

CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Farewell to Mission Schools	5
Western Areas	9
Building, Building, Building	12
NUSAS and Student Unity	15
The Wheelbarrow	20

LIBERATION

A Journal of Democratic Discussion

No. 8

One Shilling

WAR -- AGAINST WHOM ?

NOT for a moment, since the defeat of the Fascist Axis, has there really been peace in the world. Every day since then, somewhere or other, somebody's village, someone's country has heard the crackling of rifles and the chatter of machine guns, the screech of the dive-bomber, the pitiful cries of the wounded and dying. We remember how thousands marched through the streets of Johannesburg, not ten years ago, behind the banner of the African National Congress and the flags of the United Nations to celebrate VE Day. We remember the joy that was in our hearts and the high hopes that we cherished. Hopes that the noble visions of the Charters and the Freedoms would speedily be realised. That Hitler's friends in South Africa would receive their just deserts. That peace would come at last to a war-weary world.

But there has been no peace.

The ink was hardly dry on Germany's surrender documents when British troops were fighting in the streets of Athens, against the EAM, the heroes of the Greek resistance. The ashes of Hiroshima were still glowing when Chiang Kai-Shek turned his American weapons, scarcely tasted by the Japanese, against his own countrymen, to plunge China into civil war.

And so the sorry tale has gone on: in Java and Malaya, in Vietnam and Korea; nearer home, in Kenya; the other day in little Guatemala. These are not, as the newspapers tell us, all separate "little wars," unconnected with one another. They are all a part of one big war: to the unfortunate people who live in those countries a war no less murderous and destructive than the Second World

War. Examine them again; see how the pattern runs.

Soldiers from Britain, France, Holland, the United States, tanks and planes and guns, sent far from home in battleships to fight in foreign lands. These are the troops of America's "North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," the "European Defence Community." The "North Atlantic Region," as defined by its inventors, is a pretty huge area: it seems to take in Turkey in the Mediterranean - and other corners of the world. But wherever it is, it certainly does not include the territories where its soldiers are fighting. Still less can these troops be said to be "defending Europe against the threat of Soviet aggression" — which is the excuse they give for imposing a crushing burden of armament expenditure on the American and west European taxpayers, an austerity economy, and speeding the revival of Nazi militarism in Germany. No, they are not fighting the Soviet Union—not one Soviet army unit has been in action since the defeat of Japan—and they are not defending "Europe." Are they defending anything? Who are the aggressors?

Who are the Aggressors ?

Did any Koreans invade the United States and drop bombs on New York? Has anyone heard of a Kikuyu army devastating the peaceful English countryside? Have the Vietnamese sent battleships to France?

Everyone knows that none of these things happened. And since they did not happen it is clear that the troops who are found thousands of miles away from home, killing and burning in someone else's country, are committing aggression. Everyone knows that if all the soldiers went home now there would be no more fighting.

Looked at in this light, and stripped of all the newspaper ballyhoo about the "free world" fighting "Soviet aggression" and so on, the broad outline and general character of the present war we are in the middle of is pretty clear. It's not a war against "the Kremlin"—the Soviet Union is too tough a nut for Mr. Dulles and his friends to crack, and they know it. It's not a war against "Communism." Broadly, it's an aggressive war of the imperialists, led and directed from the U.S.A., against the colonial people of Asia, Africa and South America.

Of course, this is not the whole of the picture of the current international political situation — a large and complicated situation, with many cross-currents and conflicting factors. The imperialist camp is not united: its members are torn in conflict and rivalry. Its leaders, too, are not free agents. They have to reckon with their own people, who do not wish to fight the Russians or the Asians or the Africans. Witness the case of Mr. Mendes-France, who has become the most popular Premier of France since the war by ending the fighting in Vietnam and ensuring the collapse of the "E.D.C." Nor must we forget the massive strength of the millions-strong world peace movement, officially supported by the leaders of one-third of the world's population. Or the far-reaching implications of

the historic agreement reached by Nehru and Chou En-Lai at Delhi.

But the aspect we have emphasised, though not the whole picture, is a very important one for us in South Africa. When Mr. Erasmus travels to London for secret talks about "defence" it's not some Russians somewhere in Siberia they are thinking of fighting. It's not even in the Middle East (what's happened, by the way, to that famous Treaty?) Let those Africans who still fail to regard the peace movement in its true importance ponder the lesson. Just as Churchill and Dulles have been "defending" Asia against the Asians, so Malan and Huggins are out to "defend" Africa against the Africans. When Sir Godfrey Huggins starts preparing the ground for the "discovery" of a so-called "Mau-Mau conspiracy," and warning the "so-called African intellectuals" that their aims are "completely beyond the bounds of realisation," he is getting ready for war. When Brigadier Rademeyer, following the lead of the New York Times, starts hinting about sedition and high treason and heaven knows what else, and Minister Swart begins a new round of bannings, raids, threats to suppress "Advance," and deportations—these are preparations for war.

Land and Labour

"War," that is, in the Kenya manner, the ruthless massacre of thousands of innocent unarmed folk, the deliberate attempt to grind a nation into the dust of trembling fear and servile submission. That is what war means here in Africa. We know these people. We have met them before, and our fathers and our grandfathers have met them. We know their contempt for humanity and their disregard for human life. We know that they will stop at nothing, that they will spill rivers of blood, that they will strip themselves of every vestige of the "civilisation" they pretend to uphold, to retain their grasp on our land and our labour.

Land, natural resources, cheap colonial labour. These tangibles and not any altruistic urge to convert the heathen brought the imperialists to Asia, Africa and the Americas. These, not any fancy conceptions about "defending the free world" and "resisting Communism" have now sent "Western" soldiers to the jungles. It is not "civilisation" they are defending but big profits based on colonial wealth and upon the poverty, suffering and lives of Asia and Africa. Where labour is cheap, life too, is cheap.

But, for the imperialists, the writing is on the wall. The days have gone when a handful of silver could buy a colonial leader, or a party of marines quell a liberation movement. After seven long years of bitter warfare the head of a great imperial power has been forced to sit at the conference table with the representatives of the Vietnam resistance on equal terms and negotiate a treaty. We live in an era when white domination and colonialism are coming to an end.

It is against this background of the world-wide struggle to substitute negotiation for force in the settlement of disputes that we invite

South African patriots and democrats, Congressmen and progressives to consider the urgency of building up a wide and representative peace movement. The democratic leaders of this country have called the people to prepare for the most important gathering ever convened in this country: the Congress of the People to frame the Charter of the people's demands for Freedom. The breadth and vision of this undertaking, its appeal to all sections of our people of all races and colours, the immediate and inspiring response wherever the people have listened to the Call: all these are potent signs that the country is ready to advance to democracy, and that the Congress of the People is indeed, as Moses Kotane has shown, "South Africa's Way Forward."

The Malanites will try to stifle the truth of the Call to the Congress with lies, to strangle the movement of the people with provocations, repressions and violence. They shall not succeed.

They will fail because the movement of the people of South Africa is united, conscious and determined as never before, and because we live in a world where the people are vigilantly on guard for peace. But let us have no illusions. Let us not ask against whom war is being prepared, for whom the bullets are intended. They are meant for us. Only the conscious determined participation of the South African people in defence of peace can avert the massacre that is being plotted. No task before us is more urgent.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

Better Late than Never," they say. Of course it is better not to be late; some of our readers may have begun to fear we were never going to bring out this number.

Well, you've guessed the main reason for the delay, the chronic shortage of funds that has dogged this little magazine since its inception. We are not going to labour this point. We know how many calls there are on all democratic people to give financial support to deserving causes. At the same time we do ask you to consider whether theoretical clarity is not essential for sound construction, and whether a journal of democratic discussion is not indispensable as the freedom movement in this country advances to new, crucial struggles.

We think that "Liberation" has an irreplaceable function to carry out. We plan, in addition to regular publication in future, to add a number of well-known and distinguished writers to our list of contributors. An important article by Mr. Moses Kotane has been prepared for our next issue, in which this brilliant analyst carries forward the theme of economic reforms for the Freedom Charter which he initiated in his widely-discussed pamphlet "South Africa's Way Forward." We plan to print regular features specially written by well-known friends of South Africa abroad.

We ask you to help us realise these plans by donating every month to our printing fund.