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CONTENTS:

EDITORIAL

Apartheid Changes its Clothes 1

ANC STATEMENTS

O R Tambo on Negotiations—NEC Meeting—Cultural and Academic Boycott 2

THE PRETORIA REGIME IN CRISIS

Interview with Comrade Henry Makgothi 10

ANC INTERNATIONAL

Zimbabwe—FRG—West Berlin—Japan 12

AHMED KATHRADA: A BIRTHDAY PROFILE

By A T Subramonium 14

NEGOTIATIONS AND PEOPLE'S POWER

By Mzala 20

DISCUSSION ARTICLES

By Mthetheleli 27

By Ronnie Kasrils 29

BOOK REVIEW 32

Graphic design by Hylton Alcock

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EDITORIAL

APARTHEID

CHANGES ITS CLOTHES

After the physical (and perhaps mental) incapacitation of P W Botha, we were told F W de Klerk is the likely successor. It is said that De Klerk is a better reformist than Botha. This is said by the same people who said Botha was better than Vorster, who was more acceptable than Verwoerd. It is like a recurring decimal, with the difference that a recurring decimal becomes smaller. Botha is clinging to power. De Klerk's first priority is to get elected as president, and he is doing everything to achieve this. The Whites-only elections in September (not designed to satisfy the aspirations of the Blacks but to win the confidence of the White voters) are said to be the most crucial since 1948, and De Klerk tells us to wait for another five years. In a press statement, President Tambo said the idea that our people should fold their arms and sit back for half a decade while apartheid is given a change of clothes would be laughable if it were not so insufferable.

In the process of changing clothes, apartheid has turned political somersaults. Once, the ANC was called a 'terrorist' organisation, and Nelson Mandela and his comrades were 'criminals.' They changed their tune; the ANC must 'renounce violence,' as a precondition for the release of Nelson Mandela. Now it is suggested that the requirement is commitment to peace, and Mandela should be willing to promote peace. The logic in this is difficult to find, when one considers that the UDF and other people's organisations have no reason to renounce violence, since they have never propagated it in the first place, and therefore there is no need for this precondition. In any case, the Black people of South Africa know exactly what violence means, as they have been subjected to it for over three centuries. Who, then, should renounce violence?

There is another side to this cynicism. There must be negotiations with the ANC, not because the ANC is viewed as any legitimate organisation of the people, but because a 'solution' without it is impossible. Mandela and some (not all) political prisoners must be released and apartheid must be replaced by some undefined system that would get the co-operation of the Black people. It is further reasoned that apartheid is expensive, needs heavy spending on defence and security, and so should be modified. 'Security' in South African terminology means protection of the Whites, and it is in this context that one should view their preoccupation with 'security matters' on the eve of Namibian independence.

The Whites' fear of jumping into the unknown is an expression of a reluctance to move closer to, or interact with, the Mass Democratic Movement, which, on the whole, endorses the basic tenets of the ANC, such as one person, one vote, the Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines.

According to President Tambo, the two basic principles De Klerk and his party adamantly refuse to relinquish are rejection of majority rule and insistence that there shall be no fundamental change. The demands of our people are the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners; the end of the state of emergency and the removal of all troops from the townships; the lifting of the bans on all political organisations; the repeal of all repressive legislation; the return of exiles and an end to all political executions.

If these conditions are not fulfilled, sanctions against apartheid must continue and the struggle must be intensified.

The meaning of democracy is people's rule, people's power, and not sugar-coated apartheid.

ANC STATEMENTS PRESIDENT TAMBO ON NEGOTIATIONS

This is an extract from President Tambo's statement to the Ordinary Congress of the Socialist International in Stockholm, 20th June, 1989.

The special conference on Southern Africa, convened by the Socialist International in Harare earlier this year, took place against a favourable backdrop of positive developments towards independence for Namibia, and chances of a durable peace in the People's Republic of Angola. The optimism we shared in Harare was interspersed with an anxiety based on our knowledge of the dishonesty of the apartheid regime. Regrettably, subsequent events have vindicated these suspicions.

Today, despite its treachery and blood-letting, Pretoria has been forced to concede a formal withdrawal from Namibia. We look forward to a great triumph to be accomplished after November 1st. Yet, precisely because of this possibility, Pretoria has been unsparing of money and schemes in its attempt to disfigure the character of independence. We are all called upon to exercise the utmost caution in addressing that situation. We have to rise to the assistance of SWAPO, which is being assailed from all sides by the racist regime with a view to depriving it of an electoral victory. If these efforts fail, plans are already afoot to destabilise independent Namibia. We look to those who have supported the liberation struggle in Southern Africa to attack and expose this vile intrigue against the Namibian people.

Pretoria threatens independent states

It is imperative that we also underscore the reality that the Pretoria regime has not withdrawn its commitment to destabilise the Front Line States through bandit groupings and surrogates such as UNITA and the MNR. The countries of the region

continue to live under constant threat of direct aggression which has already wreaked havoc, spread carnage and held back development, especially of the SADCC member states, through the destruction of priceless material and human resources.

A news despatch from Lusaka in Zambia reports that yesterday, for example, two separate bomb blasts rocked Lusaka, tearing to pieces an unidentified Zambian male and severely damaging offices of the ANC in Emmasdale, a suburb of Lusaka. The report goes on to say that the scene was a grisly sight of severed limbs flung over a radius of 100 metres, blood among the debris of broken glass. Such are the results of the continuing destabilisation that the Pretoria regime has assigned itself in Southern Africa.

Two weeks ago, P W Botha declared that he would not hesitate to send his forces back into an independent Namibia, if Pretoria considered that its security was being undermined. Ten days ago, the state of emergency was reimposed throughout South Africa. The apartheid structures, though shaken and weakened by the forces for change, are still in place; people's organisations remain restricted and proscribed, while political activists are still being restricted, detained, murdered or hanged, and censorship of the media remains stringent.

On what basis can we take seriously the statements by De Klerk, as he aspires to the presidency, that the National Party has recognised that the time has come for apartheid to go? Have we not heard this before? P W Botha promised 'power-sharing,' and now he is going out having orchestrated authoritarianism; B J Vorster, before him, once asked for six months to remove apartheid and he went to his grave having reinforced

the system. Now De Klerk says apartheid will go, and in the same breath assures his supporters that one person one vote is not acceptable and that 'group rights' are not negotiable.

Fundamental issues remain

Yet we have been surprised to find that the general election in September, in which of course no African will be allowed to vote, is being perceived in some quarters as a historical turning point for our country. In the face of Pretoria's propaganda offensive promoting the regime as the agent of imminent change, it is appropriate to remind ourselves of what the issues are in South Africa.

In his last major speech on Southern Africa, before the People's Parliament Against Apartheid, held in Stockholm, the late Olaf Palme remarked that the Pretoria regime, faced with an avalanche of opposition and resistance at home and abroad, resorts to a window-dressing exercise couched in terms such as 'reforms.'

"The truth," he said, "is that apartheid in South Africa cannot be reformed as the regime is trying to assert in its advertising campaigns. A system like apartheid cannot be reformed, it can only be abolished."

These words ring true to this day, and stand as an injunction to all those who feel that they have a role to play in the transformation of the system in South Africa.

Our aim is full equality

The struggle of the people of South Africa is not directed towards amending the apartheid system, but at destroying it. Liberation must entail a shift in power relations such that all South Africans can engage in the political process on the basis of full equality, and collectively shape society, establish the institutions of government and adjudicate on how the resources of our country and the product of our labour should be used for the common good.

The bantustanisation and fragmentation of our country and the division of our people can only be brought to an end in a united South Africa. Our commitment to a non-racial society cannot encom-

pass any division by law of the South African people along lines of race or ethnicity, nor the exercise of political rights through separate institutions of government defined in similar terms. The rights of all South African citizens can and will be guaranteed in a Bill of Rights.

Our democratic system must provide for the equal participation of all South Africans in decision-making. There can be no doubt that the franchise at all levels must be for common political institutions on the basis of one person, one vote, one constituency.

These demands of the South African people are no different from, or more than, what is universally understood as democracy. There can be no justification for any suggestion that as South Africans we are entitled to less.

The reforms that have been promoted by the Pretoria regime are not a translation into policy of these aspirations of the majority. The changes that have been made do not arise from any desire to dismantle apartheid, but are an expression of the ideas of the ruling group acting in the interests of the White minority in order to deflect domestic and international pressure.

Central to all the reforms made and proposed is the concept of group rights. We reject both the concept and the premise upon which it is based: namely that South African society is composed of mutually incompatible peoples, whose survival and freedom is dependent on political and geographic segregation.

Our people reject 'reforms'

Experience has shown that democracy can only flourish when rights and obligations are vested equally in all citizens. These rights are negated when their exercise is linked to membership of racial or ethnic groups, for thereby the rights of all citizens are diminished. The concept of group rights, which provides a minority with a veto over the wishes of the majority, carries with it the seeds of continued division and conflict, and hence cannot provide lasting peace or security for either the minority or the majority, whereas a non-racial and democratic system provides a basis for building an enduring security for all South Africans.

There is thus a clear and fundamental divide between the demands and aspirations of the oppressed majority and the reforms put forward by Pretoria.

By their very nature, the changes we seek can only be brought about through the struggle of the oppressed. The steadfast refusal of the majority of South Africans to be co-opted into the reform process; the continued resistance notwithstanding ever greater restrictions, detentions and violent repression; the courage and willingness to sacrifice life itself; all testify to the determination to continue to struggle until our objectives have been achieved.

All the evidence indicates that, as yet, Pretoria's interest is limited to seeking the involvement of Black agents in the implementation of apartheid and thereby perpetuating White domination. The regime has singularly failed to take even the preliminary steps that would begin to indicate that it is seriously contemplating negotiations directed at dismantling apartheid.

No climate for negotiations

There can be no climate for negotiations in a state of emergency, or when the people's leaders remain in prison and their national organisations are banned or severely restricted. There is no genuine commitment to negotiate a solution where no freedom of expression, opinion or organisation is permitted, and where even to peacefully seek fundamental change outside of parameters set by Pretoria is held to be treason.

Negotiations are not an end in themselves; they can be a means to the realisation of our objectives, but they must involve the genuine representatives of the South African people and

can succeed only when it is possible for all parties to enter into discussions on the basis of equality and with agreement on the objectives to be achieved.

The ANC has over decades expressed its preference for a resolution of our country's problems through these means, but our repeated calls have always been shunned.

There can be no viable political settlement that falls outside these parameters, for any agreement would not meet the demands of the people, and the 'solutions' would be transitory and an even more bitter conflict ensue.

Pretoria persists in its refusal to dismantle apartheid and countenance the establishment of a non-racial democracy in a united South Africa. Experience has shown, however, that every policy shift or even 'reform,' and the divisions among the ruling Whites, have come about as a consequence of domestic and international pressures. We therefore call upon the international community to apply effective pressures and to deny the regime the political, financial and material resources to continue to implement apartheid and maintain itself in power. Quite simply, what the situation demands is an intensification of the struggle inside South Africa, as well as the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions.

We need help also, to stop hangings and judicial murders. South Africa imposes more death sentences per head of the population than any other country in the world, except two.

We ask you to block attempts by banks and international financiers to rescue Pretoria, by agreeing to reschedule its foreign debts.

We ask you to take the initiative in forcing the regime to decolonise Namibia and ensure genuine independence before the end of the year.

PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The National Executive Committee of the African National Congress met in full session during the early weeks of June 1989. During a meeting which stretched over four days, the NEC received and considered reports dealing with the South African situation, the changing regional balance of forces and the implications of recent initiatives, to find a negotiated resolution to the struggle for freedom in South Africa and the international situation.

The NEC condemned the extension of the state of emergency for a further twelve months. This is an admission of failure by the Botha regime which clearly demonstrates the bankruptcy of the policies of apartheid. There could be no clearer indication that the regime has no strategy other than the application of additional and more massive brute force to solve the deep crisis into which its policies have precipitated our country.

The NEC noted that during the past five years of virtual martial law, we have witnessed the effective illegalisation of 22 democratic bodies, the deployment of army units in Black residential areas, schools and universities, the arrest and detention of 10 000 individuals, including a large number of children, the planned increase of external aggression and destabilisation; yet the spirit of mass resistance, which reached its pinnacle during the uprisings of 1984 to 1986, has not been crushed.

After the initial dislocation occasioned by the State of Emergency, the democratic formations, activists and militants have creatively devised means of operating under conditions of total illegality. We can measure the extent to which these skills have been mastered by the inauguration of several mass organisations under the bayonets of the regime during this period. The spontaneous stay-at-home strikes of March 21st and June 16th, the hunger strike waged by the detainees, the rising incidence of defiant action — all these are an index of the rising militancy of our people. It is this spirit of no surrender and the will to resist that the regime vainly hopes to crush by an extension of the State of Emergency.

The NEC examined the drive towards a

workers' summit to mobilise and co-ordinate resistance to the Labour Relations Amendment Act. We unequivocally endorse these efforts and call upon all patriots, democrats and Liberation Movement militants to assist in the convocation of a successful workers' summit. Resistance to the Labour Relations Amendment Act cannot be regarded as a task exclusively for the organised working class and the democratic trade unions. Every democrat and freedom fighter must regard this law as an assault on the democratic movement as a whole and as an attempt by the racist state and the employers to reverse the gains scored in the last two decades of mass struggles.

The ANC leadership pledges its unstinting support to any initiatives taken by the democratic trade unions and the democratic movement to resist and defeat the Labour Relations Amendment Act.

The ANC believes the forthcoming tricameral elections are an insult to the majority of our people. They are yet one more attempt by the regime to win sorely needed legitimacy and credibility. We therefore call on all South Africans to boycott these elections and thus deny the regime the credibility it craves. It is the task of the oppressed Coloured and Indian communities in particular to demonstrate their total rejection of all apartheid institutions by a massive stay-away from the polls on election day, in the immediate future.

And in the period after the elections, it shall be one of the principal tasks of our people to demonstrate, in action, that the tricameral apartheid parliament is irrelevant to the process of change, that the new South Africa is being shaped by the action of our people through militant struggles — in the factories, on the mines, in the rural

areas, in the community, in the schools and the universities and on the battlefield.

The ANC's Constitutional Guidelines, based on the Freedom Charter, which we have placed before the people of South Africa for discussion and amplification, provide the only realistic basis for a future democratic dispensation. The NEC calls on all our people, in whatever formations they are organised, to regard these guidelines as their document — to be discussed, critiqued, amended or revised as they see fit.

In the course of its work, the NEC also received reports on new initiatives, emanating from the Thatcher administration of Britain, to find a negotiated resolution of the South African question. Inspired by our commitment to explore seriously any avenue that holds out the possibility of reducing the level of suffering, the NEC considered this issue with the intellectual rigour it deserves.

We remain convinced that the Botha regime, and the racist President-Elect, F W de Klerk, are today mounting the rhetoric of a 'political settlement' as a means of buying a longer lease on life for the system of apartheid and to ward off international pressure for sanctions. In this context, we are alarmed at the apparent credulity of certain western governments who are greeting the prospect of a De Klerk presidency with the same chorus of approbation with which they inaugurated P W Botha's. De Klerk has already displayed his true colours by supporting the imposition of the State of Emergency. It is the logic of the apartheid system that, like his predecessor, De Klerk will employ internal repression and external aggression to secure White power and racial privilege. The NEC re-affirmed its adherence to the October 1987 ANC statement on negotiations and underscores that only the continued escalation of internal resistance, including its armed component, complemented by increasing international pressure, will bring down the edifice of apartheid.

This NEC session was held on the eve of the return of former exiles to their homeland, Namibia, in the run-up to democratic elections. It is the NEC's considered judgment that the events at present unfolding in South-Western Africa are a practical indication of our movement's strategy

of a multi-pronged attack on the structures of apartheid through mass mobilisation, underground activity and armed struggle, supported by international solidarity. The changes in the geo-politics of the region are the finest fruits of decades of struggle on the part of the Namibian people and the unswerving solidarity they have received from the Front Line States, the rest of Africa and the international community.

As we look towards the forthcoming democratic elections, we call upon the people of South Africa through the entire range of organisations and activities in which they are engaged, to devise means of expression for our solidarity with the Namibian people and give every form of practical and moral assistance for a SWAPO victory at the polls in November. Namibia's victory is our victory. A SWAPO victory shall be our victory. For the peoples of our region the ever-growing tide in favour of the reduction of international tensions and the peaceful resolution of conflicts can only be considered a boon.

The NEC reiterated its commitment to the struggle for world peace and disarmament and noted that in our region the sole responsibility for violations of peace rests with the apartheid regime. In Southern Africa peace and freedom are indivisible. The former cannot be purchased at the price of the latter. Consequently, the greatest contribution the people of South African can make to the peace and security of our region is the overthrow of the racist regime of Pretoria. It is in this spirit that the NEC reiterates our appeal to the international community to join us in isolating this regime by imposing comprehensive mandatory sanctions against apartheid South Africa.

Finally, the NEC noted with appreciation and profound gratitude the continuing all-round support our movement and our people receive from the Front Line States, the Organisations of African Unity, the socialist countries and the overwhelming majority of humankind. We are confident that with this support we shall banish apartheid racism from our country and reduce the amount of bloodshed that would otherwise be necessary to achieve that goal.

**The struggle continues. Victory is certain.
Amandla! Matla! All power to the people!
ANC, Lusaka, June 27th 1989**

CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC BOYCOTT

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSITION PAPER

1.1. The cultural and academic boycotts were conceived as important aspects of the ANC's strategy for the total isolation of the racist minority regime. After intensive campaigns conducted by our movement and people with the support of the world's anti-apartheid forces, the UN and other international agencies, cultural, sporting, academic and other contacts between the international community and apartheid South Africa are today reduced to a bare minimum. These campaigns have already resulted in the exclusion of official South African sports teams from every world sport body; the virtual exclusion of South Africa from international entertainment circuits; the cutting off from international academic networks of South African academicians and scholars; and the stigmatisation of artists, cultural workers, sportspersons and academics who continue to foster links with apartheid South Africa.

1.2. The multi-pronged offensive of the democratic forces, inspired by the ANC, has resulted in the transfer of the initiative from the oppressor regime to the people. An important and dynamic dimension of this democratic offensive against the structures and institutions of apartheid colonialism is the sphere of culture — embracing the arts, other intellectual pursuits and sports. Cultural activity has won, and already occupies, an important position as an integral part of our overall strategy for national liberation and democracy.

Cultural workers, activists and artists have increasingly begun to assume their rightful role in the struggle for freedom and are actively assisting to mould, through their work, the values, ethos and mores of an emergent non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The application of the boycott has to take account of these new developments.

1.3. The culture of apartheid and colonialism is almost universally regarded as a tool of oppression, intended to maintain the oppressive

status quo to imbue the oppressed with a sense of powerlessness and resignation, rather than the will to resist and assert their humanity.

In the process of struggle, the people of South Africa have evolved a democratic culture of liberation, which expresses their social and political aspirations. This culture, though distinctly South African, is infused with an internationalist, humanist spirit that draws upon the best of the cultural heritage of all the population groups of our country and that of the rest of humanity. It encompasses the artistic, intellectual and material aspects of culture.

In order to grow and develop, this emergent culture of liberation needs to interact with, and be exposed to, the progressive intellectual and cultural currents in the rest of the world.

1.4. The poor educational, training, performing and other facilities which are uniformly imposed on all Black communities are a direct expression of the oppressive character of the apartheid regime. This inequitable access of the various communities to adequate facilities has led to actual inequalities of performance between Black and White.

As a consequence of this established pattern of White privilege maintained at the expense of Black disadvantage, all the major means of cultural production and reproduction are owned and controlled by a tiny élite, drawn exclusively from the White community. This includes printing presses, publishing houses, film, video and sound studios, art galleries, sports facilities and other outlets for cultural expression.

Black artists in particular have as a result been victims of the most extreme forms of cultural exploitation and degradation, including the vulgarisation and debasement of authentic indigenous art and cultural forms.

1.5. The apartheid regime has for decades sought to impose the most stringent and repressive controls on the print and electronic media in South

Africa. The minority regime's statute books are replete with a plethora of laws empowering the regime to suppress and proscribe the dissemination of accurate information in and about South Africa.

Beginning with the so-called 'hostility clause' in the Native Administration Act of 1927, the regime has employed its wide-ranging powers to suppress several newspapers, journals, magazines and other publications. In terms of the Undesirable Publications Act it has also restricted and controlled the inflow of information and cultural artefacts from outside South Africa.

The suppression and circumscription of the press and other media is an important weapon in the arsenal of the oppressor regime which it wields to consolidate its power vis-a-vis the oppressed and exploited majority.

1.6. Inspired by the example of the other organised formations of our people, the various artistic disciplines have begun to organise themselves into collectives in order to fight, together with other sectors of our society, to secure their economic, political and other aspirations as cultural workers.

The pioneers in this field have been the writers and musicians, whose organised bodies already play a not insignificant role in the Mass Democratic Movement.

This trend towards organisation must be strengthened and built upon as the cultural workers' first line of defence against potential and actual exploiters and as a means of enhancing the artists' contribution to the national democratic struggle.

2.1. The cultural and academic boycott of apartheid South Africa (that is, those bodies, institutions, cultural workers and their product that promote, defend and give aid and comfort to the system of White minority domination) must consistently and continuously be strengthened as part of our overall strategy for the isolation of the apartheid regime.

No cultural workers, artists, sportspersons or academics should be permitted to travel to South Africa to perform or to impart their services and expertise, save and except in those instances where

such travel is clearly in furtherance of the national democratic struggle or any of its objectives.

2.2. Democratic and anti-racist South African artists, cultural workers, sportspersons and academics — individually or collectively — who seek to perform, work or participate in activities outside South Africa should be permitted to do so without fear of ostracism or boycott.

It would greatly facilitate matters if the Mass Democratic Movement created credible structures for consultation inside South Africa to vet such travel. The National Liberation and Democratic Movement should also be timeously informed of such plans so as to enable it to offer advice and assistance where necessary.

2.3. The current effort to create broad non-racial governing bodies in every major sports discipline has become an important new arena of struggle of the forces of national liberation and democracy. It deserves the support and assistance of the international community if it is to realise its potential.

2.4. It is the task of the forces of national liberation to promote and project the liberatory cultural values evolved by our people in and through their struggle. The national liberation movement should foster these democratic values and assist the exponents of this democratic culture to establish contact with democratic cultural workers in other parts of the world.

2.5. The National Liberation Movement and the Mass Democratic Movement must internationalise the campaign to defend the democratic media and journalists in South Africa. The flow of regular and accurate information about events in South Africa is a weighty factor in mobilising international opinion against apartheid and in support of our struggle.

The National Liberation Movement and all other democratic forces have a duty to assist the fledgling alternative media inside the country by ensuring that the international solidarity movement, non-governmental organisations and international agencies offer financial, technical and other forms of assistance.

2.6. The suppression and circumscription of the inflow of information, cultural products and artefacts from outside South Africa is an important weapon in the arsenal of the oppressor regime, which it wields to consolidate its power vis-a-vis the oppressed and exploited majority. The National Liberation Movement and the Mass Democratic Movement support the inflow of progressive cultural products, artefacts and ideas into our country so that these become readily accessible to the widest sections of our people. We support and encourage the dissemination of all cultural products, artefacts and ideas that enhance the struggle for democracy and promote democratic, humanist values as opposed to the oppres-

sive, retrograde values and misanthropic ideals. This applies to books, newspapers, journals, magazines, video, film and sound recordings manufactured and produced outside South Africa.

2.7. The organisation and mobilisation, on a continuing basis, of the various artistic disciplines, sports codes and academics into the fold of the Mass Democratic Movement and into a co-operative relationship with the National Liberation Movement remains a priority task.

**Adopted by the National Executive Committee
African National Congress
Lusaka, May 1989**



INTERVIEW WITH HENRY MAKGOTHI

THE PRETORIA REGIME IN CRISIS

Comrade Henry Makgothi, Deputy Secretary-General of the ANC, spoke to *Sechaba* about the crisis the Pretoria regime is facing now.



Henry Makgothi speaking in London, June 26th 1989

Certainly, the regime is facing a crisis within the country, and certainly it is much deeper than any other crisis it has had to weather. You can see it from the way in which the leaders of the regime today are making their way to the Western capitals, the sort of contacts they're establishing. Their predecessors went with a lot of bluster; but what comment do we get today about De Klerk's visit to Britain? I heard a news report that said he's a very good listener.

And indeed, why are they going overseas? To ask to be given a little more time to pay the debts, to persuade people to put more money into the country. The balance of trade is not in South Africa's favour. In the past, they've been able to weather the storm, but now it's more difficult. The South African economy has developed rapidly and has reached the stage of monopoly; today the economy is controlled by about seven large concerns. So it's a highly centralised economy. This has come about in the last few years.

Of course, this concentration of capital is part of the general trend of capitalist development, but in South Africa it's got specific features. In fact, you might say that the very features that helped the South African economy to advance are now acting against its further development — the racially divided society, the repression, the barrage of laws buttressing this repression, are today making it more difficult for them to get out of the crisis. To develop what they require, they need a more educated, more skilled, working class, a society that can consume what is produced. In the past, South Africa could rely on her mineral wealth, especially gold, to redress the deficit, but that is no longer of much assistance. The price of gold is going down.

The development of the anti-apartheid struggle world-wide, and increasing response to the call for sanctions, is aggravating the position of the regime and making the crisis even worse.

Apartheid is a mould that makes it very difficult for the economy to go forward. It creates deeper and deeper contradictions. In the end, the regime is left simply with violence, its arsenal of violence, which it has to use to try and get out of the situation. The deeper the crisis becomes, the greater the prospect of violence.

Politically, the crisis has been described as a crisis of legitimacy. It's becoming more and more difficult for them to co-opt Black people. Since 1984-85, there's been a massive rejection of everything apartheid stands for, and the only way they have

of of ruling over the people of the townships is through this system of Joint Management Committees, which is simply organised state violence.

For example, the rallying which has taken place round the National Education Crisis Committee, despite everything the regime has tried to throw against the struggle on the education front, still remains very strong. In fact, it is coalescing with community struggles; the parents are becoming more and more involved, teachers are becoming radicalised. There is no aspect of the people's life that has not been affected by this crisis the regime has brought upon the country.

As another example, there's the trade union struggle. It all grows out of the crisis. When they legalised trade unions, in a way, it wasn't out of the goodness of their hearts; it was because they could not possibly go on with a labour force that was under the old restrictions. But everything they do rebounds on them, and the trade unions have become very, very radicalised. In COSATU and other trade union centres we've got a working class which has reached a very high level of consciousness. Look at what workers have done in the last few years — their response to stayaways and strikes on a

massive scale.

Now the regime is extending all kinds of pseudo-solutions, tinkering with apartheid. Apartheid — you can't reform it, you've just got to throw it in the rubbish bin. The constitutional measures they've tried — from the bantustans to the tricameral parliament — just don't work.

And now, what does De Klerk say he's got to offer? Racially defined legislative bodies and group rights. Coming at this time, it's just laughable.

What is the regime going to do? Make some half-hearted responses to what the people are demanding today, the release of Mandela — I don't think they're in a position to resist that today — and a few other concessions, and on the wave of that pretend they are doing something to marginalise the revolutionary forces. That is not going to save them. The people are not going to be satisfied with anything which does not properly spell out power. That is what the whole struggle is all about.

This business about 'minority rights' and 'group rights' — we should be suspicious, because what the regime wants when it talks about things like that is to find ways of entrenching privilege. This is really what they want. I think it is something that is typical of regimes based

on a minority; they can never guarantee freedom. It's only with governments based on the will of the people that these things fall into proper perspective; only in that context can we talk about safeguarding rights.

Today, the regime is being prodded to come up with something that will satisfy its backers. As a liberation movement, we have also come under pressure to negotiate. The Pretoria regime says it's going to get rid of apartheid, and it's very serious about reforms. This fellow De Klerk is supposed to be bringing in a new dispensation. This is all simply meant to soften us and to make us lose the perspectives of the struggle.

It is very important that we should be vigilant. If the regime is showing a certain degree of pliability today, it is because of the pressures which have been brought to bear on it — international pressures; sanctions; pressures internally from the Mass Democratic Movement; not least the armed struggle of our people.

To solve the problem in a serious way, it goes without saying that, far from relaxing these pressures, the time has now arrived to increase and to accelerate these pressures on all fronts.



ANC INTERNATIONAL

Zimbabwe Honours Nelson Mandela

The Zimbabwean town of Kwekwe honoured Comrade Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela in April, by conferring the freedom of the municipality on him at the same time as it was conferred on the President of Zimbabwe, Comrade Robert Gabriel Mugabe.

The award was received on behalf of Comrade Mandela by the President of the ANC, Comrade O R Tambo, who led a delegation to Zimbabwe consisting of Comrade Stan Mabizela, ANC Chief Representative in Harare, and Comrades E Mabitse, S Tshabalala and Gab Sethunya.

On arriving in Harare, President Tambo was received and welcomed by the Zimbabwean Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, Comrade E C Chikowore. The next day, Comrade Tambo and Comrade Mugabe flew to Kwekwe.

The ceremony in Kwekwe was colourful, a political programme interspersed with cultural presentations. The Vice-President of Zimbabwe was there, with a number of Cabinet Ministers, the Member of Parliament for Kwekwe, the Mayor of Kwekwe and the municipal council, members of the Central Committee of ZANU (PF), members of diplomatic missions and a large

contingent of ANC members in Zimbabwe. Scores of thousands of Zimbabwean citizens thronged the streets, and packed every available space around the presidium.

Comrade Tambo said in his speech that the award was an injunction to the ANC and all democratic forces inside South Africa to intensify the struggle so as to compel the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and other prisoners. He said that the award:

"should only confirm the worst fears of the enemy — that the struggle for freedom can neither be violated nor obliterated."

Comrade Mugabe recalled his first contact with Nelson Mandela in 1962 during the PAFMECA Conference in Addis Ababa. Comrade Mandela had told him that he had been sent to Addis by the people, and he was going back, whatever the odds, to report to the people. The fact that Comrade Mandela had done all that always moved him, Comrade Mugabe said. He added:

"We in Zimbabwe hope that the day is not far off when a free Nelson Mandela can join us, not only here in Kwekwe, not only here in Zimbabwe, but also on the whole of the African continent, so that together with him and his wisdom we can build a better and stronger Africa as free men and women."

Towards the close of the ceremony, Comrades Tambo and Mugabe were invited to go and cut ribbons on two streets being renamed Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Way and Robert Gabriel Mugabe Way. It was an exciting moment as the masses in the streets mobbed the President of Zimbabwe and saluted the President of the ANC.

Members of the delegation report that they left Zimbabwe fully revitalised, having seen and felt the pulse of the many friends and supporters we have in that fraternal country.

Nelson Mandela Platz in Nuremburg

In the 1930s, the German city of Nuremburg and the region of Bavaria, in which it is situated, were centres of the Nazi movement. That has changed. Progressive citizens of Nuremburg are now proclaiming their opposition to racism. In June, when a Nuremburg square was renamed Nelson Mandela Platz, the city became the fourth in the Federal Republic of Germany and the first in the region of Bavaria to name a place after Nelson Mandela.

The ANC was represented at the ceremony by Comrade Denis Goldberg, who said in his speech of thanks:

"The race laws which so disfigured your country were proclaimed in the stadium in

this city. The derelict stadium looks forlorn today. That you have chosen to leave the stadium to decay shows your determination not to allow such things to happen again."

West Berlin

Miriam Makeba, the South African singer, was honoured as an artist in West Berlin in May, for her long-standing commitment to the fight against apartheid.

She was received by the Mayor of West Berlin, and at a ceremony she signed the Golden Book of the City.

As part of the campaign, "Our City Against Apartheid," the Social Democratic Party (SPD) called for sanctions at a public meeting supported by the West Berlin Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Speakers were: Miriam Makeba; the Mayor of West Berlin, Walter Momper of the SPD; Ursula Schmidt of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and Comrade Indres Naidoo, ANC Deputy Chief Representative in the German Democratic Republic.

Japan

The first anniversary of the ANC mission in Tokyo was marked by a reception attended by over 200 people. Mayors of Japanese towns were present, and representatives from a wide range of Japanese organisations. There was a fraternal delegate from the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Comrade Jerry Matsila, ANC Chief Representative in Japan, reported that:

★ Over the past year he had addressed 305 meetings across Japan. In some of the lectures he had given in schools, young pupils had begun crying when they heard about the lives of school children under apartheid.

★ Committees right across the country were collecting money to maintain the ANC office in Tokyo.

★ Similar events are now taking place in other parts of the Pacific basin: in Hong Kong, Malaysia and South Korea.

All present agreed that in its year of work the Japan mission of the

ANC has helped to raise consciousness about apartheid. Because of public pressure against trade with apartheid, Pik Botha had been forced to spend six hours at Tokyo international airport en route from Taiwan to the Federal Republic of Germany, as no Japanese official could risk meeting with him openly.

Comrade Matsila said that nevertheless public pressure had not yet been fully translated into action by the Japanese Government and companies. Japanese government officials recently held a secret meeting with an official sent from Pretoria to ask that sanctions against South Africa should not be accelerated. In coming months, the ANC office will:

★ Appeal to ordinary people to introduce their own boycott of South African products, especially platinum, gold and diamonds.

★ Appeal to lawyers and lawmakers to protest to Pretoria about the increasing number of apartheid executions.



AHMED KATHRADA

A BIRTHDAY PROFILE

By A Subramonium

Ahmed Kathrada, one of the leaders of our struggle in the 1950s and early 1960s, is 60 years old this month. He was captured in 1963, while living underground, and sentenced to life imprisonment in the Rivonia trial. He has been in gaol for 26 years.

Ahmed Kathrada



When this profile of Ahmed Kathrada was being prepared, various people who knew him were interviewed. Without exception, they characterised him for his 'humanism.' How can humanism exist in a society such as that in South Africa, with all its inhumanity? Yet this concept of humanism infuses the lives of Mandela, Sisulu, Mkwazi; the lives of Mbeki and Gwala; and reveals itself in the leadership of the African National Congress and the Mass Democratic Movement in South Africa. This humanism is infused with a hatred for injustice and all its manifestations.

This celebration of the birthday of Ahmed 'Kathy' Kathrada is offered as a profile more than a political history of the recent time. Yet the man and his life were shaped by the events of the time — events which, with his comrades in struggle, he, too, helped to shape to some degree.

He grew up in the *dorp* of Schweizer Reneke in the Transvaal, where his parents had a small general store. They had been directly involved with Gandhiji in the *satyagraha* struggle waged at the turn of the century. The family had also responded to mobilisation by Dr Yusuf Dadoo and the 'nationalist group' in the Transvaal Indian Congress, who directed the Indian people away from the appeasement policy of the leadership at that time, towards resistance and recognition of South African nationality.

The ten-year-old Ahmed left home for school in Johannesburg, to the only secondary school in existence for Indians in the Transvaal. Within his new surrogate family in the city, he found himself in the throb of struggle, led by his already familiar

hero, Comrade Dadoo. By the age of 14, he had joined, and was an active member of, the Communist Party of South Africa. The helper with backroom work during the Mineworkers' Strike of 1946 became a schoolboy political activist in the Passive Resistance Campaign against the 'Ghetto Act' of the Smuts government. His task as youth mobiliser for the Transvaal Indian Youth Volunteer Corps in this campaign was forerunner to his becoming a foundation member of the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress (TIYC) in 1950, and its first chairperson.

The TIYC was recruiting another tier of Indian youth in the political struggle, from the Johannesburg Indian High School, from workers in the service industries and the emergent factories.

Forming the Congress Alliance

The 1950 May Day strike in the Transvaal brought the newly-mobilised TIYC members into campaign work. In the same year, the June 26th Protest Day launched a nation-wide reaction by the oppressed people to apartheid violence. The campaign was also the birth of national unity of the oppressed groups in joint struggle. In this unity, Kathrada was among the active youth leaders who gave substance to the 1949 Programme of Action of the ANC Youth League.

The Congress campaigns of that time, and the leaders of these campaigns, made up the environment in which Kathrada was nurtured. He grew up with the profound belief that, in South Africa then, the masses were making history and that history was producing the leadership that was guiding its course.

In 1951, as leader of the TIYC delegation, Kathrada was chosen to lead the South African delegation to the International Festival for Peace, Friendship and Solidarity, on the rubble of defeated fascism in socialist Berlin. He went on to work for the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Budapest, and returned to South Africa as the new militant unity of the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress was being moulded in the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws of 1952.

Kathrada's political contribution from here on is an interplay of youth leader and developing figure of national stature. He was tempered in the Defiance Campaign and the Congress of the People in 1955. In these years was built the Congress Alliance, embracing all national groups and the trade union movement. It was an alliance of the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress (CPC), the Congress of Democrats (COD) for Whites, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

The new South African nation — a nation of free people with a democratic vision — was in the making. It was this process that the apartheid regime tried to arrest in the Treason Trial of 1957-1961. The attempt the regime made to stop this process erupted in the violence of the state against the people at Sharpeville and Langa, the promulgation of the state of emergency of 1960, the banning of the ANC and later of the COD.

This was the period that led to the arrest at Rivonia in 1963. History has yet to evaluate this grand period of the liberation struggle, but at a personal level these developments were in accord with Kathrada's instincts for unity of the oppressed, for militant action against any form of tyranny, for comradeship in arms. Like his comrades in the Rivonia trial, he had been integral to the development from non-violent struggle to the emergence of Umkhonto We Sizwe and the prospect of armed struggle, but no very strong evidence was presented in court to prove this. He might have benefited from an appeal; but he stood with the other accused in refusing to appeal.

Internationalism

Between these momentous milestones in our liberation struggle, Kathrada was engaged in the daily life of the movement. His experiences in Budapest infused greater substance into his internationalism, and he spoke at a few meetings, mainly in the Trades Hall in Johannesburg, emphasising the anti-imperialist unity of the forces for national liberation and socialism. He stressed the role the USSR was playing in solidarity with the forces world-wide overthrowing colonialism



Kathrada at a political meeting in the Transvaal in the 1950s. Next to him, wearing a hat, is the late Michael Harmel, first editor of the African Communist.

and oppression. His experience in Berlin, where the people of the German Democratic Republic were beginning to reconstruct their capital city whose ruins bore testimony to the last resistance of fascism, led him to convey to audiences in Johannesburg images of the struggle against fascism in World War II, and the cost in human suffering.

He ardently espoused the cause of world peace, and emphasised that world peace and the eradication of oppressor regimes were inextricably woven together. When he clarified these issues and emphasised the power of international solidarity, the audiences greeted what he said with enthusiasm.

He experienced imprisonment for the first time at the age of 17. By the time he was 35, and sentenced to life imprisonment, he had been arrested 17 times, banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, put under house arrest and driven underground. Some of his 17 arrests reflect his anger when witnessing the tyrannical bullying of the armed racist police. Though not a physically muscular man, he had an implacable hatred for any intimidating behaviour, which he never let pass without a challenge. Many of his

arrests may have been partly the result of the vindictiveness of the security police, for whom he showed only contempt.

He was also merciless (and some might say tactless at times) in rising to nip manifestations of élitism or bureaucracy. Though he functioned in clandestine and semi-clandestine conditions, he guarded against unnecessary secrecy and other undemocratic styles of political behaviour.

Political Discipline

He retained what some called a self-effacing manner and others called his modesty. In himself, he exercised an unswerving discipline in his responsibilities, and he expected a similar discipline from his colleagues. Some comrades consider this a streak of stubbornness in his nature. He insisted that persons who take on public responsibility have a duty to be principled and uncompromising in carrying out those responsibilities, and that the leadership should always act with a consciousness of its accountability to the rank and file; this has been misidentified as an anti-establishment stance. His

whole approach guided his activity in public forums; in private, he never engaged in political gossip, and was meticulous in his loyalty to the elected leadership and the policy of the Congress movement.

The growth of the Federation of South African Women and its constituent bodies was vigorously supported by Ahmed Kathrada, who, in that pre-feminist period, believed that women had to be drawn into the life of our struggle. As a man rooted in South African patriarchal traditions, he had to balance the expectation of male responsibility to family with that of a political activist. His personal life was not devoid of the intense passion that male-female commitment carries with it. This sphere of his life was private, but by no means a blank.

I was privileged to be among hundreds who enjoyed the hospitality of his flat, which was an institution in itself. One evening, I walked in to find his friend Alex La Guma, relaxed and strumming his guitar and singing Capetown ballads.

At other times, friends, many of whom were not political activists, sat around and sang songs in Tamil, Hindi and Urdu, and listened to records. He delighted in translating the Hindi and Urdu lyrics for us — only later did we come to know that many of the themes of these songs were derived from the poetry of Tagore and Iqbal, and he wanted to share their moving spirituality.

He fervently argued for the cultural and academic boycott of South Africa, when the debate at that time was over whether the people of South Africa would lose out by being deprived of the culture of progressive humankind. Was part of his attitude based on his antagonism to the idea that 'culture' is synonymous with 'western culture' to the exclusion of the culture of the oppressed communities? His arguments essentially focused on the principle that artists from overseas had no business performing in apartheid South Africa, because by so doing they condoned the suppression of the majority and its cultural aspirations. It is timely in this 30th year of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement to recall this debate, which was settled by Chief Luthuli's call for the boycott of apartheid South Africa.

In prison on Robben Island and in Pollsmoor, Kathy has now accumulated academic degrees — he had no previous formal attainments. However,

he served on the editorial boards of the journals, *Passive Resister*, *Spark* and *Liberation*. He was also involved in education, as secretary of the Central Indian High School.

The Congress School

In the political environment of the ANC campaign against the Bantu Education Act, the Indian community in the Transvaal rejected the political move of the Transvaal Education Department to close the overspill Indian High School in Booysens and replace it with one in the Lenasia group area. The Central Indian High School was set up by the community in protest. The school had to be fee-paying, yet had to cater for those children and young people whose parents could not pay fees; so to maintain it there had to be co-operation among all the Indians in the province. The secretary had the task of organising this project, which included finding premises in spite of police intimidation of landlords, recruiting and re-training staff and finding salaries each month.

This school, which was popularly known as the Congress School, could be the subject for a sociological-educational study. The staff comprised Africans, Coloureds, Indians and Whites; many of them known Communists; members of the TIYC and Congress of Democrats, and a host of non-political persons. There was no corporal punishment; the school was co-educational, and respect between boys and girls was a guiding principle. It was a new concept of education. As secretary, Kathrada carried the responsibility, and made political activists recognise the school as a people's school. The school collapsed in 1960, soon after the state of emergency was declared and key people were detained.

Around this period, on the stone walls of the Johannesburg Public Library (Whites only) the slogan, "Let Us Black Folks Read," appeared. When the City Council eventually succeeded in sandblasting it away, the new slogan, "Us Black Folks Ain't Reading Yet," replaced it. These slogans also appeared on slips of paper in books in the library. Kathy, the practical man, had his hand in the activities of what came to be known as the Picasso Club.

Rich and tumultuous years

Our comrade, Ahmed Mohamed Kathrada, like his comrades in the Rivonia trial and a host of other political prisoners, lived and participated in the rich and tumultuous post-war years of our people's struggle against racism and exploitation. The humanism of the period was encapsulated in the Freedom Charter and the unleashing of the creative potential of the masses in the Congress Movement during that period.

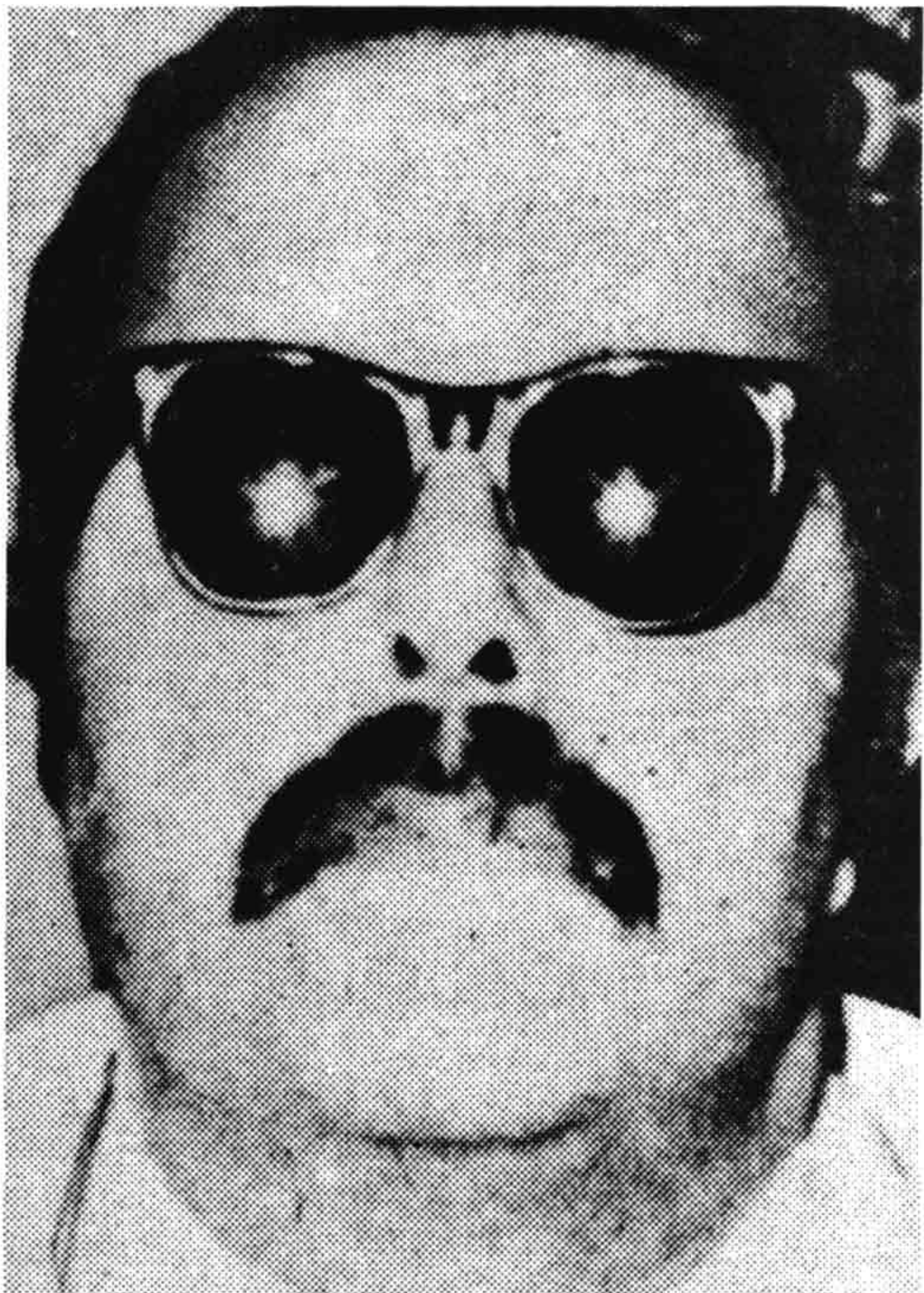
The unique nature of our South African nation is exemplified in the personality and activity of human beings such as Kathrada, whom we honour

on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

These recollections on the life of a man who has now been incarcerated for 26 years seem like a eulogy to a person no longer with us. His non-presence is often misrepresented, and, because of his modesty, 'AMK' has always been imbued with the philosophy that history relies on the masses for its making. To this must be added his passionate belief that it will be his comrades of the calibre of Mandela, Sisulu, Mkwazi and Mbeki, and others in exile, who, through their authority with the masses, will guide the process of national liberation.



The young Kathrada at a students' meeting



Kathrada as he appeared when he was captured at Rivonia in July 1963. He had used this disguise while living underground.

NEGOTIATIONS AND PEOPLE'S POWER

By Mzala

Will the current struggle go on to the complete overthrow of the racist regime and the establishment of a democratic government of people's power? Or will it be forced into a premature compromise, a negotiated settlement, whose ultimate effect would be to curtail apartheid and establish a government of some form of power-sharing? This question continues to be a subject of intense debate in the mass media.

Towards the end of January this year, the Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Beeld*, suggested in an editorial that there has never been a more opportune time to test, before the eyes of the world, "the ANC's claim to be a freedom movement rather than a terrorist gang." Circumstances, said *Die Beeld*, had changed dramatically in the past few months. The negotiations in Angola and the settlement of the Namibian question had "caused the organisation's power base in Southern Africa to shrink considerably." It speculated that, in the light of Soviet *glasnost*, the ANC must be wondering how long it would be able to rely on Moscow "as a godfather." World pressure on the ANC to abandon "violence," it went on, could become so strong that it might no longer be necessary for Pretoria to lay such stress on this factor as a prerequisite for discussions.

Africa Confidential, a fortnightly newssheet published in Britain, said on January 20th:

"... the announcement that the African National Congress is to dismantle its camps in Angola is a severe blow to the organisation, requiring a major revision of ANC strategy. Considered in tandem with the fact that civilian politicians have gained the initiative in Pretoria at the expense of the military men, since the 1988 battle of Cuito Cuanavale, it means that diplomatic and political options are in the ascendant among the major protagonists in the South African struggle ..."

Reading almost like a magazine horoscope, *Africa Confidential* suggested that this move:

"extinguishes for good the possibility of the ANC mounting a major guerrilla war in South Africa of the sort attempted in 1984-85."

In the American journal, *Newsweek* of January 23rd 1989, Spencer-Reiss argued that, following the US-brokered regional peace settlement in Southern Africa, there will be a drastic reduction in the ability of the ANC to infiltrate "anti-apartheid rebels" into South Africa. He said:

"Since 1984, when the ANC was expelled from Mozambique, Angola has supplied the group's only permanent military bases in the front line states. ANC officials know how difficult fighting will be without secure cross-border sanctuaries ... In the end, the loss of the Angolan bases may help steer the ANC toward negotiated compromise rather than an all-or-nothing armed struggle."

As far as the ANC and its allies are concerned, the question of negotiations is not problematic in principle, contrary to what is provocatively suggested by the media. The issue is not whether or not, by taking a stand on this issue, we are deciding to be a "freedom movement" or a "terrorist gang." If the negotiations in Angola and the settlement of the Namibian question can be anything to go by, then the ANC has gone on record as acclaiming the processes leading to the imminent independence of Namibia, and even volunteering to abandon its military camps in Angola, in the belief that it will not then be held responsible for any excuses the Pretoria regime may make for aborting the

processes leading to Namibian independence. This is what we have done, not merely claimed.

The media make mischief

Where does such a decision emanate from? Is the perspective of the ANC on the question of negotiations in any way related to its strategic outlook or is it a mere tactical manoeuvre born of political expediency, after the ANC found it had to retreat under what *Die Beeld* calls "world pressure on the organisation to abandon violence"? Or is it in order to fall in line with the changes in Soviet foreign policy regarding the resolution of regional conflicts by peaceful means? By taking such a stand, are we registering our positive response to so-called developments within the South African cabinet, which is said to have seen the ascendancy of the civilian politicians at the expense of the military men following the defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale?

The media all over the world, including South Africa, have been preoccupied with this question of negotiations, making all manner of speculations about the fate of the South African liberation struggle. It came up like an orchestrated media campaign, co-ordinated at various levels of opinion-making. It has even been joined by the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, who has made known her own views about the circumstances under which the ANC and the apartheid regime can be brought to the negotiating table. The pic-

ture that ultimately emerges is one of the ANC refusing to consider negotiations as an option for resolving the problem of apartheid. The speculation then is that this supposed position has been undermined by the Namibian peace process, which has led to the victory of the 'peaceful forces' over the hardline 'revolutionary forces.'

One Norwegian newspaper even suggested that there is now a split within the ANC, between a faction favouring negotiations and another standing for armed seizure of power. Moscow, too, has been brought into the picture, but this time not in the old traditional way of seeking to spread communist influence in South Africa, but as bringing a form of pressure to bear on the ANC, forcing it towards the negotiating table.

Consensus within the ANC

For those of us within the ANC, who are its members, the images constructed by the media are of course altogether strange and even surprising, full of illusions and guesswork.

★ There is not even a whisper of a split within the ANC, least of all over such a well-understood matter as that of negotiations. Our leadership and membership are moving as one, in consensus, on this question. The mischief-makers are forever scouting for what might cause a split in our ranks. They failed to create one a few years ago between communists and non-

communists, when the media were full of speculation about such a division. Now they have another gimmick. Again they will fail to see their imaginary constructions becoming reality.

★ The policies of the ANC have never been, and never will be, determined by developments within the Soviet Union or any other country. This needs to be understood correctly. We are not suggesting that the ANC is unaffected by international events. Nor are we suggesting that changes in foreign policy of various governments, particularly those that support us, do not have a positive or negative effect on the conduct of our struggle. If it were not so, the ANC could never have developed the important work of international mobilisation, which means precisely our task of persuading governments to understand the realities of the South African problem. In the same tradition, the ANC has periodically had discussions with Party and Government leaders of the Soviet Union. Recently, it stationed a representative there, a member of the NEC.

The media, however, quick to speculate before it has all its facts in hand, does not even bother to consult us to find out from us how matters are between us and the Soviet Union. No, it is eager to make headlines. This can be done only by suggesting that the Soviet Union, under the policy of *perestroika*, is no longer going to support the armed struggle in South Africa. Consulting the ANC, they reason, would not produce the kind of sensational

effect that could be made by 'news' of the Soviet Union forcing the ANC into negotiations. So they prefer to avoid such consultation. Their purpose is not to seek the truth, but to look for the widest possible sales.

★ The ANC has never, and could never have, launched a guerrilla war from Angola. Angola does not share borders with South Africa. It shares borders with Namibia. Geographically, therefore, as well as from the point of view of communications, Angola is as approximate to South African borders as Tanzania or even Algeria. Putting it this way is not to vulgarise the matter, but to state an objective fact.

Strategy adapted to conditions

In the past, when our cadres moved into South Africa from their training bases in Angola, they used the same kind of route as might be used by someone moving from Algeria to South Africa. Exactly! And over the years, precisely because our military strategists realised that we are unlikely to have a secure base for a classical guerrilla war that is launched from a neighbouring country, we developed strategies that sought to root our armed struggle within South Africa, as if it were an island like Cuba. The commercial media, however, doesn't trouble itself to study the strategy and tactics of the ANC, but rushes to talk about "shrinking power bases" and "extinguished possibilities." *Newsweek* even

refers to our Angolan bases as "secure cross-border sanctuaries" from which our armed struggle is supposed to have been launched.

The political conduct of the ANC can be understood only by studying its own strategic outlook, examining its policies, and using this as the starting point in assessing the prospects of the South African liberation struggle under the unfolding political conditions in the region and internationally.

It cannot be denied that the ANC (particularly the ANC) is affected by regional as well as international political developments. Though we do not launch our struggle from any neighbouring country, we are linked to the Front Line States and the international community by other political and diplomatic ties, all of which come into the picture when the balance of forces is assessed and strategies are evaluated.

Walking paths we choose

The question of whether or not the ANC can participate in a negotiated settlement may thus depend, not only on our own strategic perspective, but on various other factors, including pressures that may be brought to bear, resulting in our walking along a path that is not necessarily the one we would have chosen.

What happened in Zimbabwe and what is happening in Namibia may serve as an illustration. The Patriotic Front went to the Lancaster House

talks under pressure and protesting. In Namibia, SWAPO barely participates in a process determining the future of the country where it will form a government. The processes are being resolved by international forces, including the Pretoria regime, which it should normally be negotiating with. Instead, SWAPO is given observer status and is briefed only by its friends, the Angolans and Cubans, who are participants.

Each situation has its specifics, and it would be wrong to suggest that the ANC would, under South African conditions, be in the position of either the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe or SWAPO in Namibia. Walking along a forced path is not inevitable, nor even solely an objective development. It depends partly on the organisational ground work already done by the revolutionary movement, which may be forced to walk to a negotiated settlement only because it has not sufficiently consolidated the forces of victory during its march to armed insurrection.

Our policy positions on negotiations

ANC policy on negotiations has been stated again and again by various leaders ever since the beginning of armed struggle in 1961. When Umkhonto We Sizwe was formed, it announced in its manifesto that it was carrying on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, armed methods, which were seen as necessary to

"complement the actions of the established national liberation movement." Its members, jointly and individually, placed themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement. Nobody in South Africa needed to be persuaded to understand that the ANC had consistently followed a policy of non-violence for 50 years, conducting itself peacefully at all times, regardless of attacks and persecution and the attempts of the regime to provoke its members and leaders into violence. Our people preferred peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations, to the suffering and bitterness of war.

The regime had interpreted the peaceful political programme of the movement as weakness; taken it as a green light for apartheid violence; interpreted it as an invitation to use armed force against the people without reprisals.

Then Umkhonto We Sizwe was formed. It had become clear to us by then that unless we struck out along a new road to the liberation of the people, that unless the force, repression and violence of the regime was met by the organised revolutionary force of the people's movement, our slavery would be prolonged for ever.

Yet the ANC kept, and continues to keep, the possibility of negotiations as one of the options for the transformation of the country. But the kind of negotiations the ANC has in mind are not about the abortion of the liberation struggle. They are not a sell-out deal.

The kind of negotiations we

consider consistent with our strategy of armed seizure of power are not those the commercial media are speculating about. In the event of such genuine negotiations, the South African liberation movement would not be the first one in revolutionary history to take the opportunity of entering into negotiations with a regime that is no longer willing to uphold an oppressive system, one that prefers not to cling stubbornly to a power that is about to be overthrown in any case.

Experience of other struggles

The Vietnamese liberation movement conducted such negotiations, first with the French government and later with the American government, which led to the birth of an independent and united republic of Vietnam. Even during the fiercest of wars, negotiations have taken place, as they did between some sections of what was left of the nazi German state and the leadership of the Soviet armed forces in 1945.

Comrade Tambo said at Arusha in 1987:

"We could never deliberately seek the path of war in our quest for liberation if an alternative, non-violent path were available to us."

He made it clear, however, that we are not interested in talking merely for the sake of dialogue, and that any discussions must be seriously meant to end the tyrannical and murderous system of apartheid immediately.

That same year, the National Executive Committee of the ANC issued a statement saying that the ANC had never been opposed to a negotiated settlement of the South African question. It expressed the readiness of the ANC and the masses of the oppressed people as a whole to enter into **genuine** negotiations, provided they are aimed at the transformation of South Africa from a racist, divided and oppressive country into a non-racial, united and democratic one. "This, and only this," the statement continued, "should be the objective of any negotiating process." The NEC reasoned that no meaningful negotiations could take place until all those concerned, and specifically the apartheid regime, accept this perspective shared by the rest of humanity.

What are the implications?

Several practical political implications flow from this.

★ The question of whether or not to negotiate, and on what conditions, would be resolved by the oppressed people of South Africa. It would also involve the ANC leadership now in exile and in prison, during a process in which the imprisoned leadership has been freed and those in exile have returned to South Africa to discuss with the people how to respond to the situation.

★ Such a process can take place only when the state of emergency has been lifted, and organisa-

tions that were banned have been legalised and given full political rights to address gatherings and organise their constituencies unhindered.

★ The apartheid system, a crime against humanity, must then unconditionally capitulate to a democratic system of government. Negotiations are to be about this transformation from oppression to freedom, from racism to democracy, from protection of so-called racial rights to a one-person-one-vote system of government.

That is how the ANC approaches this question at the level of political principle. It is supported in that regard by the South African Congress of Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party. In its new programme, *The Path to Power*, adopted during its recent Seventh Congress, the SACP states that there is no conflict between the insurrectionary perspective and the possibility of a negotiated transfer of power. What is essential to both is the development of the political and military forces of the revolution:

"We should be on our guard against the clear objective of our ruling class and their imperialist allies who see negotiation as a way of preempting a revolutionary transformation. The imperialists seek their own kind of transformation, which goes beyond the reform limits of the present regime, but which will, at the same time, frustrate the basic objectives of the struggling masses. And

they hope to achieve this by pushing the liberation movement into negotiation before it is strong enough to back its basic demands with sufficient power on the ground."

Whatever prospects may arise in future for a negotiated transition, they must not be allowed to infect the purpose and content of our present strategic approaches. We are not engaged in a struggle whose objective is merely to generate sufficient pressure to bring the other side to the negotiating table. If, as a result of a generalised crisis and a heightened revolutionary upsurge, the point should ever be reached when the enemy is prepared to talk, the liberation forces will, at that point, have to exercise their judgment, guided by the demands of revolutionary advance. But until then its sights must be clearly set on the perspectives of a seizure of power.

Present attitude of the regime

If we are to believe some of the reports coming from the press, the South African regime now thinks it is time to negotiate the future of South Africa with all the parties concerned. *The Sowetan* of March 15th 1989 reported that Chris Heunis, when opening the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly in his then capacity of acting State President, said his government was willing to negotiate, and blamed the ANC's continued commitment to violence as the only factor keeping it from the

negotiating table. Heunis did not refer to the ANC as a "communist" or "terrorist" organisation, as his government has done in the past. Instead, the ANC was a "nationalist movement" which was expected to suspend its armed struggle in support of "national interests." David Welsh, a political science professor at the University of Cape Town, was reported in the *London Independent* of March 18th as saying that he was convinced the South African government was sincere in its desire for talks:

"Apart from a few neanderthals, the Nationalists have come to see the historical inevitability of talks with the ANC."

The regime, however, has not yet demonstrated its willingness to dismantle apartheid. Instead, while it talks peace, it prepares for war. During the first quarter of 1989, it increased its military budget by 21% from last year, and the police budget by 26.6%. This means that, during the current financial year, the South African military has got R10.3 billion, and in addition parliament has allocated R230 million to a Special Defence Fund. The state of emergency has not been lifted. Political prisoners, instead of being released, are being joined by fresh ones every day. Unbanning of organisations is not even talked about, nor the repeal of laws restricting free political activity in South Africa. Is that the conduct of a government that is sincere about peaceful resolution of the South African question?

What has British policy achieved?

The British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, has been touring Southern Africa, attempting to sell the idea that not pressure, but patience with the apartheid system, should be the approach of the African Front Line States. Yet, not even Mrs Thatcher, whose friendship the apartheid regime values greatly, can produce any evidence that the Pretoria regime would like to see an end to apartheid. The British policy of patience with apartheid has not removed a single law from the apartheid statute book; it has not freed a single political prisoner; it has not enfranchised a single Black person; it has not led to the dismantling of a single bantustan; it has not enabled a single Black family to live where it chooses. On the other hand, pressure on the apartheid system — armed struggle, mass actions and sanctions — has produced results.

Only when its forces are put into crisis and defeated, does the Pretoria regime reach the conclusion that it may have to talk. That is how it was obliged to accept that the Namibian question must be resolved on the basis of UN Resolution 435. Such instances demonstrate what armed struggle, mass action and economic sanctions can do. If those who are against this strategy can show us something better, then we shall be willing to consider their option.

The purpose of Margaret Thatcher's trip to the Front Line States, and the purpose of the

South African regime's reference to the need for talks, is to ease the pressure currently driving the apartheid system from one crisis to another. To salvage apartheid, Margaret Thatcher and F W de Klerk are flying an illusory peace dove.

Transfer of power

The ANC does not formulate its strategies in reaction to the political initiatives of the apartheid regime. While these 'initiatives,' or, properly speaking, counter-initiatives, cannot be ignored and need to be constantly studied, the fate of the revolution depends primarily on the programme of the liberation movement and the degree of organisation of the class forces that have an objective interest in the success of that revolution.

What is often referred to as a liberation struggle in South Africa is in fact a revolution. The ANC is a revolutionary movement. It cannot be otherwise, in a situation where the people are confronted by a social system as a whole and not just a few repressive laws. The ANC's political business is not to reform South African society but to transform it from the social foundations.

Revolution is a change that breaks the old order to its very foundations. In every real revolution, power changes from one class or alliance of classes to another. And, of all the questions confronting a revolution, the question of transfer of power to the revolutionary class or alliance of classes is the

foremost one. The political programme of the ANC consequently addresses the question of state power, which is at present wielded by a racist minority instead of a democratic majority. This racist minority functions for the political and economic needs of the capitalist class. In order to realise the revolutionary transformation of South Africa, the ANC demands complete transfer of power to the people, and for this purpose strives to achieve universal suffrage, complete freedom, and also the immediate overthrow of the racist government, to be replaced by a people's government.

Popular constituent assembly

Such an objective places the question of complete victory at the centre of ANC strategy and tactics. If negotiations are defined as part of the process leading up to the destruction of the apartheid system, whether such victory is achieved following negotiations or armed insurrection is irrelevant. Why is complete victory important? Because only when the victorious people have taken control of state power can they convene a popular constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution for South Africa. In the final analysis, our struggle is for a **popular** constitution.

The people themselves have to discuss the new constitution in a free atmosphere, considering their leaders' proposals on each clause, recommending change to any draft that has been submit-

ted for discussion. Such an exercise requires the fullest possible measure of political freedom. Leaders of various parties and organisations should have a guaranteed right to engage in political agitation and organisation. The people's right must be ensured to elect representatives to the popular assembly without fear of intimidation or harassment. There must be real guarantees that the elections are absolutely free and fair. The apartheid regime cannot allow such freedom of political activity in the country. It cannot guarantee that elections for a popular constituent assembly would be absolutely free and fair.

Revolution and reform

In other words, unless the liberation struggle definitely ends with the transfer of power to the people, there is no instrument to guarantee that the misery ex-

perienced during pre-liberation days would be ended in all its forms. One should therefore distinguish between a revolution and a reform; between complete victory and partial victory. The first, the principal and the basic sign that a **revolution** has occurred in South Africa, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of that term, would be the passing of state power from the racist minority to the democratic majority.

It is this strategic objective that gives direction to the political conduct of the ANC and its allies. It is victory that gives character to our political mobilisation. And for this reason the ANC unequivocally regards the working class, the only thoroughly revolutionary class, as the leader of the liberation struggle. It is this class, more than the others it is allied with, that is objectively interested in a real and decisive victory, because the workers

have nothing to lose in a revolution but their chains.

There is undoubtedly still a lot that has to be done in organising the working class to play its role as leader of this democratic revolution. The important question in that regard is: where should the ANC place more emphasis in this work of working class organisation? Should it be on trade unions and other legally existing associations, or in the work of creating a revolutionary army, for an armed insurrection, in preparation for a real and complete victory? Both are, of course, important and necessary. Both organise the working class, and educate it politically. But at this revolutionary juncture, at a time when not just the general but also the particular has to be brought into analysis, which is to be emphasised in the work of organising the working class as leaders of the democratic revolution?



DISCUSSION ARTICLES

Ronnie Kasrils' article, *The Revolutionary Army*, in our issue of September 1988 brought a number of lively responses. There has been an excellent debate, and the time has now come for us to close it. In doing so, we are including another contribution that has just reached us, and then giving the last word to Comrade Kasrils.

BUILDING THE UNDERGROUND

By Mthetheleli

Ronnie Kasrils' article came at an opportune moment. It addresses very important and pertinent issues, which need our serious attention.

We all agree that the regime is in serious all-round crisis. We all raise our fists and shout in unison that victory is certain. We agree in our general discussions that our military line grows out of our political line, that the military is subordinate to the political leadership; that is, that our military affairs and those executing them are under the political guidance and direction of the movement. The thing that is lacking is that we do not properly formulate and project how to wage the offensive and achieve victory. The thing is, how to put our theory into practice.

Comrade Ronnie's article attempts to bring us to the burning question of proper structures and planning: how to build the movement underground, to bring us to the question of building the revolutionary army. Proper structures and good organisation will utilise cadres properly and produce good cadres. In their turn, good cadres will strengthen the organisation and develop it.

Bedrock of our revolution

We are fighting a highly developed state with a well-organised army and police. This state rests on a pillar, which is the muscle of millions of Black exploited and oppressed. This is its weakness. The millions constitute a political army of revolution. They are the bedrock of our revolution. They must be organised into a revolutionary army.

We need, then, to ensure that our structures outside and inside the country conform to the challenge ahead. They should not compete, but should reinforce each other. They must be fused and integrated for the purpose. We cannot at this crucial time afford the luxury of scoring points. We must exert our energies to build an ANC leadership on the ground, that will, hour to hour, minute to minute, feel the pulse of our people; a leadership in a position to judge a decisive moment, and be able to say, "We act now."

This is the task of ANC members. Military aspects are only the means to achieve and accomplish political goals. The political campaign to make the ANC a household name in the late 1970s was correct, and it bore fruit. The death-defying and daring exploits of MK cadres from the late 1970s into the early 1980s also made the ANC a household name. Both factors helped to bring us to the position we are in today.

For this question of building the underground to be understood, it should not be a preserve of the leadership. The cadres of the movement as a whole should be educated to understand the

approach; in particular, those who are poised in their deployment to undertake the tasks.

Preparation of cadres

We are taught in our political education that every cadre of MK must be a political organiser. In our briefing of cadres going inside, our focus should be to entrench the movement on the ground. Cadres should understand which actions are appropriate during times of upsurge and times of relative calm. There is a need to unleash their initiative, creativity and flexibility.

Cadres poised for the front should be engaged in extensive political discussions, and there is a need here to be relevant to the expectations and mood of such cadres. They must be involved in discussion of burning issues of the moment.

This serves as part of their orientation and also as a platform to air their views and opinions. It is important that in these discussions they should not be confined to purely political issues, but also discuss military affairs and perspectives as part of the elimination of the problem.

It is the duty of all to ensure that everybody is up to date with developments at home and in the movement. A uniform programme of discussion for everybody going in should be devised.

In such discussions, it is incumbent on us not only to support the comrades' political quest but also their logistical quest. They must feel the care and value the movement accords them. We should aim at making our cadres, even behind the enemy lines, or in enemy hands, feel and understand their prestige in the organisation. In the dark tunnel, they must hear the rumblings of the whole membership behind them.



THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY DEBATE WHAT IS CENTRAL?

By Ronnie Kasrils

There have been a number of articles in *Sechaba* following mine, *The Revolutionary Army*, in the issue of September 1988. I would like to add a few words to what has been said by Theresa (who criticised my exposition), Woman Combatant, Mzala and Tsepo Nare (who took up the cudgels against this criticism) and Tebogo Kgope.

The reason for Theresa's objection to my position clearly appears in the last part of her article, when she states, "The emergence of a people's movement opens up a path for compromise in South Africa." This is in direct contradiction to my opinion, which is that the mass upsurge has brought much closer the possibility of a seizure of power. Theresa, as Mzala has pointed out, seems to regard a seizure of power as impossible. This has blinded her to the essence of my article, which concerns the means by which the revolutionary army of our people, with Umkhonto We Sizwe as the core, can be developed towards the capture of state power.

It is obvious that this does not show a "militarist tendency," which Theresa, as well as Tebogo, attributes to me. It situates the armed struggle within the masses, seeks to place weapons in their hands, and does not isolate them — indeed, it seeks to integrate them, and other forms of struggle, into the process. Theresa declares that I have failed to learn from the people's struggle. Far from it. My argument that the revolutionary army, in its multi-dimensional form, is a possibility in our country derives from an analysis of the rich experience we have accumulated in over 25 years — experience of developing armed struggle, and experience of the insurrectionist tendencies that manifested themselves in the township uprisings of 1984-86.

Theresa has taken the dictum, 'learn from the people's struggle,' to an absurd length, sidelining

the role and responsibility of the vanguard. Her appreciation of this role is thus reduced to the following: "It is the national liberation movement that must sum up, make more logical and systematic, the people's experience." With a view as limited as this, it is little wonder that she fails to understand or accept my argument that it is the task of the vanguard to build the revolutionary army of the masses. Such a force as the revolutionary army must be purposefully built according to systematic planning by the vanguard.

Theresa should ponder on the article by Sizwe Mkhwanazi, *Our Vanguard and the Seizure of Power*, appearing in the same issue of *Sechaba* as her own. Here, the relationship between the vanguard and the masses is given proper expression.

The surest guarantee

What I would like to make clear to Theresa is that a strategy for the seizure of power, and a programme for the building of a revolutionary army, do not rule out the possibility of a negotiated settlement. In the absence of an armed movement of our people, the mass struggle which she believes is opening up a path for compromise may do no more than that. If the enemy finds itself with little option but to negotiate, which may well be the case, the surest guarantee against a compromise detrimental to the people's interests will be the existence and pressure of the revolutionary army.

What I have sought to project is that, in such a crisis, which must be brought about by an intense mass struggle with an armed dimension, an insurrectionary situation may well develop.

What Theresa and Tebogo Kgope both fail to grasp is that a mass uprising, even an armed uprising, will not be based purely on the actions of

Umkhonto We Sizwe. In other words, it is not simply a military affair. Our insurrectionary capacity will be based on the sum total of all the forces and means at the disposal of the revolutionary movement. This includes the multi-faceted political struggle of the masses (what Sizwe and Tebogo refer to as "the political army") and the revolutionary army. Both Theresa and Tebogo seem to think that the seizure of power involves the physical defeat of the enemy on the battlefield, which is why they accuse me of militarism. In fact, the role of the revolutionary army is within the mass struggle and within the broad political-military strategy for intensifying the struggle and opening up the possibility for insurrection.

Vision of the seizure of power

Tebogo's contribution also requires some critical consideration. Although he supports the armed path and the need to build a revolutionary army, his argument (unlike Theresa's, which is at least made from a particular position) only creates confusion.

He claims I have failed to provide a vision of the seizure of power, but ignores my thesis on the revolutionary army and the unfolding of the insurrectionary possibility — the vision I sought to impart. I don't know how much space he expected *Sechaba* to afford me, but, writing about my failure to elaborate sufficiently on the subject he poses no less than 16 questions which he says I have failed to address. And in the process he fails to provide one answer. In addition, he lifts my statements out of context and misinterprets them, and then accuses me of being "ambiguous," "contradictory," "misleading" and "mistaken."

For example, he takes issue with my statement that the SADF and the SAP "can be removed only through the means of a revolutionary army," because, as he explains, "it is not only through armed struggle that this will be achieved." I did not say that removing the SADF and SAP was exclusively the task of the revolutionary army. My point is that we cannot remove the SADF and SAP without the revolutionary army. After all, my whole contribution to the debate is infused with a sense of the necessity to combine all forms of

struggle to overthrow the racist regime.

The army is more than a mere threat

Tebogo misinterprets my statement that "what is necessary" to a peaceful or violent way "is the presence of the revolutionary army." He says that in this role the revolutionary army would be "posturing," using its presence merely "to threaten the ruling power." But I have not suggested that the revolutionary army would be kept waiting in the wings. It has an active, dynamic role in the centre of the stage. It is perfectly clear also that I visualise the point at which an active, armed and mass struggle may force a ruling group to seek a negotiated settlement. I am arguing that in such a case, no less than in the insurrectionary scenario, the existence of the revolutionary army is indispensable.

The revolutionary army, actively engaged in struggle, is an instrument for bringing about the revolutionary crisis, which may or may not force the ruling group to avoid a catastrophic end by seeking a negotiated solution. It is also the guarantor that in the event of a peaceful settlement the rulers will not easily be able to renege on the agreements. I have pointed this out in straightforward language. It is indisputable that a revolutionary army exists as a threat to the ruling power, during hostilities and at the time of talks. The logic by which Tebogo presumes I have simply advocated a "posturing" and threatening form of violence is strange indeed.

Tebogo accuses me of "militarism." He refers to my statement that, "central to the creation of the subjective factor is Umkhonto We Sizwe." In taking me to task for failing to state that, "it is the ANC underground that is central," he ignores a great deal I have said about the underground elsewhere in my article.

Role of the underground

I took pains to emphasise that overcoming our subjective weaknesses "is the key task of our movement," and I have defined this as "the presence of revolutionary organisations and their ability to

organise and lead the masses in all forms of struggle — armed struggle included." I discussed at length the relationship between the underground and the army. At no point did I suggest that the role of the army is primary and that of the ANC underground is secondary. In fact, I made it clear that "it is incontrovertible that a strong underground ... would help solve all the problems we face," and "the structures of the political movement control the revolutionary army." All that written evidence exists to show how clearly I have expressed my views on the primary and key role of the underground, and yet Tebogo takes the word, "central," to demonstrate that I have minimised the leading role of the underground.

Developing the underground and developing Umkhonto We Sizwe are, as I have argued, key tasks of the struggle. What the South African situation has revealed in all its starkness is the need to develop our combat forces and popular militia of the masses, and this is a central task of the revolu-

tion. Let professors of linguistics debate the merits of "key" and "central." I do not think our people would misunderstand the meaning.

In fact, Tebogo himself, having argued that "the ANC underground is central," goes on to say: "the militant and united action of our masses is the key." One is led to wonder how he has distinguished between the words, "key" and "central" in his own use of them.

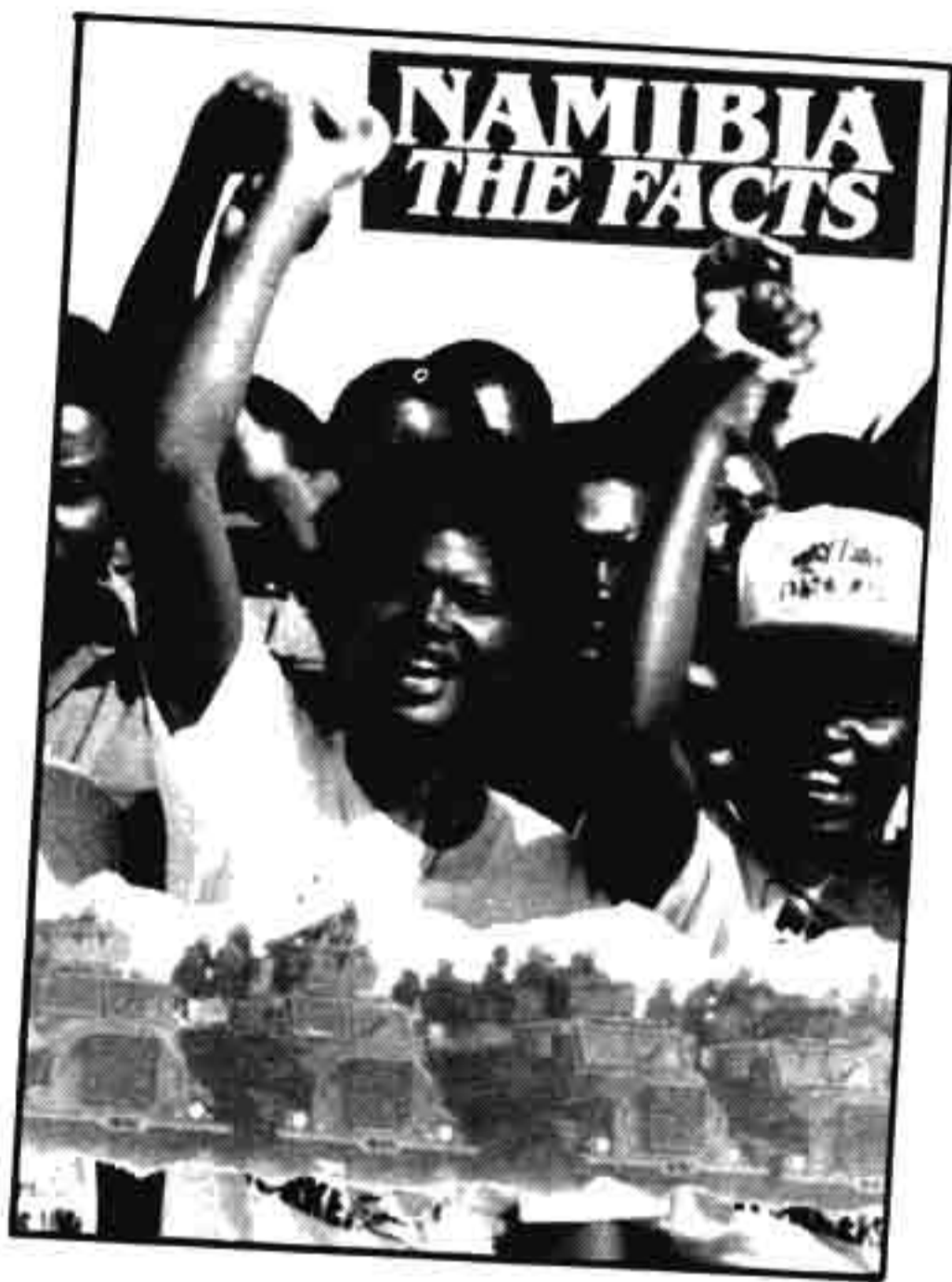
I feel it would be a pity if attention were to be deflected from the key and central issue that must be grasped by all — the concept of the revolutionary army and its role in the seizure of power. I hope this debate will persuade readers of *Sechaba* to go on studying and discussing the question.

Note: Theresa's article appeared in the January 1989 issue of *Sechaba*, Tebogo Kgope's in March, Woman Combatant's letter in May, and the contributions of Mzala and Tsepo Nare in June.



BOOK REVIEW

Namibia: The Facts, IDAF, London, 1989,
ISBN:0 904759 946, £7.50.



Poor press coverage of Namibian internal affairs is nothing new. There has always been a shortage of published information about this vast, strategically central country.

Namibia suffered under 19th century German colonialism until South Africa seized it for the British Empire in World War I. South Africa then held it and administered it, first under a League of Nations mandate and then illegally, after the United Nations revoked the mandate in 1966.

From the days of the German colonisers until now, therefore, it has been held by armed force. Forced labour under German rule was replaced by 'contract labour' for the benefit of the mining companies and White-owned farms. Repression has been intense, and control tight. Nearly all information coming from the country was what had been put out by the rulers. It wasn't until the 1950s that messages from Namibian freedom fighters began to arrive at the United Nations.

In recent years, the whole world has heard about the disputes over the legal status of Namibia, about the illegal occupation by

South Africa, about SWAPO and the struggle for freedom; yet information from within Namibia remained meagre. What was available was what had been released by Pretoria.

Few correspondents from overseas went to Namibia — they would almost certainly have been denied legal access to the townships, the bantustans and the 'war zone' in the north, where many of the mines are, and would have had to rely on government-controlled information services and on the local press. Most of the local press is orientated towards local White affairs. The exception to this is *The Namibian*, which exposes South African atrocities and supports the cause of democracy; its offices have been attacked and its journalists harassed.

Readers looking for background information on present events will probably find more information in *Namibia: The Facts* than they have ever seen before, about all aspects of the long suffering of Namibia, and the long struggle for freedom. The text is detailed, interesting, clear and readable, and presented with sources, extracts from documents, diagrams, maps and photographs.

JM

The book is available from IDAF Publications, 64 Essex Road, London N1 8LR. Prices, including packing and postage, are: United Kingdom, £8.50; Europe, £9.75; Middle East, £10.55; Africa and America, £11.10; Far East and the Pacific Ocean, £12.00

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