

CONTAINMENT OF THE AZANIAN REVOLUTION



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Jeff Baqwa, once SASO's Director of Literary Projects and in exile, analyses the strategies being used to co-opt sections of the broad liberation movement into a massive betrayal of the Cause.

It is a known fact that in quite a few situations people have been involved in struggles for change with quite specific aims in terms of what they want to achieve. However, what has turned up in the end in these situations is something quite divorced from what was aimed at. In some cases "the something achieved" turned out to run decidedly counter to the interests of the broad struggling masses.

It is our fundamental duty to engage in a continued examination and analysis of the forces at play as we continue with our struggle. It is only in this manner that we can avoid whatever pitfalls crop up on the way.

PRESSURE

The significance of Azania to the international community is without question. To cite an aspect, the abundant presence of essential raw materials which are of vital importance for the advance of technology puts Azania at the centre in terms of relations with the international community. It is important to note that these relations have been determined through a very deliberate plan by the powers-that-be in Azania and the imperialist community. It is also important to note that the imperialist community brings immense pressure to bear towards the maintenance of these relations. The reason is simple: the advancement of technology has come to mean everything in terms of the advancement of western society.

The significance referred to here in relation to essential raw materials holds for large parts of Africa. Let us examine how relations have been maintained with those parts of Africa that are now independent. Through

this we want to show the form and the nature of pressure that has been brought to bear on independent Africa by imperialism.

DOLLAR IMPERIALISM

The turn in terms of relations to most parts of independent Africa came with World War II. Apart from the rumblings that had begun in Africa itself, we must look at the role of the United States of America in the whole scheme of things. After World War II, the USA emerged as the leading and most powerful country within the imperialist community. The country abounded in capital that it sought to invest elsewhere. The country desperately sought markets where it could dispose of its surplus wares. At this point, all colonised parts of the world were under strict control by their colonisers. Britain put up protective tariff barriers around its colonies to prevent the infusion of capital from other imperialist countries. France did the same: it was the order of the day. But then, World War II had depleted France and Britain of resources to maintain their colonies to a point where they had to turn to the USA for assistance. The USA was reluctant to help because it wanted the tariff barriers around the colonies to be broken.

This would open the colonies to USA capital. The USA was motivated by its own economic interests when it refused to help the colonising powers. However, when the USA took a stand that was pro-decolonisation to a point where the then Presi-

dent of the USA, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was projected as championing the rights of the colonised, some confusion was caused in the circles of those that were struggling for change in the colonies in relation to the interpretation of the stand of the USA vis-a-vis decolonisation.

DECOLONISATION

The political effort exerted by political organisations and liberation movements in Africa, the incursions carried out by guerilla units in a number of countries in Africa and the role of the USA in the decolonisation programme were the combination of forces that led to decolonisation. This is without doubt a very interesting combination!

The one crucial point that arose after the war was the control of finances. The Bretton Woods System gave the answer to this. According to the stated intention, this System would work towards the control of the world economy. The Bretton Woods System embodies the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These were, and still are, the organs that control the flow of finances between the former colonies and the imperialist community. It was this control that, in its very essence, ushered in the concept of neo-colonialism. This control does not only stop at finances. Its immediate corollary is the control of the distribution of technological know-how. Technological expertise is extended to the neo-colonies to enhance the produc-



De Klerk, Chikane, Tutu, Boesak: the open agenda

tive capacity of a given country, only to the point where production meets the interests of the country being given technological knowledge. The methods used in this control are multifarious. As an example, the imperialists send their trained manpower to the colonies and then employ a multitude of tricks and excuses to make it impossible to train an adequate number from the indigenous masses to take over and run any of the projects they operate in the neo-colonies. The control exerted by the Bretton Woods System and the vicious and strict control of technological know-how define and determine the extent and the nature of the hold the imperialist world has on the neo-colonies.

The October 1917 Revolution in the Soviet Union has had a deep and continuing impact on relations in the international community. This Revolution heralded the emergence of Socialism. This has led to conditions whereby the imperialist bloc has made it its duty to work out an elaborate strategy to fight the survival and any further emergence of socialism.

POST VIETNAM

The defeat of the USA in Vietnam had such an impact on the imperialist community that there was a significant change in the strategy towards containment of revolution. Declarations were heard at the Pentagon to the effect that the experience of Viet-

nam had proved the theory of "limited wars" untenable. It was through the tenets embodied in this theory that the USA reserved the right to intervene in any area where US interests were said to be threatened. Then the Pentagon set about working on a new approach. The strategy that emerged was as follows:-

- * The USA should not be seen to intervene in troubled areas any more. It should project its image as the leader of the "New Economic Order". It should be seen to be acting in "partnership" with all those it entered into agreements with. It should actively encourage "co-operation" with the "Third World". For this reason, it was decided that the USA must arm nations so that, inter alia, the nations concerned shall have the capability to protect the interests of the USA on its behalf in their specific areas. (Let it be stated that a given neo-colonial government would have to use these arms against its own people!)

- * The USA would have to develop its war machinery to a point where, if it became absolutely necessary for it to intervene, it would conduct a lightning operation: that means, it would strike and "destabilize" the concerned area and be back at base before anyone has time to react.

- * The USA would identify areas which it considers of strategic importance to it. *The USA declared that it would not move from these areas even if it meant World War III!* These areas

would be under special consideration in a sense where, among other things, they would be intensively armed and they would be under continued surveillance by the USA. Among the areas identified were Azania and Palestine ("Israel"). It should be noted that these two areas form the gateways into Africa and their control gives the controller immense possibilities in terms of access into Africa.

- * The USA would identify those areas which were of no serious strategic importance to it. In these areas, the USA would yield to the pressure of the Soviet Union if and when the Soviet Union chose to move into them. These areas would be considered "selective gifts" to the Soviet Union.

TAR BABY

Apart from the schemes worked out after Vietnam, there is a programme that has been worked out, independent of the Vietnam experience, for the spread of US influence. This was dubbed "Operation Tar Baby". This strategy was aimed at the control of the lives of the people in the neo-colonies. It was directed at political structures where politicians were bribed and bought. For governments that were considered important for this strategy but remained intransigent and did not yield to it, coups d'etat were arranged. The cases of Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah and the former US President, Lyndon B Johnson are cases in point. Politicians who stood up in opposition in governments that were prepared to move along with the USA were eliminated. The strategy was aimed, quite decidedly, at the elimination of all opposition.

It was also directed at the educational structures and the media which influenced forms of behaviour, social patterns, cultural norms and value systems. The Peace Corps would be used as a bridgehead in the onslaught on educational structures. Students would be taught, among other things, about the greatness of the USA. The newspapers, radio stations and television networks would be brought

under the influence of this programme. This would be done simply by staffing them with manpower that identifies itself with the USA. This programme was also designed to use those areas where the USA was felt to be well-entrenched as forward bases, launching pads for further and continued onslaughts into neo-colonies. Our land, Azania, was one such area. It would be used to launch further inroads into the rest of Africa.

The shifts and changes in the imperialist strategy have taken very interesting forms. Whereas the imperialist community adopted a hostile attitude towards socialist organizations, there is very clear evidence of a shift in their approach. This came after the victories of FRELIMO, the MPLA and PAIGC. During the struggles of the courageous masses in these countries, the imperialists sent in their armies to "fight and destroy" the efforts of the people. They are still involved in programmes intended to "destabilise" the People's governments in these countries. However, a new dimension has emerged. The imperialists are no more waging wars of destruction only and in the single-minded fashion of the past. *There is an intensive drive to get socialist movements and parties to sit at the same table with imperialist governments.* This was evidenced in Zimbabwe and is being evidenced by the present approach to the liberation movements in Namibia and Azania.

The imperialists have also realized that through the hostilities that they have displayed heretofore, they removed the possibility of interacting with the People's governments when they took over. The idea now is to make friends and create an atmosphere that would make it possible to maintain their interests in the People's Republics, and also open the way to further negotiation and agreement.

These are the main areas to which the imperialist schemes direct themselves. They are the factors that lie at the root of these invitations. These invitations also serve the purpose of giving the imperialists a chance of studying the areas where liberation

struggles are going on. This they do by examining the various delegations they receive from the various movements and parties and scrutinising the information they give. Then they move on to use their findings in identifying the force that would best suit their schemes.

ANOINTED FORCES

The next stage is to create the kind of conditions that would make it most conducive for the chosen force to operate unhindered and unfettered. This assumes various forms. An intensive propaganda campaign is mounted to get the chosen force to be accepted by the international community as the only "authentic" force. All the organs under the control of imperialism are employed to orchestrate this phenomenon.

From this point, the imperialists move to eliminate or neutralise all other patriotic forces that are rightly involved in the struggle. Even the fascist regimes, against whom the people are engaged in battle, are made to work on preparing the ground for the ultimate negotiation with the "chosen ones."

PRINCIPLES

Let us draw our attention to some fundamental principles that guide the struggle. The right of the people to get involved in and contribute, in whatever manner, to the advancement of the struggle is inalienable. Further, as the struggle continues, it throws up new conditions from one phase to the other. These conditions do, from time to time, lead to the emergence of new leadership and organisational structures. Even during one specific phase, most of the time various organisational forms and multiple actions are manifest. The idea is to get them co-ordinated. It is in this co-ordination that efforts should be made to resolve political and ideological differences. One of the major factors in the development of organisations derives from their capability to involve themselves in ideological struggle to resolve the contradictions amongst the people

and refine programmes, strategy and tactics.

Organisations and structures are set up for the implementation of specific programmes. The structures are in themselves meaningless without these programmes. *Any fetishism that manifests itself in terms of the worship of an organisational structure resulting in a failure to criticize, shape and direct the organisation shows the backwardness and utter bankruptcy of that organisation.* An organisation shall always serve the people and not become the master of the people. An organisation shall, as a primary condition, reflect the conditions under which it operates. It shall emerge from the masses of the people, embody their interests and be accepted by the people as being of service to them, to their ultimate goals and aims. When an organisation does not rise to these conditions, it loses its legitimacy and meaningfulness.

IDEOLOGICAL DISTORTION

We shall now raise an issue which we believe is of utmost significance in this programme. The issue concerns the dilution of the militancy of the people and the distortion of their ideological foundation. We have already cited the fact that imperialists receive information from liberation movements. It must be pointed out that they also receive information about these movements from their own sources. This information is carefully doctored for two purposes. The first purpose is to further influence all and sundry to accept "the chosen force". The second is to dilute and distort the ideological foundation of the people.

The church plays a role in this scheme for reasons that should be quite clear in view of the role of the church in the whole programme of colonialism. A very pointed example is the case of the Justice and Reconciliation Committee of the South African Council of Churches (SACC). This Committee has found it its duty to set up a discussion group which examines nuances of the struggle including the

ideological base. This Committee has gone on an extensive examination of socialism in countries where it is practised. It has found that socialism is not the way to liberation because, as it states, socialism takes the freedom of the people away. This Committee puts up experts to deal with these questions and these come from liberal circles. The Committee keeps in touch with other church bodies in Europe and, we believe, elsewhere for the purpose, among other things, of exchanging information with these church groups about its "good work" among the people. For the work of this Committee to be properly understood it must be seen, and this is where it belongs, in the context of the dilution of the militancy of the patriotic forces and the distortion of the ideological questions.

We must develop a capability to cut through the nebulous facades that are presented to us. We must have an acute sense of detecting snares and threats that are laid in our way. We must break the manipulation of language apart. For instance the enemy substitutes the term "oppression" with the term "co-operation". He refers to the "exploited" as "partners". Regarding the neo-colonies, he has moved from "underdeveloped" to "developing countries" and then "Third World" and finally, at least for now, to "less developed countries" (LDC's). We must not stop at identifying the terms as wrong. The whole plot behind their promotion must be thoroughly exposed.

CULTURE

It is essential to cast a brief glance at our own historical experience in order to emphasize the consistency of imperialism. The operations of imperialism base themselves on physical conquests and the capture of the mind. The experience of colonialism demonstrates this quite apparently. When people were colonised, the first stage was military conquest. Then followed the rather subtle and rather pervasive phase. Here the enemy gets to work systematically destroying and distorting the historical roots and the cultural foundation of the people. The church and the school did and still do play a major role in this. When the

people shall have lost what is normally used as a yardstick for advancement and projection into the future, their historical experience; when a people shall have lost the norms, mores and value systems that guide them and serve as a basis for their identity, then the people shall be ready for the offering.

The emasculation relating to history and culture expresses itself in terms of a lack of confidence and a loss of a sense of self. People become reflections of foreign value systems. And added to this the insecurity caused among other things, by the lack of the barest means of subsistence and the absence of the opportunity to acquire these: add to this the fear caused by constant harassment in all forms imaginable and the equally constant parade of police and military might, then the picture of a caricature of Being living at the mercy of an uncompromising avarice of imperialism is complete. The removal of these factors forms an essential part of the struggle for liberation. This shall be done with a view to opening the Azanian community to the total forces that influence the development of man. It shall not be done such that the process turns into a worship of the vestiges of the past in a manner where the forces of advancement are closed off.

CONSCIOUSNESS

Consciousness is the motive force that determines the involvement of the people in a struggle for change. Consciousness bases itself on the conditions under which the people live. It derives from the total experience of the people. Alienation from the actual objective condition and from the experience of the people removes the basis for the correct direction to liberation. Consciousness must, and this is a revolutionary imperative, derive from the factors cited. This opens latitude for the movement towards the laying down of a proper ideological foundation that will serve as a guide in the programme for change.

The involvement of the masses of the people is a fundamental factor in the programme for change. What we

need to examine closely is the nature of this involvement. Our struggle has gone through very interesting phases. When the enemy first arrived our forefathers engaged the invader in battle in defence of the land. Then came the phase of negotiation which passed over to protest politics. The adoption of armed struggle was the highest point in the movement through the phases. In the development of the struggle, we notice that there were phases where the masses of the people operated through instructions from the leadership. When the leadership was no more available, the masses could not move. The masses were not motivated by the kind of consciousness that derives from internalised revolutionary principles. The motivating factor was an external agency, in the absence of which no action could be undertaken. Let it be stated that the objective conditions themselves do create a basic awareness in the people in terms of the situation that confronts them. It is precisely on this phenomenon that movements must concentrate their energies by way of developing, shaping, channeling and transforming this awareness into consciousness.

SOCIALISM

In colonialism, settler-colonialism and neo-colonialism the essential characteristic of imperialism expresses itself in two forms. It is the negation of the



historical process and the cultural development of the dominated people. It is the usurpation of the freedom of development of the national productive forces. Our struggle, therefore, seeks to return the people to their own historical process and in this manner to history as such.

Our struggle is an effort to lay out the tenets that shall form the foundation for the development of the people's culture. It is an endeavour to free the productive forces from domination by imperialism. It embodies, at the same time, national liberation and social revolution. The analysis of history and the development of man has shown that freedom from imperialism leaves only one option. We shall free ourselves from imperialist domination only by following the road to socialism.

The colonial situation offers the petit bourgeoisie an opportunity of leading the struggle against foreign domination since by the nature of the objective and subjective condition of this

class (high level of education, political awareness, etc), it is the stratum which most rapidly becomes aware of the need for freedom from foreign domination. However, the petit bourgeoisie as a class that is not directly involved in the process of production, can never possess political control since this is based on the economic capacity of the ruling class. This assertion does not seek to undermine the revolutionary role played and still being played by individuals that come from the petit bourgeois class. It seeks to expose the fact that, and this has been proven historically, the petit bourgeoisie as a class does not and shall never have the capability to possess political control. In order to fulfil their role in the liberation struggle, the revolutionary petit bourgeoisie must be capable of committing suicide as a class in order to be reborn as a vanguard of the revolution identifying completely with the deepest aspirations of the people. To this extent the revolutionary petit bourgeoisie must strengthen revolutionary

consciousness. The revolutionary petit bourgeoisie must identify itself with the working class and promote the normal development of the revolutionary process. Our organisational structures must adapt themselves to this process. They must provide room for movement towards the establishment of a true vanguard of the revolution.

The emergence and survival of socialism demands the consolidation of the solidarity of all socialist and progressive forces. It is through this solidarity that we shall be able to defeat imperialism and thwart its schemes to destroy socialism. It is through this solidarity that we shall be able to create platforms and occasions where we shall examine and learn from the experiences and mistakes of comrades that have trodden this path. It is through this solidarity that we shall attain complete and genuine freedom and also contribute towards the closure of this historical phase where man exploits man. ■

KE BANA BA BO MANG?*

Black faces twisted with pain
Rosy red eyes fighting for protruberance
Through razor blade incisions
Dwarfed by swollen cheeks
Swollen brows
And extra large heads
And my question
KE BANA BA BO MANG?*

Their tongues glued to granite pallets
Awaiting efficient interrogators to dislodge
Who egocentrically grin with satisfaction as
'n Bietjie blood flows here
En 'n handjie vol tande also lost
And I want to know
KE BANA BA BO MANG?

Why allow them so much suffering
Their treason or blasphemy unknown
Meting out punishment in anticipation
Or is it retrospective uteristic victimisation
Which their persecution so urgently warrants?

Ke bana ba bo mang tragically facing harsh fate
Like little puppies born of a bitch

In this wealthy citadel of injustice
Let them suffer, let them take it
Being a fate of their own choice
Opting for the devilish and subservient black
Rejecting the privileged white
Whereas they could also have been yellow
Like the East

You insulted their dead bodies in Sharpeville
With your snobbish un-African capitalism
And still when Soweto spat fire
"Good shot" your drunken spirit shouted
Intrigued by the marksman's accuracy
Sies . . .

Every minute that they suffer
Your pre-occupation is gulping one more beer
Every day that they cry
Your concern is making it in time to the disco.
And I ask you

Ke bana ba bo mang
Who must be opposed, exiled discriminated against
Banned, banished, detained, tortured

And insulted . . . ?

Ke bana ba bo mang
Who must carry the nation's lot?
The world's evils
My poverty and your existence
Whilst you sit on your bloody warm buttocks
But now I know who they are
Having seen the bowels of Mother Afrika
Ripped apart with lightning fury
Exulting from the cracks and crevices

All ancestral greats
Makana, Chaka, Sekhukhuni, Moshoeshe,
Lembede, Biko, Sobukwe, Tiro, Mohapi, Pokela

All in unison crying
You are Afrika
Kill poverty and drown sufferings
Destroy oppression
and save the Nation
and save Afrika
and bring Azania
KE BANA BA AFRIKA! **

Anonymous

* Whose children are they?

** They are the children of Afrika.