

SECHABA

the official organ of
the african national
congress south africa



**OUR SOUTH AFRICAN
WOMEN'S DAY AUG.9**

THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS SOUTH AFRICA

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AUGUST 9

DAY OF OUR WOMEN MILITANTS

South African Women have a Special Place in our Struggle. Burdened with Extra Responsibilities, they Draw on Deep Reserves of Courage and Endurance to Fight the Hated Oppressor. The Story of their Inspired Struggle is given in the Following Pages.

What place have women in a revolutionary struggle? To some, "women and children" are the inevitable victims of historical upheaval, the innocent sufferers in war, strikes and lock-outs, the objects of humanitarian concern. To others, "women's role" is something special, a thing apart, almost, from the mainstream of history – concerned with establishing the right to political participation, to "equality" at work, in education, in government. The women of South Africa's liberation movement, however, accept no such special definitions. Our women and children are victims of apartheid – and so are our men. Our women have formed their own organisations when issues (such as the extension of passes to women) have demanded it, but ours is not a feminist movement. Ours is a national organisation, and no question that affects women is separable from the fundamental questions of apartheid, national oppression, and economic exploitation. Women's place in the revolution is no different from that of men. It is in the front line. Wherever that may be.

Looking Forward

This is a time for looking forward. We look forward to the immediate future, to the mounting battles against the white supremacist forces in Zimbabwe, side by side with our comrades of ZAPU; the gradual penetration of our trained guerrillas into the Republic, and the handing on of their skills to the underground resistance movement there. We see a bitter struggle, but in the struggle itself we see the birth of a new society, as the relationships of comradeship and hope replace the relationships of oppression and despair. We see also the day of victory, and the building of a new society, when men and women shall work together for a South Africa free of racialism and exploitation. We see our women in the front line throughout, in the forces of Umkhonto we Sizwe, in the underground organisations at home, in the factories and in the villages.

August 9th is South African Women's Day, and a day for looking forward to all these things. But we can also look back a little, to remind ourselves of the work of our women in the past, and their role in forging the weapons that will defeat apartheid. We can trace the history of women's resistance to imperialism right back to the Wars of Resistance between 1779 and 1879. Then, women stood side by side with men, in their efforts to repel the invaders. Towards the end of the 19th century, when the first stirrings of African nationalism centred round the breakaway 'Ethiopian Church,' we find women again among the leading figures – in particular, the great singer and educationalist Mrs. Charlotte Maxeke. Mrs. Maxeke was one of the first African women to obtain a university degree, studying science at Wilberforce University, Ohio. She returned to found a college of higher education for Africans, the Wilberforce Institute at Evaton, in the Transvaal. When the African National Congress was eventually formed, in 1912, Mrs. Maxeke was among the founders.

First women's battle

Almost immediately after the foundation of the A. N. C., came the first real women's battle. The government, so soon after Union, wanted to extend the pass system, which already applied to African men, to women. The campaign of resistance that followed, when women chose to be imprisoned rather than carry passes, was one of the great early victories of the A. N. C. The authorities capitulated, and women remained free of the hated passes for over 40 years. It was about this time, too, that Indian women of Natal entered the political scene, to participate in the campaign of the Natal Indian Congress (founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1894) against restrictions of movement placed on Indians. Many women went to jail, and their treatment there led in turn to a large-scale strike by Indian workers at the Newcastle coal mines.

But it was the trade union movement, which, from the 1920's, united South African women of all races in struggle. African men were excluded from the definition of 'employee' under the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924, and barred from membership of registered trade unions. But not African women. In the Food and Canning Workers' Union, the Textile Workers' Union, the Garment Workers' Union, African, Indian, Coloured and White women learnt to struggle together, and to use their united strength to protect their members. These trade unions produced leaders whose names are respected throughout South Africa: Rebecca Bunting, Lilian Ngoyi, Ray Alexander, Frances Beard, Elizabeth Mafekeng, Mary Moodley. From the trade union movement, many women joined the political movement, recognising that the workers' battle is inseparable from the wider political struggle for liberation.

Revolutionary Leadership

After the 1939-45 war, the political struggle sharpened in South Africa. It was the formation of the Youth and Women's sections of the A. N. C. in 1943 that provoked the demand for more revolutionary leadership, and led to the adoption of the Programme of Action of 1949, foundation of the developing militant policies of the next 20 years.

During those 20 years, women have been playing an ever more important part in the liberation movement. It was the struggle against the Nationalist Government's renewed attempts to impose passes on women that led to one of the most impressive political demonstrations South Africa has ever seen - 20,000 women, gathered outside the Union Buildings, the Government's Executive Offices, in Pretoria. This demonstration, on August 9th 1956, is the event we commemorate on Women's Day. We commemorate it because it was a great and inspiring achievement; and because we know that it must be the last of its kind, until we are free, when we shall gather in tens of thousands again.

It was the women, too, who led the campaign against indoctrination of our children under Bantu Education; it was the women who led the struggle for trade union recognition from the big food canning combine, L. K. B., which led to the first of the long

line of boycotts of apartheid goods. And it was the women who bore the brunt of another struggle - the rural rebellions of Zeerust and Sekhukhuniland in the mid-1950's. It is appropriate that in 1969, as the armed struggle against apartheid gets under way, we should look back to those rebellions, for in both Zeerust and Sekhukhuniland power was for a short time in the hands of the people.

Rebellion

The migratory labour system in South Africa means that able-bodied men travel to the cities to seek work, while the women remain behind in the reserves. It is they who must keep the cattle, and till the land. So it is also they who have resisted government taxes and cattle culling schemes. It was the imposition of the Government's Bantu Authority system, which replaces traditional chiefs with Government-paid and appointed nominees, that finally sparked off rebellion. For a brief while, the people collected their own taxes, set up courts to try traitors, ran their own defence force. The rebellions were mercilessly crushed, the leaders banished or killed, the African National Congress outlawed. But no-one could obliterate the memory of Freedom, nor the inspiration and the hope that this short experience carried throughout the land.

Our history, then, has taught us that wherever struggle is, there is the place for women. On Women's Day, we remember the many women who have already given their lives for freedom. We remember this year especially Florence Matomela, who died in June. We remember those who are in prison, and those who have served jail sentences; we remember Dorothy Nyembe who is serving 15 years in jail for participating in the armed struggle; we remember the wives and mothers of our political prisoners and of our freedom fighters. And we look with confidence to our youth, to the young women of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and we know that they will emulate those great women who fought beside their menfolk throughout our long history of struggle.

Finally we look too to the women of the world, who have given us so much sympathy and support in the past. We look to them for political support and for practical help in the war against apartheid. And we know that they will not let us down.

A demonstration of women led by (second from left) Dorothy Nyembe Natal President of the ANC Womens' League now serving 15 years in prison and Lilian Ngoyi (next to her) National President of the Womens' League now banned and confined to Orlando Township



WOMEN IN THE FRONT LINE

by Paula Bernstein



Not long ago we read of the death of Florence Matomela; and marked one more murder to the white supremacists, who killed her as surely as they killed Ngudle and Saloojee, Mini and Mayekiso, Lenkoe and Kgoathe. They can write their lie, 'natural causes' on the death certificates. Their 'natural causes', apart from beatings and torture, include illnesses that can be controlled or cured in any civilised country today; and a lifetime of poverty, of insufficient food and of hardship also adds up to a 'natural cause.'

Florence died in the front line. Not every fighter can handle a gun. Some people think the front line is only up there near the Zambesi, or along the Caprivi Strip. Those are also front-lines, but most of our women fight right in the centre, in the heart – inside South Africa. Long years of imprisonment and restrictions, unrelenting struggle and unrelenting sacrifice. Women with heart disease and asthma and diabetes crouching on the cement floor of cells where they are not even permitted to spread a hard blanket, except at night; the only furniture a foul latrine bucket. Women confined for weeks and months and years, consumed by the thought of children left alone. Is this not the front line?

Florence was a member of Congress, a woman who gave out warmth and life like the African sun, full of lively energy and songs and the cheerfulness of infinitely generous and splendid personalities. Florence, who had

been to jail over and over from the Defiance Campaign of 1952, through the Treason Trial and 90 days, lost her husband while she was serving her last five-year sentence. Five children. Who cares for them now? Solitary confinement without access to the regular insulin she needed. Did she not, then, die fighting? Would you count her cell as the front line? Did she not sacrifice everything – her home, her husband, her children, and finally life itself – for the cause of freedom?

The Mothers Remember

Our women are scattered now like leaves across the world, blown by the force of police and oppression, forced to leave homes and children and escape to safety. And leaving was the worst kind of defeat, a forced retreat. Sometimes the children journeyed out later to join parents who had been forced to leave; torn up from everything familiar, friends, schools, streets to which they belonged, bewildered or resentful. At least, with one parent or with both, they could build a new kind of life. Sometimes it was not possible for the children to follow. They grow up, remembering less and less about the mother who left in the night, the mother in Morogoro or London or Berlin. The mother remembers; she remembers the little ones she left. They have grown and changed; they are far, too far.

Like wives and mothers everywhere, the women of South Africa create a place that is home, with whatever difficulties and sacrifice. The home offers the only stability, the only comfort. The men cannot do it. Even those who are fortunate enough not to be indentured, migrant labourers live most of their lives outside the home. The women's lives centre around the home, no matter how much they must stay away for work, no matter how much time and energy goes in other activities, still they make the continuous effort to maintain, to hold together, the basis of a home. When the woman goes – to jail, to banishment, into exile – the home has gone.

Children who have been able to join their parents in exile are uprooted and brought into a strange new land, to learn new languages, different cultures. The older ones remember home, and however much they learn new things and adapt to new ways, they are proud to remain South Africans, and for them, home is still over there . . .

But the little ones forget. In a few years the past has gone, their understanding is only of here and now. They do not even speak their own tongue. 'Say Afrika!' I heard a South African mother say to her three-year-old son. 'Afrika?' replied the little boy who was born in Europe – 'Afrika? What's that? Afrika – Mayibuyel – but how can babies remember?

One November night, one northern night in Europe, I went searching for a South African friend among great boxes of new apartment houses standing on the outskirts of a city; row upon row, a petrified stone forest, silent among the early snow and contracting cold. Hundreds and hundreds of doors, all closed against night and winter, all the same. Strangers behind strange doors in a strange town. But we found the door we wanted – and inside, like a door opening into another world, was a South African home; familiar music playing; photographs of imprisoned leaders on the walls; a bead necklace, a woven mat, carried thousands of miles, the memorabilia of that other home, the one that had to be abandoned; that home in the southern hemisphere, where November is summer and the Southern Cross sparkles in the warm nights. There, among the iron frost in this strange land, a South African woman had created something of her home.

Re-create the feel of Home

You will see such rooms, flats, apartments, scattered all over the world, the same photos of Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu and Bram Fischer, the same record playing 'Nkosi Sikelele', the same books and beads, in Sweden, Lusaka, Moscow, Lobatsi, Cairo, Helsinki, Berlin, Algiers, London, Dar-es-Salaam, Toronto, Prague. The occupants are students, trade unionists, nurses and teachers, writers and other professional people, workers of all trades, full-time political activists. To each one, a piece of South Africa adheres, and scattered across the globe the exiles re-create the feel of 'home'.

But there are many within South Africa itself who become exiles. Women and children, families of political prisoners, or of workers who have died or who are too ill to

serve the apartheid state any more, these 'superfluous appendages' are also forced to uproot themselves, to leave homes painfully created amidst poverty, with so much effort and work; and with what bits and pieces they can take with them, they are forced to make some sort of life in a Resettlement Camp in conditions of extreme isolation and loneliness, in desolate places. Apartheid has uprooted thousands upon thousands of women and their families, kicked them out of places where they have lived all their lives; Indians 're-classified' in new group areas; Coloured people removed from District Six; Africans from township and from tribe, removed to suit the needs of master apartheid plans. These people are also exiles. Paradise Valley is not home. Nor is Limehill.

Sometimes it is easier to be a man, to abandon it all and take up arms, to forget wife and family, to join the military struggle with its positive dangers and positive hope, than it is to fight this other unending kind of battle, to endure a life made infinitely cruel by the harsh laws of apartheid. Are there medals for these women, who bury the babies that die and care for the ones that survive? Will we line them all up one day and make speeches praising their courage and devotion, and decorate them for holding the front line?

Wherever there are South African women, for us that is the front line. Soweto, Lusaka, Morogoro, London, Moscow – the line stretches around the world. Wherever we have been forced to make our homes, we have only one real home – a free South Africa. Florence Matomela did not survive to see that better life for which she fought with such supreme courage and loyalty. We women will find our own way of remembering them, not with rewards or decorations, but in the new world we will make, where women will play a full and free part.

A German who spent many years in exile told me: "We had one slogan: our faces turned towards the Fatherland! This meant that everything we did was directed to one purpose – to help us to return to our country." We do not use the word 'Fatherland', but we can adapt the slogan for ourselves:

**"Our faces
turned
towards
home!"**



South African Women in Gaol

Segregation in South African gaols is three-fold. There is the usual segregation of men from women. Black (that is, African, Indian and Coloured) prisoners are separated from whites, and are held under harsher prison regulations (the regulation diet for blacks, for example, is even more unpalatable and monotonous than that laid down for whites, though in one respect the two are equal, both being almost entirely lacking in Vitamin C). Then, the prison authorities, who regard political prisoners as a potential centre of disaffection among the prison population, are usually careful to separate them from other prisoners (though this was not always the case on Robben Island where at one time political prisoners were given no protection from some of the tougher criminal prisoners, who made physical assaults on them). The gaol on Robben Island now holds most of the male, black political prisoners, and therefore the bulk of all the political prisoners in South Africa: the white men are held in a special block in Pretoria Central Prison. Women convicted of political offences are held elsewhere.

Influx of Women Prisoners

In the years 1963 to 1965, there came into the South African prison population an influx of women who had been convicted under the Unlawful Organisations Act and the Sabotage Act. At first, these women were held in isolation in a number of different prisons. The women found guilty in the trial known as the Alexander Trial in Cape Town early in 1964 were kept for nearly a year in Kroonstad Prison where (according to **Stephanie Kemp**, who spent some time of her own sentence for sabotage in another section of the same gaol) they were locked up in solitary all day, except for a short period for exercise, during which they were expected to wash themselves and their clothes. (These women had been sentenced to terms of up to fifteen years under the Sabotage Act, though they had never committed any sabotage, having only belonged to an organisation in which its possibilities were discussed).

Later, after large numbers of African women in the Eastern Cape had been convicted of membership and

active support of illegal organisations such as the African National Congress, a centre for black women political prisoners was established at Nelspruit in the Eastern Transvaal.

For two years none of these women at Nelspruit received any visitors. Many husbands, sisters, brothers and friends had been convicted in the same wave of trials. Also, one of the many disabilities that political prisoners suffer under is that, being collected together in centres, they are often held far away from their homes, families and friends. It is over a thousand miles from the Cape to the Eastern Transvaal, and even a third-class railway ticket (third-class is the only form of travel available to non-whites) costs more than most Africans can afford.

Florence Matomela

It is impossible in the space here to mention more than a very few names. But if one mentions a name at all, it is impossible not to mention **Florence Matomela**. She had taken part in the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and had been one of the accused in the Treason Trial of 1956. She was a diabetic, and while she was in 90-day detention in 1963 she often did not get her daily dose of insulin. After she had served her five-year sentence for membership of the African National Congress she was taken from Nelspruit back to the Eastern Cape to be tried on further charges. There, in the Eastern Cape, she had a visitor at last; and the visitor told her that both her husband and her sister had died while she had been in Nelspruit, and that her husband had been dead for about a year. She was acquitted of her further charges, but she recently died too.

The Late Florence Matomela, Trade Union and Womens' League leader in the Eastern Cape who died soon after her release from five years in gaol



Another name we cannot leave out is that of **Dorothy Nyembe** of Durban, also a veteran of the Defiance Campaign; at one time she was provincial chairman of the African National Congress Women's League. A few months ago, she was sentenced to fifteen years. Together with eleven men, she had been charged under the Terrorism Act with attempting to establish bases for armed attack in the country; and also with attempting to establish contacts in a military underground.

White Women Prisoners

White women convicted of political offences are held in Barberton Prison, also in the Eastern Transvaal; and this is the only political prison I can speak of from first-hand knowledge, as I spent three years there. Barberton is near Nelspruit, the two gaols are under the same command; and this makes me fear that the African women in Nelspruit have been living under conditions that are very grim indeed. For however bad conditions may be for white prisoners, one may be sure that they are worse for blacks; and I know that Barberton administration to be far from humane or enlightened.

At the end of June 1967, after she had served two years in Barberton, **Sylvia Neame** wrote an article for **The Guardian** (London) giving a very good description of the life she had led in Barberton in 1965: "When they (the white women political prisoners) first arrived they were not allowed to speak to each other at any time of the day or night. In fact it was a communal solitary confinement. In spite of the fact that the South African prison regulations (which they were not allowed to see) specified an hour a day in the open air, they were given no exercise. They approached the authorities for exercise and were given the concession of fifteen minutes a week on Sunday. Otherwise, from seven in the morning until about three in the afternoon, with a break of about one and a half hours in the middle of the day, they stood at the wash-basins in their section, washing the clothes of the men prisoners... for fifteen, sixteen or seventeen hours a day we were locked up in our cells, some of them 6½ feet by 9 feet." She went on to say that conditions later improved, but added: "The conditions of the white women political prisoners when I left, were still worse than the conditions of ordinary criminal white women prisoners; we were still being discriminated against because we were political prisoners."

"Altogether, there were twelve of us at different times in Barberton, serving sentences of from two months (for slogan-painting) to three years (for membership and active support of unlawful organisations). It is quite true that we were not allowed to see the prison regulations; we were known to be sticklers for our rights and vociferous protesters (vociferous protest was, after all, what we were in gaol for) and one prison official told us that if we saw the regulations we would 'make too much trouble'. We knew enough about them only to know that the authorities broke them many a time in their treatment of us. Our weekly quarter-hour of exercise became a daily half-hour only after much arguing and complaining on our part, many threats about how we would make these malpractices public once we were released, and only after (we guessed at the time) there had been some concern in the outside world about the conditions under which South African political prisoners lived: it was some further time before we got our full quota of a daily hour."

The 90-Day and 180-Day Law

Not all political prisoners in South Africa have been convicted of an offence against some law: gaol without trial has long been legalised there. The law known as the 90-day detention clause of 1963 gave the police unlimited powers to hold a prisoner for the purpose of interrogation;

for at the end of this period of 90 days the prisoner might be re-arrested for a further period. The 180-day detention clause of 1965 provided that a prisoner might be held for that period if he was likely to be required as a witness in any case. The Terrorism Act now provides that a prisoner may be held incommunicado for an indefinite period if the police suspect that he has any information to give about 'terrorist' activities; and the police are under no obligation to inform the families of those arrested where they are being held or even that they have been arrested at all.

Prisoners under these acts may be held anywhere the security police may choose to place them; in a prison or in the cells of some police station, which may be a remote one. Under these conditions, strange to say, apartheid and other segregation regulations may be forgotten. During my own period of 90-day detention, I was held for thirty-six days in solitary confinement in a police cell on the outskirts of Pretoria; and I could hear the singing of the African men prisoners (not political prisoners) in the cell next door. (I could also hear, and once I saw, these prisoners being beaten up by young police constables). My predecessor in my own cell had also been there in solitary under the 90-day clause, and he had recorded his calendar of days behind the door. He is now serving twenty years on Robben Island.

Once again, it is possible to mention only a very few of the many, many women who have been held and still are being held under the laws that provide for imprisonment without trial. In 1963, the police held **Albertina Sisulu**, to interrogate her about the activities of her husband, Walter, who was then still in hiding (his 17-year-old son was also taken into custody for the same reason). **Caroline Motsoaledi** was put into 90-day detention after her husband had been arrested at Rivonia. She was arrested in court, where she had gone to see her husband, and she had given birth to a child only a few weeks before this.

"Night and Fog"

Most women who were arrested were, of course, arrested because they themselves were suspected of subversive activities. In 1963, **Eleanor Anderson** of Durban suffered such severe mental torment in solitary confinement that she was moved to custody in a mental hospital from where she escaped and fled across the border. In 1964, **Mary Moodley** of the Transvaal, an elderly woman who had been held for interrogation about the part she had played in organising illegal escape routes across the borders of the country, complained when she was brought to court that, though the police knew she had a weak heart, they made her stand during interrogations until her piles bled and the blood ran down her legs. **Ruth First** was re-arrested after her first period of 90 days and was released after she had almost finished another month. In 1966, **Violet Weinberg** and **Leslie Scherbrucker** (whose husbands were already political prisoners in Pretoria Central Prison) were held under the 180-day law, as possible witnesses in the trial of Bram Fischer; they complained that they had been kept awake day after day and night after night by Security Branch men who slept in shifts. The recent arrest of Philip Golding, a citizen of the United Kingdom, under the Terrorism Act has recalled the detention of **Caroline de Crespigny**, another British citizen, under the 180-day law in 1965.

In May of this year, **Winnie Mandela**, wife of Nelson Mandela, A. N. C. leader on Robben Island, was arrested, as was **Joyce Sikekane**, a reporter on the **Rand Daily Mail**, the Johannesburg morning paper. The police have refused to say why these women have been arrested, or under what law; and we know nothing about their condition. The workings of the 180-day law and the Terrorism Act call to mind the **Nacht und Nebel** (Night and Fog) policy of the Nazis during their occupation of Europe: this policy was so named because, by it, arrested people disappeared without trace, as if into the darkness.

OUR WOMEN AT WORK



Mrs. Mary Moodley prominent Trade Union leader on the Rand

Racial oppression and class oppression inevitably bear especially heavily upon women. Added to the disabilities which affect women of all classes in a non-socialist society, they form a crushing burden. Nowhere is this burden heavier than upon African women workers in South Africa. The sign of their indomitable courage is that they have refused to be crushed and down-trodden

In South Africa, the exploiters and employers experience no shortage of cheap unskilled manpower. And they have preferred to employ men because men can more easily be moved around (and detached from family ties) than women. They are also physically better able to endure the hard labour which apartheid ordains to be the lot of almost all African workers.

73 per cent of African women (nearly four million) live in rural areas. Of these under 4,000 are employed for a wage. In the 'reserves', women often remain on the land, cultivating the family's tiny plot — while their husbands, working as migrant labourers, toil in the mines, on the White farms, on the roads and on the railways. These women attempt to scratch out a living from the exhausted soil for their children, but are usually also dependent on money sent home by the male breadwinner from his pitifully small earnings, which are also greatly depleted by taxation.

Of the women in rural areas who are employed, more than 85 per cent

work on white farms or as domestic servants.

Only 27 per cent of African women live in urban areas. Rigorous controls exist to keep them out. Of this 27 per cent (which at the same time is 47 per cent of all wage-earning African women) nearly 80 per cent are employed in domestic service.

Sechaba looks at the conditions, in the city and in the country, of this vast majority of African women workers.

In the towns

In the 19th century in Europe, during and after the Industrial Revolution, servants worked unlimited hours for negligible wages and lived in miserable conditions. Worse wages and conditions than these are the lot of the domestic servant in South Africa today.

In the cities, most women still work for less than £50 per annum. In Natal, for instance, a woman working in Durban who returns to her family in the location at night, will com-

monly earn around £3 per month. Out of this she may be required to pay her own fares – often amounting to more than £1 per month.

If she lives on her employer's premises, she will generally be accommodated in a shed-like structure in the backyard, with a tin roof and a cement floor – icy in winter and stifling in summer. A servant's lavatory will be provided but no facilities for bathing or proper washing – she will be expected to fill a bucket from a tap in the yard. At night, like those who live in the location, she will be disturbed by police raids. Even if her employer permitted it, it would be illegal for her husband to spend the night in her room.

African servants are usually fed on a special diet, consisting of maize, mealie rice and beans. They are also supplied with a small quantity of meat weekly – meat which is sold in the butchers' shops as 'Boys' Meat' and considered unfit for White consumption.

Often, after a heavy day's work, a woman servant is expected to 'babysit' for her employers. She lies on the floor of the children's room wrapped in a blanket, as she is not expected to occupy a 'White' chair.

A typical African maid's day is likely to involve cooking, housework, care of children and often heavy laundry. Few South African Whites bother to buy labour-saving devices. Why should they? For they regard their servants as machines.

In the country

While servants in the towns work under worse-than-19th-century conditions, in the rural areas their circumstances are feudal. Often, if they are married to, or children of farm labourers, they are forced to work in the farm kitchen for nothing when sent for by the 'missus'. The best they can expect, for working in the fields or in the house, is a bag of maize, a few shillings or some discarded clothing. The work they occasionally get on a paid basis is at best seasonal – and in any case pitifully paid.

Other employment

Apart from domestic and field work, what openings are there for African women? The answer, in terms of professions, is painfully clear: there are no African women attorneys, advocates, commissioners, engineers, architects, vets, chemists or university lecturers. African women doctors are a rarity.

In view of their educational disabilities (only 0.1 per cent get the opportunity to go to Senior Secondary School (Forms IV and V), it is indeed startling that 11,000 African women have managed to become teachers and 12,000 to become nurses. Opportunities as typists and shop-assistants are almost non-existent. The Whites, with their strangle-hold on commerce, employ only White women in such positions.

Factory work

As regards work in production, 1.3 per cent of rural women workers and 4 per cent of urban women workers are engaged in it. Though African women in industry average an annual wage of only £132, their contribution to the working class struggle has been a magnificent one. In the South African Congress of Trade Unions, women have done outstanding work – and have been notable for their political realism and fiery eloquence. Inevitably, such women have been heavily penalized. Such women as Mildred Lesiea and Elizabeth Mafekeng of the Food and Canning Workers' Union and Viola Hashe of the African Clothing Workers' Union have been banned

and confined. In addition, many African women trade unionists have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment or detained without trial and mercilessly interrogated.

The conditions of domestic service make the formation of a union under South African conditions an impossible task. Yet many domestic servants have also shown political consciousness. In the Johannesburg bus boycott, thousands of them set off for work before dawn and arrived home after midnight, rock-like in their refusal to pay increased fares.

New tasks ahead

'Our women are a rock' says one of our freedom songs, and their strength and courage are ever equal to new demands. Now indeed a new path is opening before them. For in the guerrilla training camps, dedicated women are today also playing their part. Like Chaka's women-warriors of old, they join battle against the foe. And as the struggle mounts in heat and intensity, more and more will flock to the liberators' standards. Their fortitude and fire have never been more necessary than in this new phase of the struggle.

Elizabeth Mafekeng, Food & Canning Worker's leader in the Cape selling the peoples newspaper to workers



AND... THOSE WHO STAY AT HOME

Much has been written and will still be written about prisoners in South Africa. There is documentary evidence of their terror and torture under detention, their hardships in prison after sentence. Some of those released have written books on their experiences, articles have been published in the press, meetings and conferences have been addressed by ex-prisoners.

The wives and mothers of prisoners are in the main less articulate, their stories less dramatic, they have had little publicity. But they also suffer fear, hardship, despair. They battle to get their husbands released, to keep up morale, to maintain contact. They have the sole responsibility of the family.

In this article, based on their own statements, SECHABA pays tribute to their endurance.

There is fear. Will I ever see my husband again? When? What is the charge, who knows, who will tell me? Is he alive or dead? The fear is not unfounded. Many prisoners have died while in the custody of the police or prison department. In 1964 Ngudie, Tyito, Saloojee. In 1966 Yum Pin, a Chinese, Alpheus Madiba. In 1969 Lenkoe, Kgoathe, Modibane. Will my husband also be 'found hanged' by his belt in his cell?

And there is uncertainty. These are extracts from letters from wives in a reserve: -

'My husband is in prison again. They caught him on the 12th. Please try to find out what his charge is. It would be better if he could be taken to court

and know what his wrongs are and be punished.' (He was detained).

'I hear now that my husband is in . . . jail. My brother visited him on my behalf. I failed to pay a visit. I was not allowed.'

After a visit to her husband in prison, Mrs. K. wrote 'I took my husband some nice food, although he is so weak I am scared I will lose him behind those prison walls.'

Mrs. L. from Johannesburg, told the press reporter: "At 11.30 p.m. there was a knock at the door. The police dragged my husband away. I was not told where he would be taken. After eight days, when I was out, the police left a message with my neighbour that my husband was dead."

There is always the immediate, and the never-ending problem of money. How to live without the husband's earnings.

These extracts are from letters from wives in the Transkei: -

'There has been a famine. The ploughing has not been successful. We are starving. I was helped by my husband when he was here because he sold our crop. The children are looking after the sheep and cattle. I must sell a sheep for food.'

She described the difficulty of selecting the sheep, of taking it to be sold, bargaining over the price - men's work.

'Please help me financially, at present we are experiencing starvation because I have run out of mealies. My husband finished his sentence and was released, but immediately deported.'

'My husband was banished three years ago. I have not seen him since. In ploughing time I go from place to place asking people to help me plough, and some young people to look after his cattle.'

'I need money for communal fines which resulted from hut burnings. It is forced to be paid by everyone who was present at the time of the unrest.'

Arrests and imprisonments have not been accepted by wives and mothers without protest.

The story of Mr. Loza, of Cape Town, is well known. For two years, his wife struggled to get him out of jail. She was one of twenty African women who petitioned the Chief Magistrate, Cape Town, in 1963 for the release of their husbands and sons. The petition stated: 'We are destitute and want to see and have our husbands back with us.' They saw the Acting Chief Magistrate, but failed to get their men released from detention without trial. At the end of the 90 day period, Mrs. Loza went to jail to meet her husband, due for release. But she did not see him. He was rearrested for a further period of 90 days. She brought an application to the Supreme Court for his release, but it failed. When refused a visit, she took her three weeks old baby, handed him to a warder and begged him to take the baby and show him to his father. This was done. Eventually, with others, Loza was brought to trial, convicted, sentenced to three years' imprisonment and taken to Robben Island. The wives arranged for the men to lodge an appeal

against conviction. On March 10th, 1965, nearly two years after Loza's arrest, the Supreme Court set aside the conviction and ordered the release of the men. Daily the wives went to the jetty on the mainland where the ferry from the Island should arrive. But no prisoners arrived. The authorities refused to issue a statement as to what was causing the delay in their release. Were they dead or alive? Where were they? Were they being detained for further charges? On the 22nd March, the wives decided to make an urgent application to the Supreme Court that their husbands be produced. On the 23rd they arrived home. Mrs. Loza



Mrs. Frances Beard, prominent Eastern Cape ANC & Trade Union leader now in prison

had been without her husband - an innocent man - for 22 months and two weeks.

And the wives and mothers are lonely.

Mrs. N. wrote of her friend: 'She was just home from hospital when her husband was taken by the police. She does not know his whereabouts. She was in bed when he was taken away, leaving no food in the house as a hailstorm had destroyed everything in the fields. I assume he is detained.'

'My child is ill and wants treatment which he would get if his father, now in prison, were here to see to it.'

And Mrs. T. Writes:

'My husband is arrested. And what is so sad is that I am about to have a child.' A month later she wrote again: 'I had a nice little daughter. But now I have none. She died one day old. So I am alone again.'



Lilian Ngoyi, President ANC Women's League with Indian Women's leader Mrs. Pillay and White democrats leader Mrs. Helen Joseph who is under House Arrest since 1962

In traditional Xhosa Wear, Mrs. Albertina Sisulu, banned and restricted and Mrs. Winnie Mandela now in solitary confinement at the Rivonia Trial.



Women in the Struggle



A policeman's cane twitches as an African woman runs from a demonstration in Johannesburg, where 335 African women were being accused of disturbing the peace by protesting against passes for women.

A policeman's cane swishes as an African woman runs from a demonstration in Johannesburg where African women were being accused of disturbing the peace by protesting against passes for women



Coloured women greet their families and jeer at the police after being arrested at a demonstration



Typical scene at meetings and demonstrations prior to the banning of the ANC in 1960

ggle



Women demonstrators face the police at court during the Rivonia Trial

DEATHS IN DETENTION!



Major P. J. Swanepoel - the beast of Compol - the main interrogation centre in Johannesburg

- **Caleb Mayekiso Died Within 7 Days Of His Detention.**
- **Nichodimus Kgoathe Died With Bruises All Over His Body.**
- **James Lenkoe Was Found Hanged In His Cell With Serious Electric Burns On His Toes.**

Three recent deaths in detention in the most suspicious circumstances provide sharp confirmation that torture of political detainees continues unabated in Vorster's prisons. Electric shocks, brutal beatings and a so-called suicide in a highly compromising situation have been revealed in recent inquests in Pretoria. Despite spurious efforts by Police, Prison officials and Government doctors to cover up the violence inflicted on defenceless detainees, the truth has once again been forced to the surface.

MURDER

No matter what ultimately caused these deaths, we say that death in solitary confinement, especially in a South African prison, is MURDER! No one, including relatives, have any contact with a political detainee once he is arrested. How can we then accept the word of Vorster's interrogators, his prosecutors, his courts for what really happens when a person is detained.

James Lenkoe, said to have been found hanging by his belt in Cell 12 at Pretoria Local Prison, and certified to have died in this way, was in reality subjected to electric shocks to an extent that medical evidence conceded that he may have died from electrocution. These facts emerged

at a second inquest demanded by Lenkoe's widow when the original officially given cause of death became suspect. James Lenkoe died within five days of his detention under the Terrorism Act.

At the special inquest, in a rigorous and tenacious cross examination, Advocate D. Soggot brought to light the cruel fact that Mr. Lenkoe had been subjected to electric shocks sufficient to cause death at some time within the 12 hour period before he died. This evidence was given by Dr. A.R. Moritz a world authority on burns, specially flown out from the U. S., who stated in court that a mark on Lenkoe's toe was caused by an electrical burn. Similar evidence had earlier been given in court by Dr. J. Gluckman, a pathologist, who stated that the presence of copper ions in the damaged tissue of Lenkoe's body indicated a thermal injury caused electrically. Dr. Gluckman added that he found other injuries as well including a small bruise on Lenkoe's neck below his ears, bleeding of the eyelids and gums, linear marks on the shoulder, bruises on the arm, and the injury on the toe. He also found a curious haemorrhage at the base of the skull. Dr. Gluckman said that the bleeding of the eyelids and the gums could have been caused by any of a number of factors. The bruise on the neck could have been caused by a belt

buckle, or other factors. When asked about his opinion on the cause of death, Dr. Gluckman said it could have been caused by electrocution. An equally possible alternative was by hanging.

BRUISES AND MORE BRUISES

The Lenkoe case has burst into the headlines at the very time of another inquest on the death of a detainee, Mr. Nichodimus Kgoathe. The police admitted in court that they had been instructed to investigate his death as well as certain allegations of assault during his detention. Police Sergeant A. B. Gildenhuys of Silverton told the Court that Kgoathe had told him after much hesitation that he had been aussaulted by members of the Special Branch during interrogation. Dr. P. J. E. Joubert, called in by a magistrate, told the Court that he found numerous marks on Kgoathe's body including linear bruise marks over both shoulders and behind the neck, three bruises behind the right upper arm, three U-formed bruises behind the right thigh, as well as a wound on the left eye. Notwithstanding these extensive injuries, the police tried to intimate that Kgoathe died from a fall in the shower.

The inquests revealed a number of other sinister features on the treatment of detainees. Under cross examination, Chief Warden Breedt admitted that on official instructions his department did not keep records of the movements of detainees when they were handed over to the Special Branch. Mr. Soggot asked whether the inference was that the police did not want people or the courts to know how long a detainee was kept at the interrogation centre Compol and stated that there had been a case where a conflict on how long a detainee had been kept at Security Headquarters was resolved in court in favour of the detainee's assertion that he had been out of the prison for four days. Typically, the explanation given by Major Swanepoel the head of the torture squad of the Special Branch for moving detainees out of prison to the interrogation centre was that there were administrative procedures to be completed.

TORTURE PROVED

The administration of torture to political detainees has now been so well proven that there is not a corner in the world where it is doubted. Yet

One of the first detainees who died in detention was 'Babla' Salojee. He was interrogated by the beast of Compol, Swanepoel just before he died. No one will ever know the full story of what was done to 'Babla' before his death. A case of suicide the police said after he had hurtled down from the 7th Floor window of the Security Police headquarters in Johannesburg



Minutes after this photograph was taken, Sultan 'Babla' Salojee, the man on the stretcher, was dead. He had hurtled from the 7th floor of Security Police headquarters in Johannesburg.

No one will ever know the full story of what was done to 'Babla' before his death. He had been a 90 Day detainee, held in solitary confinement for interrogation. A case of suicide, the South African police say.

Suicide under torture is murder.

torture continues and our comrades in the front line of struggle are mutilated and wracked by men who have nothing to learn from the archives of Gestapo technology. As to the extent of these practices in South Africa, we can do no better than quote the words of the police officer who testified in an electric shock case at Bultfontein in 1964. "I don't think there is a police station in the country that does not use violence during questioning. Tying a plastic bag around a prisoner's head is common in investigations."

Curiously, just as the name of Ilse Koch will always be associated with Belsen, so one man, Major P. J. Swanepoel is mentioned repeatedly in conjunction with the interrogation of detainees. Numerous detainees have spoken both in the courts and outside of the sadistic nature of this Beast of Compol. Yet, when he was for once on the receiving end of a sharp cross-examination in the Lenkoe case the court allowed him to evade explaining his actions. With contemptuous disregard for public opinion, this chief inquisitor of South Africa's Gestapo, the man who questioned Lenkoe on the day

he died, assumed an unbecoming air of innocence to deny all knowledge of illtreatment of detainees.

BITTER DEDICATION

But the list of victims of Special Branch violence is growing. Neither the relatives, the comrades in struggle nor world opinion accept the stories of suicide and self-infliction of wounds that are concocted by the interrogators. And, even if there have been suicides in detention, they have been suicides under torture; and, as we have said before: suicide under torture is murder!

The murder of political prisoners is a crime which stands highest in the list of atrocities committed by the South African Government. No action can be more provocative to those who are fighting for a free South Africa than these never ending acts of savagery against detainees and political prisoners. There need be no questioning the response of bitter dedication these acts generate. The perpetrators of these crimes will most certainly be brought to book!

OBITUARY

MASANGO CALEB MAYEKISO

A. N. C. AND TRADE UNION LEADER

Statement on the Death in Detention of Masango Caleb Mayekiso, African National Congress and Trade Union Leader (South Africa).



The African National Congress of South Africa mourns and salutes MASANGO CALEB MAYEKISO who died in solitary confinement under South Africa's obnoxious 180-day detention law.

Comrade Mayekiso who had been released from prison after serving four years imprisonment for belonging to an "illegal organisation" – the A. N. C., was re-arrested on 13th May, 1969 and detained under the 180-Day law.

On June 1, Special Branch detectives visited his wife in New Brighton and told her that her husband had died.

According to press reports she said that she thought at the time that the Special Branch had come to inform her that she could visit him. Under the 180-day law no relatives or legal representatives are allowed to visit a detainee.

In her statement to the press Mrs. Mayekiso emphasised that her husband looked well and healthy when the Special Branch took him away three weeks earlier.

The police had offered to pay Mayekiso's funeral expenses but this offer was scornfully rejected by Mrs. Mayekiso.

Caleb Mayekiso was Chairman of the New Brighton (Port Elizabeth) Branch of the A. N. C. which is one of the most powerful branches of the Congress. He succeeded Raymond Mhlaba, now serving a life sentence on Robben Island after Raymond was banned from participating in the activities of the A. N. C.

Caleb was slightly built, bespectacled, aged 56 and of a quiet and unassuming demeanour. Where one would expect a towering personality to lead so militant and powerful an area we found Caleb Mayekiso a gentle, soft-spoken figure with a monotonous delivery of speech. No one looking at him would have suspected that he had held an unassailable position as leader of the people in Port Elizabeth.

The answer lay in Caleb's consistency and integrity as a working-class and National liberatory leader.

He helped build a strong branch of the Textile Workers' Union and

eventually became the leader of the African Textile Workers in South Africa. In all the stirring struggles of the fifties, Caleb played an important role. He went to prison during the historic Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign of 1952. In the following two years Caleb was arrested on numerous occasions. He could never make any long-term appointment, not being sure whether he could keep such an appointment.

On one occasion in 1954 he was charged with incitement to public violence.

In 1956 he was charged with High Treason in common with 155 others. He was involved in the trial right to the end in March, 1961.

In 1963 he was arrested again and was charged with belonging to the banned African National Congress. He was sentenced to four years imprisonment.

On the last occasion he was arrested on May 13, this year, and died in detention as have so many others under sinister circumstances. Although physically small this man was made of steel.

His death, under highly suspicious circumstances, will ultimately be investigated and those responsible will undoubtedly receive the punishment they deserve.

In the meantime the African National Congress pledges to carry on the struggle to free our country from the grip of its present diabolical rulers. In the free and democratic republic that will arise the names of people like our comrade and fellow freedom fighter – Masango Caleb Mayekiso – will have an honourable place.

A great and dauntless freedom fighter has passed on. His death will be avenged a hundred times over in the coming battles for the final overthrow of the Facist-Racist oppressors in our country.

The A.N.C. dips its banner in memory of this great freedom fighter.

HAMBA KAHLE – MAYEKISO!

Special
News Digest
on ...

RECENT DEATHS OF POLITICAL DETAINEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

This special News Digest is printed in order to draw the attention of our many supporters to the sinister aspects surrounding the deaths of an increasing number of political detainees in South Africa and to urge them to protest and to organise international public opinion around our demand for the release of all political prisoners in South Africa.

1 Death of Caleb Mayekiso – the fifth death in detention in the past year

Masongo Caleb Mayekiso, 56, a long standing leading personality in the African National Congress, and a senior office holder in the Cape Province, and prominent trade unionist, has died while in custody under the 180-day detention clause. Mr. Mayekiso who was released from a four-year prison term last year was detained on May 13 this year and died on or about 1st June.

The **Rand Daily Mail** which reported his death stated on the 9/6/69 quoted Mrs. Mayekiso as saying that her husband had been in employment since completing his prison term and that he was looking healthy and well when the Special Branch took him into detention.

In a report on the death, the **Sunday Tribune** reported on the 8/6/69 that Mrs. Mayekiso turned down an offer by the Security police to help with funeral expenses. The paper stated that "Four other detainees under the **Terrorism Act** died during the past year. Two committed suicide, one was said to have died, either of tuberculosis, or pneumonia, and the fourth was said, in an official report, to have slipped on a piece of soap and fatally injured himself."

The paper also reported that in Parliament, Mr. Lourens Muller, Minister of Police, refused to answer questions about possible abuses under the detention laws. According to the **Star** of the 3/6/69 Mrs. Helen Suzman had raised the matter in the House. The paper states that "She mentioned other cases and added that in almost every case where prisoners complained that they had been badly treated, the name of one man was mentioned. She was prepared to give the name to the Minister."

2. Another detainee's death – court evidence on electric shocks

Another detainee **James Lenkoe**, died while in detention under the 180 day law. The **Rand Daily Mail** on 3rd May reported that, "Counsel representing the widow of a 35 year old African who is said to have been found hanging in a cell in a Pretoria prison while detained under the **Terrorism Act**, raised the possibility in the Pretoria Inquest Court yesterday of death having been caused by electrocution, and not hanging.

"The inquest was held into the death of James Lenkoe, a Lesotho national, who is said to have died while detained in the Pretoria Local Prison on March 10.

"On March 21, Lenkoe's widow, Mrs. Julia Lenkoe, was granted an application for a second post-mortem examination to be held on her husband's body." The **Rand Daily Mail** continued, "At the start of yesterday's hearing Mr. J. G. Geyser, for the State, handed in several affidavits which described how Lenkoe was found hanging in Cell 12 at the Pretoria Local Prison about 10.30 p. m. on March 10. The affidavits said he was hanging from a belt attached to the bars of the window and that a handkerchief was tied round his face knotted at the back and passing through the mouth at the front . . . Mr. Geyser also handed in the report of Dr. H. von P. Koch, who carried out the first post-mortem examination. In this, Dr. Koch said his findings were consistent with death due to hanging."

After giving further medical information in person, Dr. Koch is reported in the **Mail** to have "agreed that the features described in his post-mortem report, if seen alone, could not lead to any specific diagnosis as to the cause of death. However, he had taken into account the ligature found round the neck. He agreed that the features described were as consistent with hanging after death, except for the haemorrhage in the cartilage area. He did not think this could have been caused after death."

Under further examination Dr. Koch said he had attended the second post-mortem which had been conducted by Dr. Gluckman who had pointed out to him what looked like a mark on the second toe of Mr. Lenkoe's foot. Dr. Koch said that it did not look like a burn mark to him but an abrasion.

The Mail report continues, "Mr. Soggot (the defence advocate - Ed.) also questioned Dr. Koch at length about distinctive microscopic transformations which, he said, resulted from the alteration of cells as a result of an electric burn. Dr. Koch agreed that fatal electrocution could take place without any signs, and that very high voltage could enter the body through a very small area and leave no detectable sign of its exit from the body.

"Mr. Soggot asked that if he could prove that the mark on Lenkoe's toe was the result of an electric shock and was a burn mark, would Dr. Koch agree that this, with the other signs described in his post-mortem, could be consistent with electrocution. Dr. Koch said that if it were proved that the mark was a burn, then - with the other features - this could be consistent with electrocution."

Subsequent medical evidence turned on the character of the burn and on how death may have been brought about.

A report in the **Rand Daily Mail** - 5 6 69, described the further significant evidence on these questions.

"Dr. A. R. Moritz, a world authority on burns, yesterday told the Pretoria Inquest Court that he was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that a lesion on the toe of a suspected terrorist - who is alleged to have hanged himself - was an electrical burn mark.

"Earlier a South African Pathologist, Dr. Jonathan Gluckman, told the court that his investigations of the wound indicated a thermal injury, possibly electrically applied, because of the presence of copper ions in the damaged tissue . . .

"In his evidence Dr. Moritz described the injury in technical language, and said that the presence of cysts and other factors indicated a thermal burn, probably received within 12 hours before death . . ."

"Questioned by Mr. Soggot he said that he had done extensive specialized research into burn wounds and death during the war for the American Armed Forces. The work started with study of wounds caused by flame throwers, and he continued this into research on electrothermal injuries after the war. He confirmed also that he had been a member of the commission which considered certain medical legal aspects of the assassination of President Kennedy . . ."

"He agreed fully with Dr. Gluckman's earlier evidence, said Dr. Moritz. Questioned by the medical assessor, Dr. Scheepers, he said that his studies had been concerned with microscopic slides. The injury would have been inflicted more than two minutes and less than 12 hours before death, he thought."

In a later report the **Rand Daily Mail** of 7:6 69 reported Dr. Moritz's evidence as follows.

"The only inference to be drawn against the evidence in the present case was one of copper deposited in the skin as a result of an electric shock. Nothing had been put before him which suggested anything different. Nor had anything acceptable been put before him which would move him to doubt his conclusions that the injury was done within 12 hours of death. The presence of copper in the basal area of the skin, suggesting electrical metallisation, had been illustrated by spectrographic test and was chemically beyond reasonable doubt."

In an earlier hearing of the Court, Professor Shapiro, a former Government pathologist, gave evidence on the possible cause of death. The **Rand Daily Mail** reported as follows (30 5 69):

"Professor Shapiro, a former Government pathologist, when shown the report of the district surgeon who performed the autopsy on Lenkoe, said he agreed that the findings were consistent with death by hanging and electric shock. Asked about bleeding in the neck, he said pressure on the neck could cause bleeding before death under certain conditions. The bleeding could have been consistent with haemorrhaging before or after death, said Professor Shapiro."

At an earlier hearing critical evidence was given of the detention of Mr. Lenkoe and his interrogation by the Special Branch.

The **Rand Daily Mail** reported on May 24:

"Mr. Soggot was questioning Major P. J. Swanepoel, the Security policeman who is in charge of the interrogation of people

detained under the Terrorism Act and who said he interrogated Lenkoe on the day of his death."

Major Swanepoel had told the court that on that day no harm had come to Lenkoe and no assault had been committed on him. Lenkoe had been questioned from about 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., he said, and he had taken a statement from him. The statement was not complete.

"Lenkoe", he said, "was under supervision at all times, even when he went to the washroom. He had not received an electrical shock at any time during interrogation and it was unlikely that he had been shocked accidentally at any other time while in the security police building Compol."

Mr. Soggot asked whether it was possible that he had got an accidental shock from the stove at which Major Swanepoel had said detainees were allowed to warm food.

"Major Swanepoel said Lenkoe was never alone. If he had been accidentally shocked the policeman who was with him should have reported this. Major Swanepoel said he had never received such a report."

Tortured

Mr. Soggot then asked Major Swanepoel about allegations over the years that detainees had been tortured by Security policemen.

Major Swanepoel said he knew of the allegations but the fact of the matter was that detainees were exceptionally well treated. Mr. Soggot said that affidavits from a number of people alleged that the torture of detainees included electrical shock and that Major Swanepoel had himself been named as having administered electrical shock.

When Major Swanepoel contested this - 'I want to know the names of the people who said this about me' - Mr. Soggot produced six affidavits handed in to court during an application brought last November on behalf of a detainee, Gabriel Mbindi. Mbindi had been said in medical evidence to have two perforations of the ear drum.

Major Swanepoel suggested that these must have come about before Mr. Mbindi was arrested.

Mr. Soggot commented that the State's own medical evidence was that the perforations were recent.

Major Swanepoel said, in answer to further questions on this point that he had wished to repudiate the allegations made in this application.

Mr. Soggot asked how it had come about that the matter was settled out of court, and that the State had paid R3,000 towards the cost of Mbindi's application, although none of the allegations were conceded as being truthful.

Major Swanepoel said he had no knowledge of how this had come about.

Questioned further, Major Swanepoel said that during interrogation he tried to persuade detainees to make statements but if within half an hour or an hour they would not do so, they were returned to the prison.

"No unlawful methods were brought to bear on detainees." "Asked why detainees were taken to Compol Building for interrogation he said it was because that was where his office was. He preferred his office for questioning. There were administrative procedures to be completed."

Major Swanepoel agreed that there was an order that no register be kept of the movement in and out of jail for questioning of detainees.

Mr. Soggot asked whether the inference was that the police did not want people or the courts to know how long a detainee was kept at Compol.

He said there had been a case where a detainee claimed that he was kept four days and nights at Security Headquarters, Johannesburg, and assaulted, but where the police claimed that he had been in prison during this time. An investigation had supported the detainee's claim that he was out of prison these four days.

Major Swanepoel said he had not had anything to do with the investigation of that case.

Mr. Soggot asked Major Swanepoel whether he had not been interrogating a detainee, Salojee, when the man jumped out of a window and was killed.

The prosecutor objected. Mr. Soggot said he wished to ask this question because the suicides of other people associated with interrogation might be relevant to the court but he would abide by the court's decision.

The magistrate, Mr. J. J. H. Tukker, ruled that he could not put this question.

Mr. Soggot asked Major Swanepoel if it was correct that at least two other detainees had died this year while in detention. The prosecutor again objected. Mr. Soggot said he wished to raise this question on other deaths since it might be relevant to the present hearing.

Mr. Tukker ruled that he could not put this question.

Major Swanepoel told the court that he was surprised when he heard of Lenkoe's death. It was inexplicable to him and he did not think that the statement Lenkoe had made had anything to do with his death.

Earlier during yesterday's hearing Major Swanepoel had told the court that Lenkoe was a hired assassin.

Lenkoe had given certain information no pressure was brought to bear on him.

He had given this information voluntarily. Major Swanepoel said no pressure would be used because, in terms of a Supreme Court ruling such a statement was inadmissible.

In his experience detainees often voluntarily gave information. The was nothing exceptional about such a thing happening.

Detainee's death - doctor's evidence of prior assaults

Police evidence of a fall in a shower was overshadowed by a doctor's evidence of severe assaults prior to death upon a detainee Mr. Nichodimus Kgoathe.

Under a headline 'Detainee was hit, doctor tells inquest' the Rand Daily Mail reported on 7/6/69 as follows:

"A District Surgeon testified at a Pretoria inquest yesterday that an African detainee he had examined shortly before his death had marks on his body which could have been caused by a sjambok and wounds which could have come from an assault with the buckle of a belt."

The inquest was held into the death of Mr. Nichodimus Kgoathe, who was detained in the Silverton police cells, Pretoria, under the Terrorism Act and who died on February 4, this year.

Evidence of Dr. P. J. E. Joubert, who was called by a Pretoria magistrate to see Mr. Kgoathe shortly before his death said Mr. Kgoathe had moved with the utmost difficulty. It was my opinion that he was suffering from the after effects of concussion and needed to be treated by a specialist. He could not accept Mr. Kgoathe's explanation of his having fallen in the shower room and had told him so. Only then did Mr. Kgoathe say that he had been assaulted by members of the Security Police during interrogation on January 16.

"It is my opinion," said Dr. Joubert, "that Mr. Kgoathe's injuries were the result of an assault. The linear marks on his shoulders could have been caused by a sjambok while the U-formed wounds could have been the result of an assault with the buckle of a belt."

He said he had made arrangements for Mr. Kgoathe's admittance to hospital, where he was taken on January 21. He died 14 days later.

During his stay in hospital, Mr. Kgoathe was treated for infection in his lungs and bladder.

A hospital report read that Mr. Kgoathe had died as a result of excessive lung infection and kidney failure.

A post mortem report said the cause of death was bronchial pneumonia.

The magistrate, Mr. G. J. Strijdom, found that, in the light of the evidence and statements before the court, he was not in a position to conclude that any person was to blame for Mr. Kgoathe's death.

In statements before the court, several members of the Security Branch said they were informed by Major F. Hugo that he was investigating the death of Mr. Kgoathe, who was allegedly assaulted by members of the Security Branch during interrogation. Mrs. Monica Kgoathe, 46, wife of Mr. Kgoathe, said in a statement: "... when he (Kgoathe) left for Johannesburg on Sunday, November 3 last year, he was in good health and did not complain of any illness. She did not try to see him because her son also informed her that no visitors were allowed to see her husband." She never saw or heard anything from Mr. Kgoathe. She said that the police informed her on February 5, this year, that her husband had been taken to hospital where he died on February 4.

Detective-Warrant Officer J. M. Venter, of the Security Police, said in a statement that he was informed by Major F. Hugo on April 14 that he (Major Hugo) was investigating the death of Mr. Kgoathe and certain allegations of an assault on Mr. Kgoathe by members of the Security Branch.

Warrant-Officer Venter and Sergeant De Meyer continued to question Mr. Kgoathe until about midnight on January 16. They then left Mr. Kgoathe in the company of Bantu Detective Sergeant Solomon Chauke to sleep in one of the offices. He and Sergeant De Meyer slept in an adjoining office, Mr. Venter said. The following morning, about 6 a.m., when the questioning of Mr. Kgoathe was resumed, Mr. Venter said he noticed a swelling on Mr. Kgoathe's left eye. Asked about the swelling Mr. Kgoathe explained that he had sustained the injury the previous afternoon when he had slipped and fell against a wall while having a shower.

Warrant Officer Smit said that he interrogated Mr. Kgoathe from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on January 16. About 1 p.m. Mr. Kgoathe had asked permission to have a shower and since it was a hot day and the facilities were available, he gave Mr. Kgoathe permission.

"He had explained that he had slipped and fallen against the wall of the shower from the previous day."

Major Van Zyl said the Rev. John H. Barlett, the police chaplain arrived simultaneously. Asked by them whether his injury was not perhaps caused by an assault, Mr. Kgoathe had said he had fallen while having a shower and that nobody had assaulted him, Warrant Officer Smit said.

Lieutenant J. R. Bodenstein of the Security Branch, told a similar story. He said that he made pertinent inquiries from Mr. Kgoathe whether he had perhaps been assaulted, to which Mr. Kgoathe replied that he had slipped and fallen against a wall.

Police Sergeant A. B. Gildenhuys of Silverton said that Mr. Kgoathe had complained of body pains on January 18. He gave instructions that a doctor be called.

When he saw Mr. Kgoathe again later that day, Mr. Kgoathe still complained of pain and told Sergeant Gildenhuys that he had been assaulted by members of the Security Police during their interrogation.

Mr. Kgoathe did not want to lay a charge and refused to make a statement.

Dr. W. J. Pieterse, who examined Mr. Kgoathe on January 18, said he saw a wound on Mr. Kgoathe's left eye as well as a gill on his left shoulder.

A Pretoria magistrate, Mr. C. G. Jordaan, who had visited the detainees on January 20, said he saw Mr. Kgoathe, also known as Kabi, Kalkadi or Nichodimus Kwagthe.

Mr. Jordaan said he saw on his second visit Mr. Kgoathe's condition had deteriorated extremely and asked for a doctor to be called.

As a result of this request Dr. P. J. E. Joubert was called.

According to his statement the following were found on Mr. Kgoathe: linear bruise marks over both shoulders and behind the neck, three bruises behind the right upper arm, three U-formed bruises behind the right thigh as well as a wound on the left eye.

SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION

Stephen Dlamini, President of SACTU now serving 7 years on Robben Island



"The future of the people of South Africa is in the hands of the workers. Only the working class, in alliance with other progressively-minded sections of the community, can build a happy life for all South Africans..."
— Preamble to the constitution of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

The SACTU constitution was adopted more than fifteen years ago. As the preamble shows, SACTU saw the role of the working class, not only to agitate for improvements in conditions of work, but also that of being the leading class in the Liberation struggle. The purpose of this article is to examine briefly this constitution. From its inception SACTU, as the only genuinely non-racial South African trade union federation, unequivocally threw its weight on the side of the Liberation Movement and became a member of the Congress Alliance. SACTU participated fully in all campaigns launched by the Congress Alliance. A large number of its leaders at all levels have suffered

banning, imprisonment and exile for the part they played in the struggle. Many, many members of SACTU have been hounded out of jobs. Without doubt SACTU has lived up to the role it set for itself.

The methods of struggle in the '50s took the form chiefly of demonstrations, boycotts, stays-at-home and strikes under a general policy of non-violence. Clearly the Congress Alliance was largely concerned with demonstrating the strength of the organised body of the oppressed people with a view to bringing about conditions for a meaningful dialogue with the oppressor. Both the method of struggle and, flowing from this, the objective have now changed radi-

cally. The main content of the struggle now is laying the basis for a Peoples Revolutionary War with the objective of a total seizure of power. It is no more a question of talking to the oppressor but of bringing about his complete destruction. This immediately poses the questions "Who will seize power? Who will come out on top?" To answer these questions correctly we must understand the nature of South African society and its composition.

Brief Analysis of South African Society

(1) **The Ruling Class:** It is generally agreed that South Africa is an ad-

vanced capitalist-imperialist country having well-developed links with international imperialism. The ruling class is, however, not homogeneous but composed of an alliance of international imperialism with local monopoly capital on the one hand and the semi-feudal land barons of agriculture in alliance with smaller business on the other. The latter encompasses largely the Afrikaner (Boer) population and is reflected politically in the ruling fascist Nationalist Party. The former encompasses English and other (mainly Jewish) White interest in alliance mainly with British and U.S. imperialism. The South African White population being largely Afrikaner and given the chauvinistic appeal of the Nationalist Party, imperialism/monopoly capital for a time was on the retreat politically as the United Party suffered several defeats at the polls. The rising tide of the liberation struggle in the late fifties saw this element fostering the Progressive Party as a prelude to a possible compromise with the Black majority.

The situation is, however, not static. Afrikaner capital has over the years, especially in the sixties, gained entry into big business partly by the effective use of its control of the political machine and partly because monopoly capital felt it prudent in its own interest to allow such entry. This, to some extent, explains the subtle political changes taking place within the Nationalist Party reflected in the "outward looking" policy of Vorster and in the struggle going on between the Verligte (enlightened) and Verkrampste (conservative) sections of Afrikanerdom. This changing situation also explains the increasing participation of European (mainly West German) and Japanese imperialism in the South African economy via close association with Afrikaner big business and state capitalism.

White Working Class

The rest of the White population is composed of the working class employed in mining, manufacture, commerce and in the state bureaucratic apparatus. The White workers are a privileged group, a labour aristocracy, paid handsomely as a price for their continued support of the super-exploitation of the Black majority. Their wages are six to seven times those of Black workers and, in the mining industry, as such as twenty times more! It is hardly sur-

prising, therefore, that the White workers are the most ardent supporters of White supremacy. They have been in the forefront of agitation to restrict the employment opportunities of Black workers. White workers have at times been at loggerheads with the Chamber of Mines over the latter's attempts to open up semi-skilled categories of work for Black workers. It was the agitation by White workers which in 1925 resulted in the so-called "civilised" labour policy which has guided all subsequent government actions. The White working class is a direct beneficiary of the apartheid state and it is difficult to visualise it playing any political role other than that of defending White supremacy.

The Black Majority

The oppressed Black majority, composed of Africans, Coloureds and Indians, accounts for over 80% of the total South African population. An overwhelming proportion of the Black majority are the working masses i.e. the urban and rural working class and the peasantry. The distribution in these three sectors is almost equal, that is, about 3½ million people each. The three sectors are, however, not distinctly separate, homogeneous groups for the migratory labour system results in a mobility from one sector to the other so that ideas and levels of sophistication are not greatly divergent. This is an important fact to remember. For, though only a third of the working population is employed on the mines and in manufacture this urban proletariat has an influence greater than its number.

Thus, while the migratory labour system is designed to intensify the exploitation of African workers, it also enables a free flow of ideas between the different sectors of the African working population. Caught up in this contradiction the fascist Nationalist Party hopes to turn the clock back by its Bantu Education policy and by the establishment of Bantustans on tribal lines where, it is hoped, tribal wars and attitudes will be fostered.

The African, Coloured and Indian working masses are the backbone of the South African economy. The super-profits and ability of the ruling class to bribe and corrupt the White workers is dependent upon the super-exploitation of the Black workers. The African workers on the mines, indus-

try and farms, the Coloured workers in the vineyards and manufacturing industries in the Western Cape, the Indian workers on the sugar plantations and industries in Natal comprise not only the overwhelming majority of the South African population but also the most ruthlessly exploited and expropriated. They have always been in the vanguard of the liberation struggle for they clearly see that economic exploitation stems from political oppression. The Black working class has inevitably produced some of the most outstandingly dedicated and self-sacrificing leaders of the liberation movement. Many of them are today languishing on Robben Island for their courage in the face of fascist brutality and violence.



Wilton Mqwayi, Eastern Cape SACTU leader now serving life sentence on Robben Island

A small percentage of the Black population belongs to the middle class, being small shopkeepers, professional men, civil servants, and chiefs. They, in common with the rest of the Blacks, suffer the indignities and tribulations showered on them by the apartheid state. They too desire an overthrow of the colour bar and the

right to participate as equals in the machinery of the state. This class too has produced some brilliant and courageous leaders in the liberation struggle. But certain changes must be noted.

The Bantustan set-up, side by side with the setting up of Urban Bantu Councils, has created job opportunities for this element enabling them to escape, however little, from the worst excesses of the exploiters. Increased opportunities for promotion in the Bantustan civil service, in the police, as magistrates, for the sole right to own business in the Bantustans and in urban locations, goes hand in hand with submitting to government policy. The most moderate form of protest carries with it the risk of losing a licence or losing a job. This must, necessarily, dampen the ardour of this class. We must hasten to point out however, that this element comprises only a small fraction of the Black population.

Some Conclusions

We are presently engaged in laying the basis for a Revolutionary People's War for National Liberation. What

role will the various sectors of the South African population play in this struggle?

The fascist Nationalist Party and its backers, while in the process of breaking out of their chauvinistic shell, are still the chief beneficiaries of the apartheid state and are certainly its staunchest defenders. Similarly the White workers, concentrated in the urban areas, derive their privileges directly from the continued economic exploitation of the Black majority. It must be expected that they, too, will defend the apartheid state to the hilt.

International imperialism and its local allies also derive super-profits from the exploitation of the Black workers. While seeking to moderate the worst excesses of the fascists because of the international milieu in which they operate they, too, would like to maintain the status quo. However, one must be fully conscious of the high degree of sophistication of this element. As the world has already seen, imperialism, instead of seeking to maintain its colonies by force, has granted formal political independence while maintaining a firm hold on the economic stirrups. As the struggle in South Africa in-



Mark Shope, SACTU - General Secretary, at present on the African Secretariat of WFTU

tensifies, this group will increasingly jettison the fascists and seek a compromise with the liberation movement. Their guiding star is profit and it flows from this that the kind of compromise they would be prepared to offer might bring some political changes but would keep economic power firmly in their hands. Such a "solution" would be meaningless to the overwhelming majority, the working masses, for it would bring few concrete changes in their conditions of existence.

The oppressed working masses of South Africa, the African, Indian and Coloured urban and rural workers and the peasantry are the most exploited section and therefore, the most concerned with bringing about a change. They will provide the cadres for the People's Army and it is they who will initiate and undertake urban political agitation in support of the guerrillas. It is they who will fight, gun in hand, and, if need be, die for liberation. In a very real sense they are the vanguard of the revolution in alliance with other progressive sections. To quote once more from the preamble to the SACTU constitution:

"The future of the people of South Africa is in the hands of the workers."



ZIMBABWE

AN APARTHEID STATE

After many promises and four years of propogando, the Smith regime has unveiled its new constitution. This has been endorsed by the White electorate in the recent Referendum. Delicate as an old maid, the Front has not yet exposed the full details – or its further intentions – to world scrutiny. What is nevertheless apparent is that the proposals to set up separate Black and White provincial "parliaments", with segregated voters' rolls, are a major step towards an ostensible theory of geopolitical separation of the country which matches the Bantustan bluff in its rank impudence.

This is not a reversal of policy, as many in Britain would like to believe, but a full-blooded resumption of a trend which despite delays and checks has moved white attitudes from the early days of rule by the British South Africa Company. White Rhodesians, 5 per cent of the population, are determined to barricade their wealth and status behind race laws, and bulldoze away the remnants of multiracialism introduced during federation. White violence, rather than popular democracy, stands out as the sanction for rule. So much is clear. The question now arises: how far along the road to apartheid have Zimbabwe's white intruders travelled?

Genocide

Apartheid is more than mere racial discrimination, or the casual exploitation of one group by another. It is a strict ideology of white supremacy and racial segregation whose logical end, genocide, is tempered by the need to feed off black labour.

The rise of apartheid in South Africa took place through an alliance between White workers and White nationalists. White workers saw a chance of escaping the worst excesses of capitalist exploitation by climbing on the backs of Coloured, Indian and African workers. Afrikaner nationalists hammered out baaskap, a traditional compound of race prejudice and exploitation, into an articulated theory of White power which swept the political boards.

Consolidated behind a barrage of industrial legislation, the White nationalists attempted to make apartheid pervasive – in jobs, residence, education, travel, birth, death, and even love. The dynamo of apartheid was the hard core of White nationalist ideology, and the current of its ideas flowed easily amongst the White population.

The existence of racialism in Zimbabwe from the first days of White invasion is manifest. The white Pioneer Colum, mythically revered by the settlers, was the most savage of the looting tribes to enter South Central Africa. Setting up their conquest state by force of arms, they tried to prevent the emergence of any common society with master and servant laws, the notorious Immorality and Indecency Suppression Act, of 1903 (forbidding sex across the colour line), and segregated land holding.

Dispossessed of Land

Finding but little gold, the invaders sought recompense by dispossessing the inhabitants of land, marking off huge fertile tracts for sale to future White immigrants. From this basic division in the primary means of production, land, flowed the body of

discriminatory rules with regard to transport, public facilities, liquor, and passes. To this was added settler conventions; a minimum of social contact and deference enforced by the sjambok. Africans were assaulted for walking on pavements in White villages, for 'threatening' White women, and turned out of skilled jobs.

This 'kragdadigheid' of the British colonials remained, rough and unformed during the stagnant inter-war years. Their fierce jingo loyalties kept them from a frank formulation of racism, even though segregation was repeatedly advocated in the settler parliament. For an influential section of Rhodesian Whites could be regarded as external capitalists – gentlemen farmer, civil servants who regarded England as home, agents of British companies.

It was this White elite which saw in federation the chance of amassing power and status. A conspiracy between White racists and an unreluctant British (not her first or last such sell-out) ushered in federation, talk of partnership, and a massive policy of expansion.

Two Divergent Tendencies

Two divergent tendencies can be clearly seen in federation. This was a period of tremendously rapid growth; the income from Zambia's copper, and a new invasion of White immigrants (20,000 a year) boosted the tempo of political change. A small liberal element tried to give some legislative substance to the much-vaunted talk of partnership by relaxing discrimination in certain public facilities such as swimming baths, hotels and clubs. White Rhodesia could tolerate this, believing it to be in the interest of hoodwinking the outside world that a new era in race relations was under way.

But when Garfield Todd began to believe the propoganda and attempted to allow mixed marriages, reforming the land law and the franchise, the White voters threw him out. Though content to see the federal government play around with multi-racialism of a kind, they insisted that an entrenchment of White supremacy was necessary for their existence. It was out of this crisis of federation that the White Rhodesian ideology of race began to grow; restrictive race practices were justified on the grounds of 'protecting civilisation' and 'fighting communism'.

Police State

Apartheid is the ideology and practice of White domination. With the upsurge of African nationalism in the 1950's White Rhodesia suddenly realised how threadbare its traditional policy of racialism was when faced with a militant challenge. With the revulsion against Todd, and the break-up of federation imminent, the settlers began to transform the country into a police state, with repressive laws even more vicious than their South African counterparts. It is at this stage that one might say that Rhodesian apartheid came to be formulated.

Its architects were the small farmers, White workers, Afrikaner communities and settler nationalists who gained control of the state by their promise to fight off the African demand for entry into a common society. Yet Apartheid is not limited to the techniques of isolating and subjugating an African majority to a

White minority. We have seen that a pervasive theory of White power must cover every aspect of race.

The settlers followed up broad theory of 'civilised standards' with the more explicitly racial idea of community development. This justification for segregation and a separate 'bantú culture' was a necessary ideological step in the construction of Rhodesian apartheid. The White nationalists were not able to forge ahead with the full implementation of their scheme, however. Allowance had to be made for the remnants of multi-racial practice from federation, the 'old gang' of federationists, and the hostility of Britain in its new-found righteousness to an apartheid state under the Union Jack.

These checks in the growth of Rhodesian apartheid are important, since they underline its weakness, and its need to move ahead slowly and deviously. Smith with his sudden declaration of UDI gave notice to the world – and not least to his own White bourgeoisie – that apartheid was structurally necessary for the maintenance of White wealth and status. Any compromise such as the 1961 constitution (which looked forward to a repeal of the Land Apportionment Act) was out. So was a



Joshua Nkomo, President of ZAPU

settlement with Britain which would curtail the further extension of the new ideology. Perhaps Smith's strange cavortings over Tiger and Fearless can be explained by his wanting to give the impression of a state looking for a settlement, while in fact playing the game of a racist whose only concern was to sabotage a deal restrictive on his ideological plans.

Affront to Mankind

Much of Rhodesian apartheid is still on the drawing board, as the new proposals make clear. Rhodesia's White nationalists are not as strong as their South African counterparts in relation to the rest of the White population; yet there is a passive – and increasing – acceptance of their ideas. The relative weakness of Rhodesia, internally, and internationally, forces its leaders to seek their fraudulent, racist utopia in devious ways. But the people of Zimbabwe are now suffering under an indisputable apartheid state. This is an affront to mankind, and must be eradicated.

Stop Press

THE BOSS - A NEW THREAT TO FREEDOM

At the time of going to press the Vorster regime was pressing ahead with legislation to give sweeping authoritarian powers to the Bureau of State Security already dubbed BOSS by South Africans.

The powers are similar in many respects to the powers vested in the S.S. by Hitler soon after he took power in Germany.

Once BOSS becomes law, nothing which this sinister organisation disapproves of can be published or raised in court.

The press cannot publish or communicate any information relating to military, police or security matters "deemed prejudicial to the safety of the State." In other words any person tortured in detention can be denied the right to seek redress in court if the Prime Minister or any official authorised by him issues a certificate preventing any evidence being led on his detention.

In other words anything the BOSS does not want publicised or brought to court can now be legally and effectly hushed up. The cases referred to in "DEATHS IN DETENTION" and the News Digest published in this issue will not be possible if any detainee wishes in future to call attention to the crimes being perpetrated in the name of State Security in South Africa.

In our next issue we hope to publish a detailed account of this pernicious piece of fascist legislation.

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