

Apartheid Feeds on Blood

MR CHAIRMAN, Rt. Rev. Archbishop Trevor Huddleston; Comrade Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe, the Hon. Robert Mugabe;

Your Excellencies, members of the Diplomatic Corps; Comrades leaders of the brother people of Zimbabwe; Distinguished participants at this important conference; Comrades, friends ladies and gentlemen.

The Afrikaner poet, Ingrid Jonker, died in 1965 at the young age of 32. Consumed by a dark foreboding and overwhelmed by despair, she committed suicide as her creative intellect was coming to its ripening.

By her death, she joined herself to the children of our country about whom she had written. Her tragic passing was as powerful an indictment of the apartheid system as were these verses which she has left us:

The child is not dead
the child lifts his fists
against his mother

who shouts Africa! shouts
the breath of freedom and
the veld

in the locations of the
cordoned heart.

The child is not dead
not at Langa nor at
Nyanga

nor at Orlando nor at
Sharpeville

nor at the police post at
Philippi

where he lies with a bullet
through his brain

The child is the dark
shadow of the soldiers on
guard with their rifles, saracens and batons

the child is present at all
assemblies and law-giving

the child peers through the
windows of houses and into
the hearts of mother

STATEMENT BY ANC PRESIDENT O.R. TAMBO AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN, REPRESSION AND LAW IN APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA, HARARE, 24TH SEPTEMBER, 1987.

this child who wanted
only to play in the sun at
Nyanga is everywhere the
child grown to the man treks
on through all Africa

the child grown into a
giant journeys over the whole
world without a pass"

We share with Ingrid
Jonker that noble vision of
the child who wanted only
to play in the sun, the child
grown into a giant, journey-
ing over the whole world,
without a pass. We share with
her the knowledge and
confidence that the wanton
massacre of the children at
Langa and at Nyanga, at
Orlando and at Sharpeville,
at Soweto, Athlone, Maseru,
Gaborone, Harare, Maputo
and Kassinga, the knowledge
that this succession of mass-
acres will not deny us our
journey over the whole world
— free at last, at last free,
the last to be free but free,
at last.

What pain it must have
been to her, who, an Afrika-
ner, saw these images, of
those who immolated the
child who wanted only to
play in the sun at Nyanga,
and then told her that they
murdered in order to protect
her, her kind and her "civi-
lisation". And what her tor-
ment to know that each
extra day of her "way of life"
costs the souls of many a
black child.

And under that terrible
order the children die, with
bullets through their heads,
welts on their bodies, hearts
and brains stopped before
they could attain maturity,
because a person as ordinary
as you and I, has inherited
powers that go beyond all

that is permissible in the
conduct of relations among
those we would all count
as mortal.

A criminal tyranny that
has the audacity to call
itself a civilisation lives on
across the borders of this
country: It survives because
humanity, and principally
ourselves, has not yet said
that an extra day of apartheid
is an extra day too long. It
thrives because it can include
within its body count the
lives of children whom it
describes as opponents that
it has vanquished. It persists
because without the death of
innocents, it cannot be.

We meet here today be-
cause we want to discuss the
unspeakable plight of the
black children of South
Africa. We meet because
there is something that is
happening to the hapless
and the innocent that
should not be allowed to
happen. We meet because
we recognise that our own
lives have meaning only to
the extent that they are
used to create a social condi-
tion which will make the
lives of the children happy,
full and meaningful. We have
gathered ourselves in Harare
and on this particular occa-
sion because we know that a
grievous injustice is being
done to all humanity.

And yet, strange as it
might seem, there are some
who are opposed to the fact
that we meet here, for these
purposes. These are convin-
ced that our consultation
is of the devil's own making.
And yet they are the first
to stand unabashed in front
of the whole world, project-



ing themselves as the very representation of all that is good, upright and unconquerable.

Our century has witnessed some of the worst atrocities in all human history, perpetrated by people who considered themselves good, these, regardless of their opinion of themselves. And once more the peoples have judged that those who uphold the apartheid system are committing a crime against humanity itself. And as this conference knows, at the core of this crime is the theory and practice of racism.

death by disease and starvation is planned essence of this system. The barefoot child — clothed in a sack that should carry produce — planting, hoeing, reaping is the alter ego of the white farmer who towers above the toddler with a whip in his hand. The orphan is no more than a precise statement that apartheid lives. The mangled remains of the black child who wanted only to play in the sun are the justification for the existence of the largest and most sophisticated machinery of repression that Africa has ever known. The apartheid

capabilities of each child. Our liberation would be untrue to itself if it did not, among its first tasks, attend to the welfare of the millions of children whose lives have been stunted and turned into a terrible misery by the violence of the apartheid system.

Moreover, our concern for the children, the inheritors of our future, cannot be postponed until the day we achieve our emancipation. That is why this Conference is being held. It should result in the greatest possible international mobilisation



Another Massacre

What more man-hating ideology can there be than this which defines black people as less than human! And could we expect any consequence from its practice other than the slaughter of black children! the predator feeds on human blood. That fact defines its being.

The endless rows of children's graves, ready prepared for the children whose

predator feeds on human blood. That fact defines its being.

This terrible desolation defines for us what our struggle must be about. We cannot be true liberators unless the liberation we will achieve guarantees all children the rights to life, health, happiness and free development, respecting the individuality, the inclinations and

around the issue of the plight of the children of South Africa. The world needs to be informed about what is happening to these young lives. Let the truth be told in all its gruesome detail. Let all humanity see the true face of apartheid, mirrored as it is in the glazed and staring eyes of the children it is starving to death and in the sightless eyes of those

it has murdered.

Let all those in the West who still treat with this régime as legitimate explain why they continue thus to aid and abet the commission of a crime against humanity. Let them stand accused as those who, by refusing to impose sanctions, extended a helping hand to the apartheid régime so that it could continue its campaign of terror against the children.

Inside our country, we, as well, have a responsibility to act now in defence of the children. There too, we must rip off the cloak of silence which the Pretoria régime tries to drape around its horrendous misdeeds. The democratic movement, must in its entirety, join the campaign to force the racist régime to take its blood stained hands off our people!

Other men, and women of conscience must themselves join in this struggle because none can reckon themselves human and be unconcerned about what is happening to the young. We would expect that people of all faiths would feel moved by their own beliefs to say we too must be counted amongst those who stood up in defence of the children. Similarly, the Child Welfare Societies have an obligation to extend their own work and join the battle for the advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of the child. So too must the cultural workers, like Ingrid Jonker, use their talents in pursuit of the common goal.

Of late, the Pretoria régime has been involved in a wide-ranging propaganda campaign whose aim is to give racial tyranny a new face and thus to divert attention away from the ugly reality of the continuing system of apartheid. That ugly reality includes the unrelenting persecution of the children,

the murder of activists by secret murder squads, ongoing and planned illegal trails of the people army, Umkhonto we Sizwe. It is represented by the continuing state of emergency, the execution of patriots and some of the them in secret, the attempt to force the so-called independence on the people of the KwaNdebele Bantustan, aggression against the frontline states, plots to assassinate leaders of the ANC, and so on.

To hide this reality and to shift the focus of our offensive away from the objective of our advance towards people's power, through struggle, the racist régime has been making all manner of noises about the issue of negotiations. At the same time, it hopes to give sufficient grounds for its international allies to be able to claim that the basis for negotiations exists and thus to try to undermine and destroy the campaign for sanctions. The fact of the matter is that the Botha régime is not interested in any genuine negotiation that would lead to the transfer of power to the people through a system of one person one vote in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Its preoccupation is to manouvre in defence of the apartheid system.

The proposal to establish a so-called National Statutory Council reflects this preoccupation. Of fundamental importance to the conflict in our country is the reality that the régime that holds power over our people has neither political nor moral legitimacy. It is the result, the expression and continuation of a racist and colonial legacy which decreed that a white settler minority should govern, like the black indigent majority must be

consigned to the status of the governed.

In all out history under racist rule, the reality has been that though we were defeated, we have never been conquered. We had to live with the fact of white minority domination but have never accepted that it is a condition to which we must succumb. That is why the ANC was formed 75 years ago, and that is why our people have sustained the struggle over all these decades.

It cannot be that at this late hour we would accept some creature of the apartheid parliament, given to us as a mechanism for negotiation, created by the same illegitimate institutions to which we are opposed, and subject to summary dismissal by the same institutions.

It is in any case to add insult to injury to suggest that we who have opposed any elections based on race should now accept an electoral process based on race. To imagine that we can be convened and presided over by the marshalls of the racist hordes, to discuss the abolition of a racial tyranny imposed and maintained by the same marshalls, beats all understanding.

The contending forces in our country are as clearly defined as they were with regard to this country when a new constitution was negotiated and agreed in 1979. On one side, there are the forces, both black and white, which represent the democratic and non-racial perspective. These have, themselves and on their own, recognised the leading role of the ANC. On the other side are those of apartheid racism and reaction grouped around the ruling fascist party, including its black puppets.

Once more, the Pretoria régime is playing politics with



an issue which is of principal concern to all our people, the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners. We would like to take advantage of this opportunity to reiterate this demand and to urge all opponents of racism both inside and outside our country further to step up the campaign for the release of all our leaders and activists who are imprisoned and detained and for an end to all trials of those whose only offence has been to join the struggle for a democratic South Africa.

So must we also intensify the campaign to save the lives of the tens of activists who have been sentenced to death by the apartheid courts. Already some of these have been hanged and some of them in secret. We must not by our silence and inactivity become unwitting collaborators with the apartheid regime in the commission of judicial murders of men of women who are heroines of our struggle and people. Indeed we could pose the question — how can there be a climate conducive to negotiations when these patriots face and are objects of execution!

Rumours put out by the Pretoria regime that some of its members have been in contact with the ANC are complete falsehoods without any foundation whatsoever. When and if the time comes that the apartheid regime feels compelled to talk to the ANC, it will have to come to us openly and not in secret. We who represent the majority of the people of our country, the victims of the apartheid system, would have to ensure that these masses know what the racists are saying and ensure that these millions, participate in any activities designed to shape their destiny. Our very convi-

ctions dictate that we enable this democratic process to take place.

South Africa must be transformed into a united, democratic and non-racial entity and a force for peace and progress in our region and our continent. That will only come about through struggle carried out in our country and supported by the world community. The Botha regime is not a force for change but the principal to obstacle to fundamental change. Our strategic objective must therefore continue to be to intensify our offensive, to defeat this regime and to ensure the transfer of power to the people. The unity of all democratic and anti-racist forces both within our country and internationally is fundamental to the victory we all seek. Consequently, we all have a common obligation to guard that unity like the apple of our eye.

We are meeting here to discuss the situation of children in apartheid South Africa. As we discuss this issue, we should not forget the similar plight of children in Namibia who, in addition, are forcibly recruited into the army of occupation, corrupted into joining the various terror gangs and forced to serve as prostitutes to satisfy the animal needs of the army of terror.

Neither should we, overwhelmed by the harrowing stories that describe the abuse of children in South Africa, ignore the plight of millions of children throughout Southern Africa who are also dying in unimaginable numbers thanks to a criminal campaign of debilitation and aggression carried out by the Pretoria and its surrogate puppet groups.

All this knowledge should spur us both to act in defence of the children and to inten-

sify the general offensive against the racist system whose evil deeds made this Conference necessary. In this regard, we have the unquestionable obligation to escalate our political and military assault against the apartheid system. Equally we need to press on with even greater vigour for the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against racist South Africa.

We join in welcoming you all to this important Conference and are certain that our deliberations will do much to widen the front of struggle against the apartheid crime against humanity. We would like also to thank our dear brother, comrade-in-arms and leader, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe for joining us this morning and for his inspiring call to battle, from one who everyday is, like us, faced with the counter-offensive of the apartheid regime.

To our old friend and fellow-combatant, Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, we say thank you very much for taking this important initiative. In you, the children of our country have always found a protector and a second parent. In their name, we wish you good health, being certain that the victory of the cause to which you have dedicated your life is not far.

Finally, let me extend a special word of welcome to Lisbet Palme who has also interrupted a busy schedule in order to be with us. Thank you for your care and consent. Your commitment gives us enormous strength to fight on whatever the difficulties. — THANK YOU.

