the strategy and tactics are without any conceivable and visible success, the more the need for total and complete reassessment . . .

"... As a Movement . . . we have said all that needs to be said for the movement. Our theoretical position is quite clear and what we need to do is get down and work.

"... Unless we actively exercise our right to self-defence our communities are going to turn into police garrisons and cemeteries. We can no longer afford to stand and watch as the 'tears go by'. . . . We will have to go out of our way to defend the gains made in the course of our struggle, and to preserve and defend the principles of Black Consciousness displayed by the masses in action."

Programme

This State of the Nation Address set the tone for a Congress which did not perpetuate the realms of rhetoric and the old rearguard battles to define the nuances of the BC ideology. Delegates analysed the strategies of work stoppages, stayaways and boycotts and the decisions of Congress in this regard are encapsulated in the Position Statement issued by the Central Committee.

The direction and thrust of Congress was to provide the basis for a Programme of Action which would see directed action and the ushering in of a Worker's Republic of Azania.

Congress resolved to:

- Adopt a reuamped version of the education policy;
- Pay close attention to the Education Crisis and to call a National Seminar on Education over the Easter week-end;



Mathews Phosa, Head of Legal Secretariate of AZAPO.

- Further the efforts towards strengthening AZAPO'S women's wing and actively assisting in the programmes of BLACK WOMEN UNITE (BWU);
- Create a National Youth Organization on the principles of BC;
- Pledge total support for the Anti-Asbestosis campaign launched by the BLACK ALLIED MINING AND CONSTRUCTION WORKERS UNION (BAMCWU);
- Launch a co-ordinated campaign against the celebration of Golden Jubilee of Johannesburg in 1986;
- Destroy the myth that the struggle is only against Apartheid and to achieve civil and human rights;
- Form Detainees Concern Committees;
- Enact the theme "Resist, Defend, Advance."

Constitution

Constitutional amendments included the cleaning-up of excess verbiage in the AZAPO Constitution. Significant amendments include:

- The duties of the National Vice Presidents will be determined annually by Congress. Congress resolved to elect a Cape and a Transvaal Vice-President whose duties shall be:



Kehla Mthembu, Head of Youth Secretariate



Sefako Nyaka, Secretary for Urban and Rural Development

(a) To direct and co-ordinate all activities of the Organization in the Cape and the Transvaal respectively.

(b) To be responsible for convening and presiding over interregional meetings in the Cape and the Transvaal respectively;

(c) To perform other duties as directed by the National Council or the Central Committee.

A Vice-President (Finance) was also elected whose duties are:

(a) To initiate and co-ordinate fund-raising projects;

(b) To monitor financial records of branches, regions and secretariates and to ensure that funds are despatched to the Secretary-General.

The Vice-President (Political Education) whose duties are:

(a) To ensure the development of the BC ideology;

(b) To implement and monitor orientation programmes and leadership training schools for members;

(c) To constantly update the Organization on developments

both nationally and internationally.

• Branch executive committees must now include branch organisers.

• Disciplinary powers of all formations are strictly governed by AZAPO'S Code of Conduct.

1985 Central Committee

The new Central Committee elected at Congress reveals how strongly the convention that nobody should serve on a post for more than two terms is observed.

This convention has developed out of the principle of collective leadership.

The New Central Committee is:
President Ishmael Mkhabela (Soweto);
Deputy President Reverend Joe Seoka (Soweto); Vice President (Transvaal) Ntjama Habedi (Soweto) Vice President (Cape) Phambili ka Ntloko (Queenstown); Vice President (Political Education) George Wauchope (Soweto) Vice President (Finance) Mandla Seleokane (Cape Town); Secretary General Mbuyiseli Mahlali

(Uitenhage); National Organizer Thabo Sehume (Attredgeville); Publicity Secretary Imrann Moosa (Durban); Projects Co-Ordinator Haroun Patel (Lenasia)

The Central Committee has appointed the following secretariate-heads:
Labour - Thabo Ndabeni
Health - Abu Asvat
Legal Affairs - Matthew Phosa
Urban & Rural Development - Sefako Nyaka
Womens Affairs - Thembi Mbobo
Religious Affairs - Mamabolo Rapesu
Youth - Kehla Mthembu.
Education - Lybon Tiyani Mabasa
Culture - Mandla Mosweni

Frank Talk is of the view that the manner of conducting the Fifth National Congress showed a positive advance over previous AZAPO congresses. We would like to urge all formations of AZAPO to resist the machinations of settler colonialism and its apologists, to defend the revolutionary gains made in the liberation struggle and to advance towards an anti-racist, socialist, worker Republic of Azania

POSITION STATEMENT ON WORK STOPPAGES, STAYAWAYS & BOYCOTTS ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION AS AT 85-02-02

Following a thorough overview and reflection on the political/ideological development and the immediate- and long-term tasks of the Black working class and its revolutionary organisations, the Central Committee of the AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION (AZAPO) unanimously decided to declare that the toiling and oppressed masses shall use all revolutionary and progressive strategies and tactics within the grasp in order to abolish the country's system of social degradation, economic exploitation and political oppression of Black people.

In order to sow confusion among our ranks by propagating policies and slogans incompatible with the line of the national liberation struggle, the system has through its agents fanned the flames of hysteria, enmity and hostility among the ranks of the oppressed and the exploited. This propaganda onslaught against the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist forces represented by AZAPO is nothing but an extension of the psychological propaganda war-machine championed by the SABC, the enemy media and the internal and external allies of murderous imperialists.

The Central Committee believes that in the struggle for the repossession of land and a society devoid of every kind of inequality, exploitation and discrimination only a united, politicized and organized people with their consolidated, galvanized power can break the chains of slavery and oppression.

AZAPO believes that any form of struggle should raise the revolutionary potential of struggle and that it

should be consistent with both the short-term and long-term goals of the national liberation movement.

AZAPO considers that the tactics of work stoppages, stayaways and boycotts are tried and tested methods in the liberation struggle, and have every potential to enhance the struggle.

Realizing the ruthless oppression and super-exploitation of the Black working class, AZAPO regards it as axiomatic that *Asinamali* (we have no money) and *Azikhwelwa* (we will not ride) inform the tone of most boycotts, stayaways and work stoppages in racist South Africa.

While conscious of the possible benefits of work stoppages, stayaways and boycotts and their contribution to the experience of the Black workers in united mass action, AZAPO takes into account that any method of struggle employed carelessly can be perverted and made to deflect the Revolution into channels of disaster.

As a liberation movement, AZAPO has a duty to analyze all mass actions of the oppressed and exploited and use the rich lessons which may be gleaned therefrom to advance the revolutionary effort to qualitatively greater heights.

AZAPO is of the view that work stoppages, boycotts and stayaways are only to be employed after carefully scrutinizing the material conditions. These conditions include:

- (1) the resources of the people,
- (2) a thorough assessment of the short- and the long-term goals,
- (3) consultation with the community,
- (4) how the tactic links up with

the overall struggle for national liberation.

In embarking upon these tactics, the following must be articulated:

- (a) the target,
- (b) the method,
- (c) the duration,
- (d) the consequences,
- (e) clear and achievable goals and demands.

It was with this in the back of our minds that the following resolution was adopted in December, 1984:

That this Fifth National Congress of AZAPO held in Retreat, Cape Town;

Realizing and acknowledging that boycotts, strikes and stayaways constitute some of the necessary and essential weapons in the struggle of our people;

Also realizing the need for a concerted and sustained effort in pursuance of the goals and principles of our struggle as contained in the Manifesto of the Azanian People;

And further realizing the effects and potential of such collective efforts to effect the achievement of One Azania, One Nation.

Therefore resolves:

To reaffirm and commit ourselves to the defence and prosecution of the Black working class struggle;
To continue to give direction and sustenance to our people and their legitimate organisations in enhancing the revolutionary potential of the oppressed and the exploited;

To maximize the full participation of all sectors of the Black community, after thorough consultation, investigation and canvassing in pursuit of these goals.