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FEBRUARY 1981



# SECHABU

official organ of the african  
national congress south africa

## SAVE THEIR LIVES



**MANANA**



**LUBISI**



**MASHIGO**

# SECHABA

February Issue 1981

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# STOP APARTHEID MURDER!

Solomon Mahlangu was hanged. Despite international protests and demands for his release, the brutes decided to take his life. His only "crime" was that he had a "common purpose" with those involved in the Goch Street incident.

Now they have sentenced to death Ncimbithi Johnson Lubisi (28), Petrus Tsephe Mashigo (20) and Naphtali Manana (24).

These comrades have committed no crime at all except to fight against apartheid which has been declared by the UN "a crime against humanity". They were not involved in the bank siege in Silverton. They were sentenced to death for their involvement in the attack on Soekmekaar police station in January 1979. Although nobody died during this incident, the judge found that the three had "intended" to kill 2 black policemen in the station.

These are freedom fighters, the best sons and daughters of our people, men and women who are prepared to sacrifice all — including their lives for the liberation of our people. They are amadelakufa — those who are prepared to die if needs be — to quote a phrase from Mandela's Rivonia speech.

This is the calibre and testimony to the quality of our youth, a youth which knows nothing but suffering, a youth which features prominently in the current political trials, but a youth which strikes at Moroka, Booyens, Orlando. Sasolburg and Secunda and disappears without trace. This is the generation of Thandi Modise.

The ANC has recently signed the Geneva Convention, which in contradiction to Boer morality, grants Prisoner of War Status to all captured soldiers. The morality of the ANC is diametrically opposed to that of the Pretoria Boers. Even at this last and dark hour we are not afraid to show



our humanity. We are sure that victory is on our side and the enemy is bound to lose.

Our humanity is a people's humanity, revolutionary in essence and it is because of our convictions — and we do not want to be pitied — that we ask the international democratic community to say with one voice. Save the Lives of the Pretoria Three!

# SOLIDARITY WITH S.A. WORKERS

## STRIKE LEADER URGES:



*Thozamile Botha*

*Below Sechaba interviews Thozamile Botha, leader of Ford workers in Port Elizabeth and former chairman of the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO).*

Comrade Thozamile recently the world has heard so much about you, could you tell us something about your childhood, your youth and how you came to be a trade union leader?

T.B.: I was born in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth on 15 June 1948. According to my documents whilst in South Africa, I was born in 1950. This came about as a result of pass laws. I had to change my date of birth because I could not be registered in Port Elizabeth after having been out of Port Elizabeth for three years

— I was with my grandmother in Alexandria — whilst my parents were in Port Elizabeth. I was not allowed to live there. Then I had to reduce my age when I came back to Port Elizabeth so that I could be registered.

So you came to know the meaning of pass laws at an early age?

T.B.: I was born into the system of pass laws.

What about your education?

T.B.: I studied at a Secondary School, I was already old at that time. This was at Kwazakhele High School. Then I went to work in 1968 when I passed Standard 6. I worked at S.A. Adamus for three months and thereafter I worked at Downing and Edward.

Then I went back to school and I did J.C. Afterwards I got a bursary to do Matriculation because I did not have money. I went to Newell High School where I passed my matric. Then in April I had to go and work. I got a job at Murray Stewart. I worked from April 1974 to January 1975 before I could go to Fort Hare in 1975. So I wrote my matric privately.

At Fort Hare there was a strike in 1976 with the result that for 2 years I was out of school. This was partly due to the fact that I did not have money to go back. So I had to go and work at Kwazakhele High School for 2 years, 1977-78.

And then what happened?

T.B.: In the course of 1978 about 474 students were arrested during the uprisings and we as teachers had formed before then an Association for Science and Technology. The Association was aimed at "improving

the quality of life"; the standard of science at black schools; we aimed at building a laboratory where we were going to cater for the pupils interested in science but are out of school and also to supplement the poorly equipped black laboratories.

So during the course of that campaign for financial support these 474 students were arrested and we had to raise funds; we organised a fund-raising show called "Save the Children" and we raised about R900. Immediately thereafter all the organisers were arrested. There were 13 of us, the executive of the Association for Science and Technology and I was charged - all the others were acquitted and released after detention. I was charged with "incitement" to public violence.

It was then that the last state witness in my case Mzukisi Nobhadula - who changed his statement because he said he was forced to make a statement against me - "died" at the "Rooi Hel" prison within two weeks of his arrest for "perjury". And this was a week before Lungile Tabalaza died in Port Elizabeth.

When did you start at Ford?

T.B.: At the end of 1978 because I felt I was underpaid as an unqualified teacher. I decided to work at Ford. I started at Ford in early 1979 to be precise in February where I worked first in a leather factory where there were a number of women working there - only 5 men. I got a job which I did not like partly because of exploitation and ill treatment. The women were especially maltreated and very much underpaid. So I decided to take a job as an industrial engineer trainee. We went for a course for three months after that we did industrial engineering work.

How was PEBCO formed?

T.B.: The Port Elizabeth Civic Organisation (PEBCO) was formed in September 1978. It was formed at Zwide Township - a newly built township - where I got a house in June only to discover that the houses had no floors, no ceilings, were unplastered and water was metered. That was the first of its kind in P.E. where Blacks

have to pay for metered water. So we complained about this - the women of the township went to the Administration Board to complain. The manager refused to talk to them and advised them to bring their husbands. They told us and at a meeting we decided to send a delegation to the director of the East Cape Administration Board, L.C. Koch.

I was elected to lead the delegation. All Koch told us is that the houses are sold at lease, rents are stipulated by the Department of Community Development, water for the whole black community was going to be metered.

So we went back. At a meeting attended by more than 10,000 people - the Centenary Hall was full - we decided to change the Zwide Residents' Association and substitute it with a larger body which will be the mouthpiece of the people of P.E. At that meeting we made a suggestion that this body should be an alternative to the government imposed community councils whose aims should be: to fight rent and bus fare increases; to fight against mass removals and enforcement to Bantustan citizenship upon black people; to fight against enforcement of Bantu Education and also to fight for the establishment of old-age houses for the older citizens instead of them being sent to Bantustans. We also fought against the practice of dumping black people into single-sex hostels; we combated this. We fought against the removal of Walmer Township - a township near Port Elizabeth where people are being removed to about 30 km from P.E. These were the issues that were raised.

We know that Ford intervened at this juncture. What were the issues?

T.B.: Because of my involvement in PEBCO, Ford decided to give me an ultimatum to choose between PEBCO and my work. I chose PEBCO. That same day at a PEBCO meeting which was again attended by more than 10,000 people, it was decided that if Ford does not reinstate me then PEBCO will employ me as a full time functionary. The following day when people went to work they issued leaflets everywhere at 7.30 a.m. demanding that

I should address them on the reasons for my resignation at Ford.

Immediately I resigned the following day leaflets were distributed in the plant demanding that I should be brought back to the plant to address the workers, the leaflets were distributed by the workers. The management was given an ultimatum: If I'm not there by 12.00 noon that day the workers would walk out.

Of course I was not there and the workers walked out demanding that I should be brought back otherwise they will stay out. They remained out for 2½ days until the management called me to the plant. We had a discussion and the outcome of that meeting was that there was a misunderstanding between the supervisor and myself. They said they would be prepared to take me back and to give me a chance to address the workers and to give reasons for my resignation. I did that.

And then what transpired?

T.B.: I told them that I was prepared to go back to work provided there were no conditions attached and that everybody was reinstated unconditionally and that there should be no victimisation. We were all re-instated with pay.

How did the white workers react to this? Did they show any solidarity with you in your struggles?

T.B.: No, not at all, on the contrary, when I returned to work the Ford white workers held a meeting outside the plant and took a resolution that they would boycott or they would go on strike if Ford was not paying them double for the days we were on strike (and we were paid our money) and they did not stop at that. They also made some other demands namely that eating facilities should be segregated because their lives were in danger amongst anti-government elements — meaning us. They made insulting statements that the Blacks were smelling and they could not behave themselves in the cafeteria and that Blacks were kissing their white ladies.

How did the black workers react to this situation?

T.B.: The black workers boycotted the canteen and remained outside; they demanded that the man who made these statements should retract them and that he should be transferred to another plant. Though the management disassociated itself from the statement, it refused to transfer him.

This led to a listing of other demands by workers, for example, doing away with job reservation within the plant, integration of training facilities for black and white workers; training of Blacks for technical jobs and promotion of Blacks to managerial positions. The management was given 14 days by the workers, until that elapsed. The workers walked out, sent a delegation to the management.

Was the management sympathetic to your demands?

T.B.: They never are and will never be so. The management declared the meeting illegal. In fact before the meeting took place, three days earlier they published notices to other plants stating that there should be no more meetings within the plant — the meetings were banned within the plants. When the workers held a meeting that was a contravention of the order of the management, they declared the meeting illegal and gave the workers an ultimatum either to go to work or to go home. Then the workers would decide to go home but they would demand that they should be paid on the spot.

The management would then call in police — about 10 vans and 4 trucks all fully loaded, riot police armed. Then the management would come to address the workers with their usual ultimatum: either go back to work or go home or the police will act.

We would then all go and hold a meeting outside in the community.

One day whilst we were walking out at Ford Cortina, about 500 workers at the Engine plant were also walking out. At S.A. Adamus, the same day, about 600 workers walked out. At General Tyre

about 1,200 workers walked out. At Red Lion Hotel it was 125 workers. All these workers walked out the same day. All of them gathered in the township in the Community Hall and took a resolution that they will not go back to work until all their demands had been met.

The management issued a statement that they will not reinstate the workers but will re-employ them on application without payment and the workers rejected that. We then approached the UAW.

What is that?

T.B.: That is the Union of Auto Workers. The UAW refused to participate in the strike on the grounds that the strike was political; PEBCO was involved. Later they went to negotiate on our behalf. On coming back they persuaded us to be re-employed.

Why were you arrested?

T.B.: Well I was still talking about the Ford strike that whilst people that went out were on strike, and while the trade union refused to negotiate on behalf of the workers, then PEBCO decided to take resolutions to force Ford to reinstate the workers by taking a resolution to boycott all Ford parts throughout the country; to boycott liquor outlets controlled by the government, to boycott all white-owned shops, that there was going to be a day of solidarity, that all workers in the Eastern Cape and Port Elizabeth area would not go to work for one day, and students announced at this meeting that they had taken a resolution in a meeting of COSAS that they would not go to school for one week in solidarity with the Ford workers. So a day later Ford agreed to reinstate all the workers, when an American consul based in Cape Town went down to Ford, to persuade them to talk to the Ford workers committee. Then everybody was reinstated and the management agreed on 9th January to reinstate me unconditionally. Then on 10th January I was arrested, detained for 48 days and on release I was banned. This meant I could not work in any factory, I could not go to school, or go out of doors between 6pm-6am everyday I could

not go out on public holidays and weekends, I could not be visited by friends at home I could not be involved in politics. Then I decided to leave the country.

Can you tell us about the Sullivan principles and the Code of Conduct?

These are just a sham — they are an excuse for the multinational corporations to operate in S.A. so they continue with the exploitation of the black worker protected by such reforms as the Sullivan and EEC codes where workers continue to work under the same conditions with no improvement whatsoever. All that is happening is that the multinational corporations claiming to operate these codes which are aimed according to them at "improving the quality of life" of the Blacks where in fact they are improving the method of exploitation. In fact they are promoting apartheid at a more sophisticated level. Where they are now using subtle methods, they still maintain a vertical line, in other words Blacks can supervise other Blacks but no Black can supervise a white man. They talk about the training of Blacks — but they have to train in their own separated institutions. There are no technicians in S.A. today. There is no way these codes can be implemented while there is racism or discrimination as a system in S.A.

And Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions?

Their recommendations are the most dangerous reforms used by the regime. These are aimed at monitoring the activities of the workers, at controlling the workers, by saying they've allowed workers to organise strikes, in order to organise a strike today the workers have got to apply to the government, to the Dept of Manpower and Utilisation, and again workers cannot represent migrant labourers who constitute 60% of the total black workforce in South Africa. And also that workers and trade unions should not participate in politics. There is no way that trade unions cannot participate in politics when they are oppressed by the S.A. political system. In fact their very existence inside the plant is a political one. Unless

they are liberated as a nation they will remain oppressed as a class of workers — it's part of a total liberation struggle. These recommendations are just aimed at controlling the activities of the workers, so they do not get out of hand.

And the Poverty Datum Line?

This is nonsense and a 'fake. Because of the PDL, when they talk about it, they do not consider rents, education, clothing, or the rise in food prices. The PDL in 1977 was \$127 a month — whereas 33 British Companies paid below this level and were paying people \$92 and below. Also it is calculated by whites with the food being rice, mealie-meal, coffee, sugar and nothing else. People cannot eat meat or vegetables on these calculations. People have to live on bad rice or maize, nothing else.

Fords try to present itself as one of the most progressive employers, as an exponent of the idea that you can change apartheid from within. Can you give us your reaction to this?

A good example is the Ford strike, where we went on strike first of all because I was involved in community activities, trying to improve the quality of life in the community, fighting against rent increases, bus fare increases, against mass removal of people. But Ford claims to be fighting to improve the quality of life of the Blacks. If Ford was concerned, they would not have dismissed me. Again the demands were equal pay for equal work, scrapping of job reservation within the plant, promotion of Blacks to senior positions and training facilities. If Ford was progressive, there would not have been such demands at Fords. If there is no integration, if white workers can make insults — that they're in danger, that Blacks are smelly and demand separation of eating facilities — this is a sign that there is nothing progressive about Ford. Ford has also built the most expensive houses costing R85 a month, whereas we're earning nothing more than R200. How does a person buy groceries and clothing — if they're concerned about improving the quality of life.

What is your message to Sechaba readers on solidarity?

What is important now, especially for the trade unions, is that all workers must unite. In terms of disinvestment, the situation is more urgent than ever. We are calling on all the trade unions throughout the world to unite and pledge solidarity with the workers in South Africa. First of all we are saying to the workers, when workers go on strike somewhere in South Africa, they remain workers and need solidarity. Workers have one common enemy who delights at exploiting them, especially now when some companies close when business is bad, and go and open businesses in the South African cheap labour system. This is a disadvantage to workers in other countries, because the companies are increasing the rate of unemployment in their countries and exploiting workers somewhere else. The general excuse is that people in South Africa will starve. The companies talk of human rights — they should talk of human rights in their own countries and not in countries which have a cheap labour system. Again there are trade unions which have heavily invested their pension funds in South Africa, banks and companies trading with South Africa. They must withdraw their investments because their monies are being used by the South African regime to buy arms and kill the black oppressed people, so they are responsible for the death, oppression and exploitation suffered by the people of South Africa as long as they have invested in South Africa.

The argument would be that workers will starve in South Africa. But workers have gone on strike for long periods without pay. We were on strike for 3 months without pay. 2,000 workers were prepared to go to the Bantustans because they wanted meaningful change — and some were killed. When Goodyear was on strike people were killed, there were shootings. These are signs that people are prepared to sacrifice their lives for change in South Africa.



## PRETORIA 3-

# EMERGENCY CAMPAIGN

On the 26th November 1980, Apartheid Judge De Villiers, implemented white racist justice by sentencing 3 young patriots to death and 6 others to terms of imprisonment ranging from between 10 to 20 years. All the comrades, members of the ANC, had been tried for alleged "High Treason" and other trumped up charges which the regime calls "terrorist activities". In the face of this travesty of democratic justice, the revolutionary fervour of the comrades was not dampened. Their songs said: "We shall Overcome", "Siyahlongana Kahle Sesithole inkululeko", and their slogans resounded "Amandla — Power to the People". The 80 relatives and spectators allowed into the court responded with "Afrika! Mayibuye" and then "Nkosi Sikelela iAfrika!" was sung. The Pretoria Supreme Court became the setting for one of the most moving political meetings at the end of 1980 — the Year of the Charter, the 25th Anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter.

The reaction to the apartheid justice was swift and scathing both in South Africa and abroad. Outside the court, hundreds of people marched to the back singing "Senzeni na" and waited for over an hour to catch a glimpse of the condemned patriots as they were driven in heavily guarded police vans back to prison.

The Womens Federation of South Africa at a meeting in Soweto resolved to send a petition to all the churches calling on the regime to spare the lives of the 3 comrades.

Professor John Dugard, head of the Witwatersrand University Centre for Applied Legal Studies attacked the sentences, saying: "A sentence of this kind is denounced by history. By imposing the death penalty on

the Silverton Three, Mr Justice De Villiers had both ignored South African history and failed to take account of recent history in Zimbabwe."

Internationally an emergency campaign was immediately launched to save the lives of the Pretoria Three. The UN Secretary General issued a statement of protest against the sentences. Anti-apartheid groups throughout Europe and the US and Canada have begun to build a mass campaign to prevent apartheid murder.

In becoming a signatory to the Geneva Conventions, the ANC has solemnly undertaken to treat all captured enemy soldiers as prisoners of war. The international community must do all in its power to save the lives of Comrades Lubisi, Mashigo and Manana and demand that they be accorded prisoner of war status.

PROTEST TO P.W. BOTHA, UNION BUILDINGS, PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA.

SEND MESSAGES OF SUPPORT TO THE PRETORIA THREE AT: PRETORIA MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON, PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA.



# RACISTS CLAMPDOWN ON PRESS

Amidst a sinister plot to emasculate the Press, the Steyn Commission of Inquiry into the Media — the big stick in the racist arsenal — has again been used to strike at newspapers serving Blacks and two leading black journalists. Using the provisions of the Internal Security Act, the South African fascist state has not only served banning orders on Zwelakhe Sisulu and Marimuthu Subramoney, but has also phased out of circulation the Post, Saturday Post, Sunday Post and the Sowetan.

## Strike Settlement Ambushed

Having carefully watched the process of negotiations between Mwasas and the managements of the Argus and SAAN companies, and wary of the settlements, the racist hawk took a swift dive to strike a double blow. The banning of the two Mwasas leaders and the closing down of the newspapers (under false legal pretences) was an attempt to make the agreement baseless and also at sowing confusion in the ranks of both parties.

The reasons for these hawkish acts of intimidation and panic are quite clear. The reaching of the settlement was not in the racist state's favour.

It would have meant that the papers would resume publication. The Sunday Post, in particular, had become the target of vicious criticisms as reflected in the testimony of the Chief of Security, Brigadier Coetzee, to the Steyn Commission and other threats, including from P.W. Botha. There has also been considerable utterances from the military top-brass expressing similar "concern". The main crime of the Sunday Post however, is that it initiated and co-ordinated the campaign for the

release of Nelson Mandela, published the Freedom Charter and acted as a true reflector of apartheid reality. Zwelakhe Sisulu was its news editor.

For Mwasas to have succeeded to gain recognition of the newspaper companies and successfully negotiate a settlement outside the dictates of the new labour regulations "would be the end of fascist morals". Mwasas is not registered under the requirements of the Wiehahn ghosts and its successes by fascist standards, would therefore establish bad precedents. It would have put into doubt and suspicion the real motives behind the Steyn Commission (which had already started passing judgement even before its so-called mandate was completed). These actions, bannings and closures, would therefore justify the outcome of the commission — which is already predictable.

## "Legal" Guise Unveiled

Since the end of October 1980, most newspapers were hit by a nationwide strike called by Mwasas (see Sechaba Jan. Issue 1981). As a result most papers were unable to publish regularly or at all. The Post, Saturday Post, Sunday Post and Sowetan were amongst the worst hit. These papers were closed after the Argus company was told that they failed to publish for more than a month and that their registration had consequently lapsed in terms of the Internal Security Act — which also governs registration of newspapers.

An urgent application was made to the Supreme Court for a declaration of rights on the grounds that single sheet copies of the newspapers were published and sent to various people, including state

officials and statutory libraries as demanded by the act. The Judge chose to find that the company's actions did not constitute publication based on some technicalities bordering on definitions. An urgent appeal was then made to the Internal Affairs Minister, Heunis, to allow resumption of publication. The normal re-registration procedure takes at least 21 days, according to the Act.

But the presence of the Chief of Security, Brigadier Coetzee in the court hearing leads to the conclusion (based on the record of security machinery manipulation of all state sectors) that in fact the government was using legal technicalities of registration as a means of silencing the papers. It is this machinery that recommends banning orders and his men had just served these on Sisulu and Subramoney. Only such an outcome would justify his attacks on the media (Post in particular) when giving evidence to the Steyn Commission and the general harrasment of journalists by his gestapo.

#### Who are Sisulu and Subramoney?

Marimuthu Subramoney is the national Vice-Chairman of Mwasu and its Natal regional secretary. He was a reporter on the Daily News for eight years until his resignation in September 1980. He then formed his own news agency — Press Trust of South Africa. He was also managing editor of a new company which had planned to print and publish a weekly newspaper, Ukusa, from February.

He was the Durban correspondent of Capital radio, Channel 702 News, BBC, Radio Deutsche Welle and Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Earlier last year he was detained by security police during the country-wide school boycotts.

Zwelakhe Sisulu spear-headed the two month strike by Mwasu. He became the president of Mwasu in the wake of the now defunct Wasu. He is also news editor of Sunday Post. He is the son of a leading member of the ANC, Comrade Walter Sisulu, who is serving a life prison sentence on Robben Island.

Earlier this year he won an appeal against a 9 month prison sentence imposed upon him for refusing to answer questions in a fascist court on telephone conversations he allegedly had with a colleague. He has been detained for questioning several times. His mother, Mrs Nonsikelelo Sisulu, was served with her fourth consecutive banning order in 1979. She has been banned since 1964. In terms of their banning orders they are not supposed to communicate.

#### Reactions to Fascist Act

The Council of Unions of South Africa (Cusa) — an independent black trade union centre — sought an urgent meeting with the Government to discuss the bannings.

These (bannings) were also severely criticised by Mr Hal Miller, managing director of the Argus Company and Mr Clive Kinsley both of whom had negotiated with Mwasu.

They issued a joint statement calling for the lifting of the bans, which they characterised as "senseless, totally uncalled for in the circumstances of the strike and counter-productive to the agreements reached between the newspaper managements and the striking journalists."

The actions were also condemned by the Afrikaans Press — The Volksblad in Bloemfontein, the Beeld and the Transvaler. The Beeld's editorial said the regime had put itself in poor light overseas by "taking a fastidious stand on a minor ruling over registration of the newspapers, as a government that tampers with freedom of speech and the press, to thwart its opposition.

Condemnations also came from the International Press Institute, Metalworkers Federation, ICFTU and the British National Union of Journalists, who mounted a demonstration outside the South African embassy in London.

# WE FOUGHT IN ZIMBABWE

## part 2

Did you have to do hard labour?

There was a time when we had to do hard labour, but that was stopped by I understand Lardner-Burke. Apparently they thought we were getting some form of training that would strengthen us, that would toughen us so that in the event that we would want to break out of prison, we would be stronger than the prison warders.

When was it stopped?

In 1975 or 1976. I am not so very sure now, but I am sure we did not work at all in 1977. We worked outside, that is, between the two walls in some pits about 8 feet deep, circular pits. We crushed stones using 4 pound and 12 pound hammers, big boulders. We crushed them to gravel. I don't know where this was used, but I believe it was taken somewhere to be used in some road construction. I don't know where. And there was a time when we used to crush bones and make them into powder. It was said to be used for porcelain manufacture somewhere. I don't know. The bones would be cooked or would just be burnt in some fire, then crushed. In the exercise yard. We were made to sit in columns. If you so much as uttered a word and were seen by a warder you were in trouble. Even this exercise was also subject to the disposition of the warders. There were certain privileges during this exercise time such as playing volley ball, draughts, and at one time there was also table tennis, but I never saw it, it was before my time in Khami. But for slight mistakes made by any one of us or just because the warder in charge was not pleased he would take away the ball and make us take down the net. They would deny us this privilege except when

at times there was an officer who liked sport and we would ask that we be given sport. And there was a time when we were able to get prison authorities to organise matches between A Hall and B Hall, otherwise that was the only time we had any contact with A Hall.

When you were held in solitary confinement did you see other prisoners when you were in the exercise yard or were you kept on your own during exercise as well?

No, we all went out together. Of course there would be times when they would only go by sides, that is, the west end side to go for exercise for 30 minutes and come back, and then the east side to go for exercise for 30 minutes and come back.

When you were being held in solitary confinement did you manage to speak to any of the others during the exercise?

Yes, we did, although they were very stringent. We talked under our armpits, because if you were seen by a warder talking to another man you would be in trouble. They loosened up a little with the intensification of the struggle outside. And then again the change of warders, the old type of warder, the vicious territorial type of warder was getting out of prison service, and new men were coming into prison service, young men, generally of better education and qualification than the old stock, and chaps who were at least broad-minded, chaps who understood. Some of them sympathised with our cause. But I wouldn't like to give the impression that all of them were like that, even with the new chaps themselves. As a matter of fact, the very fact they went to prison

means that they were running away from the war outside.. Prison staff are not subject to call-ups, so most of them hankered for service in prison. Some of them came to work in the prison after they had served their terms, after they had served their call-ups, and some of them came battle-scarred and they would take it out on us. They would revenge. This happened particularly last year when we were taken to B Hall after we had had a fight in A Hall. These chaps were most vicious when they actually said it outright that we should join Muzorewa or Sithole. Well, of course we refused and they started beating us. The young chaps particularly got the bitter end. As for people like myself and some of the older chaps, the African warders paid a certain respect to us, but the young boys suffered most. These young men are the men who wanted to go for military training and were arrested on the borders by the security forces. They were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 8 years to 13 years, and brought to Khami. Most of them were ZAPU. In fact, I can safely say that 80% who came to prison at the time were ZAPU. Therefore, they suffered for their political affiliations.

To get back to our routine, after lunch, which we sometimes had in the courtyard or sometimes inside our cells, we would remain in the cells until about 2 o'clock and then let out again for exercise which just lasted 30 to 45 minutes. After which we had our supper round about half-past 3 or 4 and went back to the cells. Immediately we went into the Hall we would undress, take off our clothes and place them at the toilets outside the cells, go into the cell naked. When I arrived in Khami this was so. I understand that before our time prisoners were allowed to sleep in their clothes, but after some attempts had been made by the notorious Diggiden, a notorious criminal from Britain. He has a very long record of escaping from prisons in Southern Africa. Now after Diggiden had escaped, they made the prisoners sleep naked. You only had the blankets you had, no pyjamas. We used 3 blankets in summer and would be issued with the fourth at the beginning of the winter season, which usually was in May

until September 30th. We had a sisal mat that we slept on, no pillows, no sheets. This goes according to the scale. There is a system of grading in the prison. Amongst the D class too there are Scale 2 prisoners, that is, those who go to prison with educational qualifications, degrees or with recognised professions like teachers, or a man of means, a man who has property outside, a business man. These were all Scale 2. The rest are just Scale 3. Scale 3 I have already discussed. You are entitled to the pillow-case, some sheets, 4 blankets, they have pyjamas; they had towels before we were issued with towels, they have socks, boots. They were given a different type of soap. We were issued with blue soap and they were given something like Life-buoy which was later changed to Daily. They had long trousers, a hat, a vest, shirt, jersey and corduroy jacket. They were generally kept comfortable. Their diet was better cooked. They got more meat. They had milk, tea, butter, they had jam and they got their fruit every day.

What was Scale 1?

Scale 1 were whites. This scale 2 is African, the educated, and the Coloureds. They got bread every day. As for the other facilities, they had a razor a man every day to shave with. We were four to a razor, twice a week.

Were there any white prisoners in Khami?

There would be at times, but they were brought there only if they misbehaved at Khami Medium. They were brought to Khami Maximum. They didn't generally stay for too long. Whenever they were there they received the Meikles treatment, you know "Meikles". Last year we had David John Price. He occupied cell 123 while I was occupying cell number 124. One day I was whisked away from my cell and sent to one opposite to cell 121. That was at the time they brought the baronet, Sir Rupert Mackeson, (laugh). I stayed with him for a long time, but we were not allowed to mix with him, but at the weekends we managed to converse with him somehow.

Did you find that you had anything in common?

Since he was a prisoner we had something in common with him. In general all criminal prisoners lie too much. I didn't really believe many of the stories he told us, but as for some other incidents, the noise he made in court when he went about raving and shouting, "To hell with Muzorewa". We are not discussing those matters. The Scale 2s and the Scale 1s got the same exercise period with us. At times they would be strict. They would not want them to participate in our sports activities, but then sometimes they would loosen up. This was particularly so last year when Price made some troubles in Khami. He started beating about the warders left and right and they had to allow it to mix with us. He generally behaved like Prince Charles. I don't know what happened to him, but I believe he has committed suicide. He is the impassionate type.

Going back to your conditions, what personal possessions were you allowed apart from clothes? You were saying you had a little bit of spending money, for instance, you could buy a few things like writing materials?

You can't call that a possession, because we didn't have that in our possession. What happened was that there was a time when we were given gratuity. I don't know whether this was by the government or Christian organisations or what, but this amounted to 5 shillings a man every month. You were only required to order. What we were allowed to buy was biscuits, sweets, chocolates, tobacco, matches, some books, exercise books. Those who were studying by correspondence were allowed to buy this, stationery. We were allowed to buy this from the 5 shillings we got a month. But this privilege was suddenly stopped around August 1971, because it was said that part of this money would be kept for us and would be given when we were released. But none of us was ever released. They said they were going to keep three shillings of this, we would be given when we came out of prison. I don't think there

is anyone who got this when they came out. I didn't. Anyway, none of us got it when we were released this year. It was said that the other 2 shillings was going to be used to pay for the 8 cigarettes that we were going to be given once a week. We were given Drum. Most of the time I was in debts in prison. I was helped by some comrades.

While in Khami how did you keep up to date with political developments in the struggle outside?

We did get some newspapers, although they were censored. The prison authorities brought us a copy of the Chronicle, daily. Like the exercises, this was also subject to arbitrary withdrawal. Sometimes they would just take it away. They would not buy us a paper for long periods of time. However, we managed to smuggle some papers into the prison through the use of prison warders. At one time it was very difficult. The only articles we got into prison were just cuttings, but eventually, as time went on, we were able to buy newspapers. It so happened again that of the criminals who worked at the offices there — laundries, kitchens, they were using criminals, the C class prisoners from Khami Medium — we had some dealings with them. They just filched, they just stole the newspapers from the officers. There was once an embarrassing situation for a certain officer. They had come to search the Halls and he discovered his newspaper in the cells. It was his because he had written his own name on it, William Binder. He had left it in the office and they found it in the cells. So by these methods we were able to bring in some material from outside. We also did get once in a while pamphlets from sympathisers and supporters. We used warders to bring this to us. We didn't have many sympathetic warders, we had very few. Especially when the situation would be tense, they would fear to have anything to do with us. Now money worked here — we had to bribe; we had to rely much on bribery. We would give them money and tell him that this is yours for entertainment and would you please kindly bring me a copy of the

Chronicle, for 3 days or so. They would agree generally. They liked money. So this is how we managed to keep up with some of the events in the world. By these means we were able to get this American magazine, Newsweek and Time. We would get Scope. We would get To The Point. We would at times get Drum, but it is too bulky. And also by this means we were able to get tobacco, more tobacco than we got from the prison.

Did you ever get publications from the Liberation Movement?

Not much, but we did, once in 15 months, 18 months, two years. Not always. But after 1975, after the leaders were released in 1974, after 1974 things slackened and the relationship between us and the warders grew friendly little by little. We were able to make use of a lot of them. But many of them are crooks, and criminals too. I mean the warders themselves. For instance, if I had a friend in the location here, and asked the warder just to go to a friend of mine there, tell him that I want this and that, tobacco, newspapers and all and please bring that to me, he would go to the friend, and tell them that I had asked them for money so that he could buy me these things and he would take the money and use it and keep quiet about that. If I asked him in prison, which I would do obviously, he would tell me that he had been there and that no, he didn't find the person I had sent him to, so he would go again. I would only come to hear of it later on, if I had a visit from that particular friend of mine, that I would know the man had been there, and I gave him so much. Now that would place me in an awkward situation because I would not be able to demand that money from the man, because he might want to beat me up or charge me, and where would I be. So I would just keep quiet. So some of them were criminals, some of them were crooks. But on the whole we did manage to get some things inside and after 1974, as I said, we would get some pamphlets from the organisation. I can safely say once in six months.

Did you have any communication, contact with ANC? Was this possible?

I once had, but with the deterioration of relations between this country and Zambia that stopped. I was in contact with some of my comrades in Lusaka, I wrote to them and they replied, but there was a time when I would write and receive a letter and realise that he was not answering to what I had written because he had not seen the letter. And then communications stopped. But that was long ago, that was 1971/72. At the time they sent us some food parcels -- which at one time came late and I was made to gobble the whole thing at the offices, but I couldn't.

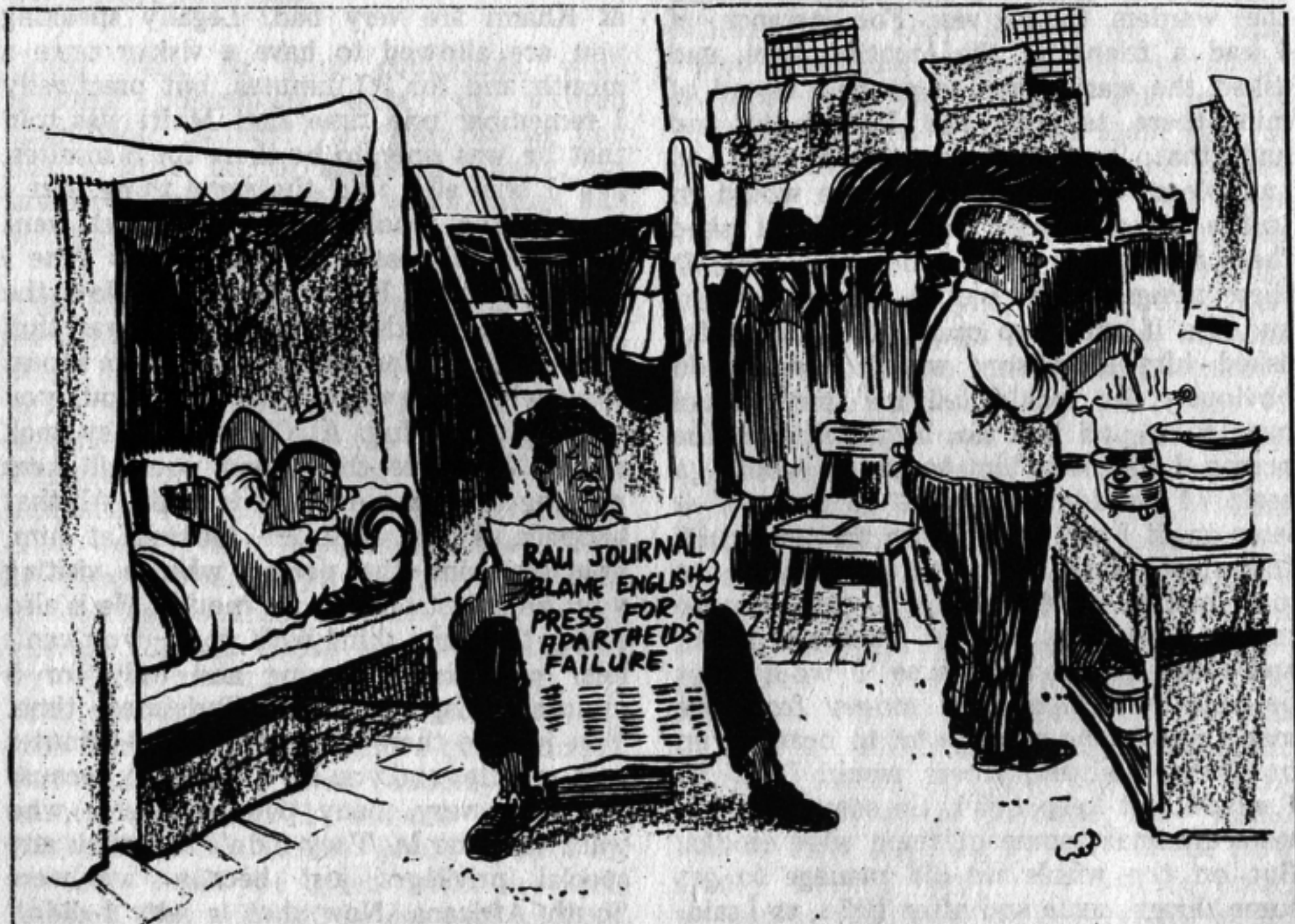
Did you have visits from your families?

Not all of us. Yes, especially Bothwell. His mother did come regularly every Christmas. Now, as for me, I didn't want, because the conditions for meeting visitors at Khami are very bad. Legally speaking you are allowed to have a visitor once a month and for 30 minutes, but practically I remember one time that Mnizi was told that he was only to be there for 5 minutes, and I was also told the same thing, but I ignored the whole thing and I just went there and discussed. It was at this time I was visited by Bothwell's sister. Now the difficulties of the visitor's room was that the visitor is far and you have to shout. Now when there are 3 or 4 of you, you can't hear a thing. At Christmas they pack about 30 inside there, and you will hear nothing from the din that is made. All that happens is that you are looking at him, you see him, the person who is visiting you; he is just moving his mouth. He is also seeing the same thing with you -- you can't hear what he is saying and only for 5 minutes. Especially at Christmas time. You just go there and come out, 3 minutes or 4 minutes and you are chased out because there are very many people outside who want to come in. They didn't accord us any special privileges just because we were South Africans. Now that is why I didn't want my people to come because they would leave me worried, because I would not be able to hear what he says and there

are many things I would like to know about my home. William did also get some visits from his father twice, his mother came twice, his sisters also came 3 or 4 times. His parents usually came during the year. It would be better during the year.

During the year you might be lucky and be the only one in the visitor's room at the time you are called. Your conversation would be audible. I didn't want this, so that is why I refused to have my people come and at any rate I didn't have very good communications with them. I would write a letter, they would answer, but of the most important things I wanted to know they just ignored me on those. But I would see that they had received the letter. And sometimes I would write a letter or receive a letter and realise they had not received mine. So I just gave up and decided that I must behave as if I had nobody else in the world. The other thing that helped give us a picture of what

had taken place in Lusaka was when a group of men was deported from Zambia to this country. In fact, with the connivance of James Chikerema, George Nyandoro and all those who broke away from ZAPU to go and form FROLIZI. These men were brought to Khami. We stayed together with them and we used to discuss a lot with them. They told us a lot of what had taken place in Zambia. Unfortunately, they did include some of the things that I have subsequently come to find that they were not so. For instance, they included Duma Nokwe among those who were expelled from the organisation. I have subsequently found that that was not so. We did buy some educational books, but this of course only took place really late, 1977, 1976. Such as book-keeping books, because the books that were in prison before, that is academic books, book-keeping books, they were gradually withdrawn from circulation because they were



"It just goes to show you can't believe everything you read in the papers. All the years I thought I was miserable under apartheid I was actually happy."



said to be educational books and we were not allowed education and Father Magava was very diligent at this. In actual fact, the authorities didn't care very much about them. They would conduct a search and take the books away and return them all as they were, but whenever Magava was involved the books would come back reduced. He supplied us just with novels, particularly the vernacular novels. Whatever we did that side, we did on the strength of what we had known before we had gone to prison, what we had acquired there at the time when we were still allowed to correspond, that is to receive education by correspondence.

We had schools there. We were not allowed, but we just organised classes from Sub A to O level. We didn't have many qualified teachers. In fact, we never had more than 4 qualified teachers at a time and even those qualified teachers were teachers who had never taught at secondary schools. So we just taught ourselves. For instance, I was a teacher in Khami from 1969 to 1977 until I got tired of the whole thing and gave up. Bothwell also taught English literature, but it did not go far. I taught economics. Unfortunately, I started with a group of 16 students. I wanted to hold examinations with 6 of them (laugh) — they had run away. I realised that it may have been due to my not understanding how to go about teaching. I just taught without actually having been trained in teaching. I also taught book-keeping. They managed to pass every year. I managed to draw on a number of them.

When you say they managed to pass, was this outside examinations?

No, not at all. Our own examinations, but they looked down on that ICB course I've just been telling you about. Bothwell is also doing the ICB course; he thinks there is nothing in it. The Part 2 that they are now doing here, they think that they will pass with flying colours, also those who will sit accountancy, will sit in October and I will see then. I am trying to show you now that we concentrated very much, despite the fact that we lacked material. I taught geography for one year. Many

academic subjects did not draw attraction really. Most of us were concerned with subjects for courses. We were preparing for employment in the future. We laid much more stress on that than academic qualifications, because of the realisation that we were getting old. When we came out of prison you might find that you were fifty years, not having any course, so you would find life very difficult. One overriding factor that we always had in mind was that things might not come out the way we had expected, or the way we wanted, as that was nearly the case with the transitional government of Muzorewa, Chirau, Sithole and Smith. So we had to prepare for such eventualities.

I say we had schools. You would think perhaps in terms of some buildings and facilities like stationery. You must remember that after they stopped education it was a charge to be found in possession of a pencil. So whatever we had in that way had to be kept secret. We managed. They did come and conduct searches and take them away, but in a short space of time we would have our pencils again. We used the toilet tissue for exercise books. For blackboards we used the ground, the earth, you just write with your finger on the ground. For book-keeping, geography, everything, you used your finger on the ground. You had no blackboards, no chalks. Inside the cells we used soap to write on the wall. We had a damp rag to wipe it off. You had to be certain that you would not be in the vision of the warder, when he peeped through the peephole, so you had to be on the same wall as the door, not for instance at the opposite wall, where he would be able to see you. If you are on the same wall, he may see you standing at the other wall, but he would not be able to know what you are doing on the wall. The chaps would sit here on the ground, on the floor, and listen to whatever we were teaching.

Politically, what do you think you learnt from your time in prison? How did your attitude to the liberation struggle change and develop while you were in prison?

It changed for the better, if it changed, that is, we managed to stick to our 15

principles. I wouldn't make a sweeping statement and say that we all stuck the same way, that there were no periods of wavering. I wouldn't go to that extent, but on the whole we adhered by the principles we had when we went to prison. There was a time when we were completely cut off from the outside world, when we heard nothing but the propaganda of the enemy. The enemy concentrated on such incidents as the disintegration of ZAPU in 1971 — and before them there was a lull in the struggle. After our Wankie and Sipolilo operations there was a bit of a lull and things were a bit quiet and propaganda locally was that there was no longer any ZAPU, it was finished and we were the last and there would never be any uprising again. One got the impression that we were the only people who had ever wanted to fight for the liberation of the country. But we kept on remembering that it was the enemy telling us all this and we managed to stick to our ideals, we managed to stick to our principles.

Then in prison I came to learn of comradeship. There were very small things which took place by which I was able to admire my comrades, such things as some comrades, the non-smokers, sacrificing their privilege of getting sweets in order to help the smokers. Each man had the choice of taking the eight cigarettes issued to us once a week or a packet of sweets. The non-smokers sacrificed their sweets in order to help the smokers. There was a time in in prison when it was very very difficult to get tobacco from outside and I will say to you that before 1974, it was only at Christmas time that we managed to smoke to our satisfaction. During the year we had it tough and had it not been for the help we got from the non-smokers among us, many of us would have been disturbed mentally. This comradeship manifested itself in other ways, such as for instance we managed to stick to one another in the face of intimidation, in the face of torments. We helped each other in many ways and I came to respect many men. In fact, I came to respect man in prison.

But we were affected in 1971 when Chikerema wanted to form FROLIZI.

surrounding their decision in Lusaka. This affected us, because some of us then wanted to follow Chikerema, but it was just "tribal" inclinations. I will say that because there is no other reason why a man would want to follow another man without knowing why that man has made the decision he has made. He is just following because he is a home boy, he is a man from the same place I come from, of my "tribe". Incidentally, those men who followed Chikerema, who suddenly called themselves members of FROLIZI in prison, without knowing anything about FROLIZI, they eventually gravitated towards the UANC and many of them were released from



prison to go and form the nucleus of the auxiliary forces of the UANC in 1978. They left the prison on 24th October 1978. We heard of them, although their stories were not broadcast, not published. In fact, there was some minor coverage of their commanders, but it was said that they had arrived from Zambia together with Muzorewa when he came into this country about June in 1977 — which was not the case. There were 28 of them who went to form, to man the auxiliaries in 1978. But on the whole, their departure from ZAPU left us more strong and the more convinced of the justness of our cause, because when we came to see what Muzorewa did, and Sithole did, that is, coming with tails in between their legs to Smith, we realised that we had been right all along. They were nothing but cheap lying extremists, who would merely flinch with the first bullet, and we were proved right. They came in June to September — Chikerema, Sithole, Muzorewa and the others. What did they achieve? They made many wild promises to the effect that they would stop the war at the snap of a finger. The war did not stop. We remained in prison and we remained strong. We conducted some political classes. These were not allowed of course, but we did conduct our own political classes. Remember, we had to deal with new men, young men, many of them born from 1954 to 1962, who wanted to cross to go and join ZAPU, that is, ZIPRA in Zambia. They were arrested on the borders, but some were here around Marula, and there were a number of them who had no intention of crossing but were going for visits.

Now there were many of these men and there were the other young men who had the intention of going for military training. So we had to do something for these men. It was not their fault that they were arrested. They had been determined and they were still determined. So we conducted political classes and we did so much so that they acquitted themselves very well during the election campaign and I have heard that even the leader of the Patriotic Front, Dr. Joshua Nkomo, realised that they had obtained better political education than the guerrillas themselves.

Do you feel bitter or resentful about your time in prison?

Not at all. Oh, about my time in prison? Well, I'll answer this way. I think I have already answered you on that. We do not resent, we have no regrets about our participation in the struggle in this country. Given the same conditions, we would do the same thing again. We would come back here armed. We would do exactly what we did and if it led to our capture again we would not flinch. To say that I am bitter about my being in prison, I wouldn't very well say that, except that of course nobody wants to be in prison but what I mean is this, that I have no regrets about the part we played in the liberation of the people of this country. More particularly so that we have achieved our aims, our ends, that of getting independence for this country. So I have no regrets. I am not bitter at all, Yes I have stayed in the Rhodesian prisons for 13 years. It is usually said that the best years of one's life — because you know when I came into this country I was 31 years old, now I am 43. It would not have been different if I was in prison in South Africa or if I was free in South Africa, because as a matter of fact the whole of South Africa is just a prison. So one prison cell is not different from another prison cell. So I have no bitterness.

We of South Africa, as I said, identified ourselves fully with the people here. This manifested itself in the political classes we ran in prison. We participated. I can only tell you that Mninzi, for instance, is one of the men who led the political side and they did much in this respect. I personally was not actually involved in the political classes, that is, the political subject itself, except in a general way. I was involved in other activities. But we learnt a lot. We also learnt how to deal with men. We may not be particularly experts at that, but at least we think we know more about men than when we came here. That is why we think we are rather equipped for the situation in South Africa.

**Jawaharlal Nehru Award  
for  
International Understanding**



**Presentation to  
NELSON MANDELA  
14 November 1980  
New Delhi**

# INDIA PAYS TRIBUTE TO MANDELA



*Oliver Tambo accepts the Award as Indian Prime Minister, Indira Ghandi looks on*

November 14, 1980 was a memorable day in New Delhi. On that day India's Foreign Minister as President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations welcomed an ANC delegation led by President O.R. Tambo. The occasion was the presentation of the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 1979 to Comrade Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Neither Comrade Mandela nor his wife Winnie were granted permission by the South African racists to receive the Award. Comrade Tambo received it on their behalf.

It is worth noting that the Government of India instituted this Award in 1965 "to honour the memory of our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, as a tribute to his untiring and devoted endeavours, spanning over half a century, in the cause of world peace and understanding amongst men everywhere".

This Award, which is given annually to distinguished and eminent persons, has up

to now been conferred upon 14 individuals from 12 countries.

In his speech the Foreign Minister said this about Nelson Mandela:

We regard Nelson Mandela as a front ranking leader of the oppressed people of South Africa. We have admired his unfailing uncourage in waging a relentless struggle against social injustice and racial discrimination. The ideals of liberty, equality and justice cherished by the man in whose memory this Award has been instituted and, even earlier, by his sage and mentor, Mohandar Karamchand Gandhi, have inspired Nelson Mandela. With Jawaharlal Nehru he shares a love of freedom and a vision of a society free of prejudices and intolerance. Like Jawaharlal Nehru, Nelson Mandela is a man of peace who is fighting against oppression. For him, (and I quote from his own words):

"to overthrow oppression is the highest 19

aspiration of every free man”.

In dedicating himself to constructing a society in which all men may live in harmony, he has recognised the supremacy of the moral law that underlies national and international relations and without which there can be no enduring peace. In declaring his total commitment to this cause, in the following words:

“It is an ideal which I hope to live and to achieve. But, if need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die...”

Nelson Mandela reaches out and imparts to humanity at large a sense of faith and a spirit of dedication in their every day lives.

Nelson Mandela is languishing in the notorious Robben Island prison, but prison walls cannot restrain a spirit like his. Wherever human freedom and dignity are valued, Mandela will be present. We share his conviction that the thirst for freedom cannot be quenched and the profound urge for a just peace that inspires the overwhelming majority of his countrymen, cannot be overcome by the domination of an unjust and racist system that seeks to condemn them to everlasting servitude. He has been in the vanguard of the struggle of his people and by imprisoning him, none can succeed in destroying either the will of Mandela or the people he leads. History has proved time and again that such brutish constraint can only heighten the struggle against bondage. Ultimately the world will unite against the oppressors to overcome and succeed. We have gathered here to honour this great son of Africa, whose message of freedom is not confined to a particular country but is for all the world.

*Below we reproduce extracts from the reply by Comrade President Oliver Tambo.*

Today, as Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela moves around the restricted confines of his prison cell on Robben Island, his mind is tuned in to the proceedings in Delhi. He shares this pre-occupation not only with his beloved wife, Winnie Mandela, herself the subject of heartless restrictions and bans, but also with Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, James April, Toivo ja Toivo

and other national leaders and fighters for liberation, for democracy and justice — fellow inmates of the notorious Robben Island prison. The thoughts of the entire membership of the ANC and of its allies and friends converge today on Delhi. The vast majority of the people of South Africa, from all walks of life and all strata and race origins — the young no less than the old — regard this day in New Delhi as a national occasion for them.

It is therefore my pleasant duty, on behalf of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress, to express the deep appreciation and gratitude of all the national leaders and patriots incarcerated in the prisons of apartheid, all the members, allies and friends of the ANC and the great masses of the people engaged in the liberation struggle of our country, for the great honour bestowed on Nelson Mandela in nominating him for the 1979 Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding.

It is equally and especially my pleasant duty, although a much more onerous one, to convey to Your Excellency, Mr. President, to your Government and people, the heart-felt thanks of our colleague, brother and comrade, Nelson Mandela.

He received the news of the Jawaharlal Nehru Award with a mixture of disbelief, surprise, profound gratitude and excitement. But the excitement quickly mellowed into a deep sense of humility. For, he understands the full meaning of the Award, its enormous significance and its challenging implications for him and his people.

He understands, because he knows Pandit Nehru's imposing stature as a world statesman, he knows his revered place in the hearts, minds and lives of the 650 million people of India; he knows, too, the esteem and deep respect Pandit Nehru enjoyed among the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Nelson Mandela, therefore, accepts the Award with full awareness of its historic message. He accepts it as a supreme challenge to him personally and to the leadership of the ANC and the people of South Africa of all races. He accepts it as an honour less for him than for the people of Africa.

We of the African National Congress wish to pay special tribute to the penetrating vision of the Jury of the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding: the recipient Nelson Mandela, is beyond the reach of society. For more than 18 years he has travelled and appeared nowhere, his voice has remained unheard and his views unexpressed. In that time, momentous world events have occurred sufficient to put into complete oblivion any one not involved in the main current of development. We mention a few of these developments, limiting ourselves to Africa only:

A long-cherished dream of the ANC came true with the formation of the OAU in 1963. The continent has torn asunder almost every chain of colonial bondage and joined the world community of nations as a full and equal member, contributing with great effort to the solution of international problems. Southern Africa has undergone geo-political transformations and social upheavals in the course of which colonial foundations, some of them laid 500 years ago, have been reduced to a heap of ruins. New names have appeared on the international scene and now stand out as great landmarks defining the geo-political landscape of Southern Africa: Samora Machel, Kenneth Kaunda, Agostinho Neto, Seretse Khama, Julius Nyerere, Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe, Sam Nujoma. The South African Defence Force mighty in its arms and proud of its record, has had a traumatic defeat for the first time in its history by the armed forces of a newly independent state, and barely three months later, the same army was unleashing its might upon small children who confronted bullets with dustbin lids and stones in Soweto. South Africa has suffered the staggering "Information Scandal" which climaxed in the fall of Vorster and Van den Bergh, of whom it could be said: No two South Africans have been more faithful to Hitler and his ways, and none more identified with the naked inhumanity of the apartheid system. Their place has been taken by P.W. Botha and Piet Koornhof, who fighting no less relentlessly for the permanence of white minority rule in South Africa, have given

fresh impetus to the dynamics of revolutionary change by their remarkable and disastrous failure to distinguish between the forgotten era of J.C. Smuts and Jan Hofmeyer — when the African giant was still lying prostrate, in chains — and the present hour, when the people's demand for power enjoys universal support and can no longer be compromised.

For the question in South Africa today is no longer what amendments should be made to the law, but who makes the law and the amendments. Is it the people of South Africa as a whole or a white minority group with not even a democratic mandate from the majority of the people? An organ like the so-called Presidential Council is wholly objectionable not because Africans are excluded from it, but because it is a studied insult to the Black people. It represents a policy decision for, and not by, the majority of South Africans. If this is the practice today, it was the practice in 1910 and since. But today, the people of South Africa are challenging the very constitutional foundations of the Republic of South Africa. Hence the struggle for the seizure of power.

The stormy succession of tumultuous events of the kind you have mentioned were sufficient to drive Nelson Mandela and his Robben Island colleagues out of our minds. Yet he and the other jailed national leaders have a presence in the consciousness of our people and of the world public so powerful that it cannot be explained except in terms of the indestructability of the cause to which they have surrendered their liberty and offered their lives — the cause of the oppressed majority in South Africa, the cause of Africa, the cause of progressive mankind.

The unique significance of the 1979 Jawaharlal Nehru Award is that, displaying a delicate sensitivity to this enduring presence, it has identified in Nelson Mandela the indomitable spirit of a people, the supreme justice of their cause and their resolute determination to win final victory. In our humble opinion, the Jury of the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding could have made no better choice among the people of South Africa for such an honour at this time. For, if

the immediate reaction of racist Prime Minister P.W. Botha to the victory of the Patriotic Front Alliance in Zimbabwe was to invite the people of South Africa to a multi-racial conference to discuss the future of that country, the oppressed millions, supported by white democrats, responded by demanding the release of Nelson Mandela from imprisonment. The fact that P.W. Botha was evidently only trying to diffuse an explosive situation in South Africa subtracts nothing from the centrality of Nelson Mandela's past, present and future role in the struggle to unite the people of South Africa as fellow citizens in a democratic, non-racial and peaceful country. His entire political life has been guided by the vision of a democratic South Africa, its people united across the barriers of race, colour and religion, and contributing as a single nation to the pursuit of international peace and progress. For this reason, he knows no distinction between the struggle and his life.

Having chosen the law as the avenue through which he could best serve his people, he soon found that the legal system of apartheid was itself an instrument of oppression. His conscience dictated that he place the quest for justice above the administration of unjust laws.

This concern for justice led him into politics, into the leadership of the African National Congress, and ultimately to Robben Island and even more politics.

It is opportune to recall, and Nelson Mandela's captors may wish to ponder the fact, that Jawaharlal Nehru, who was no stranger to imprisonment and was in no way destroyed by it, served the world community, including the British, far better as a free man than as a political prisoner. Nelson Mandela's 18 years' imprisonment has in no way destroyed him, and will not. Indeed a striking feature of political imprisonment in South Africa is that the morale of the prisoners remains intact, notwithstanding the harsh brutality of the prison conditions and the long duration of the prison sentences. The demand for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners is world-wide, and is made more in the interests of all South Africans than out of any sense of

unwanted pity for those imprisoned. But, overwhelmed by their iniquitous past and present, and lacking in true courage, the self-appointed rulers of our country fear the future; they are frightened of democracy, scared of social progress and suspicious of peace. That is why Nelson Mandela and some of the best known of our leaders remain in prison.

It is fitting that on this day, I should recall the long and glorious struggle of those South Africans who came to our shores from India 120 years ago. Within two years of entering the bondage of indentured labour, Indian workers staged their first strike against the working conditions in Natal. This was possibly the first general strike in South African history. Their descendants, working and fighting for the future of their country, ;South Africa, have retained the tradition of militant struggle and are today an integral part of the mass-based liberation movement in South Africa.

But the striking role of India in the development of the struggle for national and social liberation in South Africa has its firm roots in the early campaigns led by Mahatma Gandhi in that country, coupled with the continuing and active interest he took in the South African situation. All South Africans have particular cause to honour and remember the man who was in our midst for 21 years and went on to enter the history books as the father of free India. His imprint on the course of the South African struggle is indelible.

In the 1940's, in South Africa and India, our people voiced the same sentiments: to wage a war in the name of freedom and democracy, they said, was a hollow mockery as long as the colonial peoples were not free. We applauded the "Quit India" demand against the British, for, as the Congress resolution in August 1942 so correctly said: "India, the classic land of modern imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the peoples of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm". And so we were filled with hope and enthusiasm as we watched events unfold in India.

If Mahatma Gandhi started and fought



his heroic struggle in South Africa and India, Jawaharlal Nehru was to continue it in Asia, Africa and internationally. In 1946, India broke trade relations with South Africa — the first country to do so. In the same year, at the first Session of the UN General Assembly, the Indian Government sharply raised the question of racial discrimination in South Africa — again the first country to take this action. Speaking at the Bandung Conference in April 1955, Jawaharlal Nehru declared:

“There is nothing more terrible than the infinite tragedy of Africa in the past few hundred years.”

Referring to “the days when million of Africans were carried away as galley slaves to America and elsewhere, half of them dying in the galleys”, he urged:

“We must accept responsibility for it, all of us, even though we ourselves were not directly involved.”

He continued, “But unfortunately, in a different sense, even now the tragedy of Africa is greater than that of any other continent., whether it is racial or political. It is up to Asia to help Africa to the best of her ability because we are sister continents”.

To her great honour, India has consistently lived up to this historic declaration, which constitutes one of the cornerstones of the Non-Aligned Movement. The tragedy of Africa, in racial and political terms, is now concentrated in the Southern tip of the continent — in South Africa, Namibia, and in a special sense, Robben Island.

Quite clearly, we have all come a long way from 1955. Jawaharlal Nehru’s clarion call has already translated itself into a partnership of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin-America, who have joined hands with the Socialist community of nations, the progressive forces of the world and the national liberation movement, in an anti-imperialist front to eradicate the last vestiges of colonial domination and racism in Africa and elsewhere, to end fascism and exploitation, and promote a new world economic order that will ensure true democracy, social progress and peace.

Nelson Mandela, who gained political maturity in the company of such household names in South Africa as A. J. Lutuli,

Moses Kotane, Yusuf Dadoo, J.B. Marks, Elias Moretsele, Z.K. Matthews, Monty Naicker, Walter Sisulu, Lilian Ngoyi, Bram Fischer, Govan Mbeki, Helen Joseph and many others, has been confirmed by the Jawaharlal Nehru Award as a leader of men, ranking among the great international leaders of modern times. In their struggle for the seizure of power, the people of



*Indian Foreign Minister Raf with ANC President Oliver Tambo*

South Africa — its youth, workers, women, intelligentsia and peasants, led by the African National Congress and its allies, will not betray this great honour to our country. Nelson Mandela, with the rest of the leadership of the ANC, will remain worthy of the great Jawaharlal Nehru — today, tomorrow, ever.

The struggle to rid South Africa of racism, apartheid and colonial domination continues, and victory for the world anti-imperialist forces is certain.

## KING SABATA SAYS:

# 'SWEEP AWAY THE MATANZIMAS'

*The following statement by King Sabata was made in Lusaka at a press conference chaired by ANC President Oliver Tambo in October of last year.*

First of all I would like to thank all of you most sincerely that you have been able to find the time to attend this press conference this morning. Secondly, I would like to thank the Party, the Government and the people of Zambia for receiving me into their country with the warmth they have displayed. I am only a few weeks out of South Africa and must therefore still adjust to the new conditions of living outside of a South African environment. This process is made easier by the fact that in this country such is the welcome that has been extended to me that already I feel at home and very much at ease.

As our Chairman has explained, I come from a family of traditional rulers. When the time came, I too was selected as King to preside over the destinies of my people. According to our tradition, a person placed in such a position has to act as the voice of the people and not as a master over them. During my incumbency I have tried to carry out this task to the best of my ability.

When the indigenous people were conquered by the armies of the nations that took our country from us, their traditional rulers, such as my own forefathers, were turned into servants of the colonial regime. This meant that we could no longer act as the voice of the people but as messengers for the white masters. Of course, not all our rulers accepted this position. One of the results of this was that when the ANC was founded in 1912, the most senior traditional rulers throughout Southern Africa, including my own grandfather, King Dalindybo, participated in the formation of this national organisation.

When Pretoria decided to introduce the policy of bantustans in which they expected the

traditional rulers to play a prominent part, many of us had to ask ourselves the question whether service in these bantustan institutions would be in the interests of the people. It is a fact that throughout South Africa, including Transkei, the area I come from, the people rejected this bantustan scheme and demanded freedom and democracy in the country of our birth.

In this situation my role was clear. It was to speak out against the fragmentation of our country, in favour of liberty. But in the Transkei there were other traditional rulers, in particular Chief Kaiser Matanzima to whom I am related, who decided to go against the will of the people and agreed to serve as Pretoria's tools against the interests of the people. In exchange Pretoria gave such collaborators fat salaries and posh cars and houses.

When Matanzima was preparing to accept the fraudulent independence for the Transkei, to break the people's resistance he offered me the post of president in this non-existent state hoping that the prospect of ill-gotten wealth would attract me and persuade me to betray the people. I am glad to say that Matanzima failed in his intentions.

Today the Transkei is ruled by the cruel, greedy and their close collaborators. This group is amassing a lot of wealth at the expense of the people. It maintains itself in power through the conduct of a campaign of terror against the people. Nobody in the Transkei feels secure from arbitrary victimisation by Matanzima's police army. This includes Matanzima's own collaborators. The area is under permanent state of emergency. Many people are arrested without cause and detained for many months without being charged. Some of these people are even murdered in police cells, as happened recently with one of Matanzima's former ministers, Saul Nzumo. In short, ladies and gentlemen, Matanzima is enthusiastically carrying on the policy of his masters in Pretoria, using the same methods, assisted and advised by

the murderous South African Police.

The people are starving. Famine is widespread and will become worse. The people have no land. They have no jobs. When they leave the Transkei to look for jobs, the white officials in the labour offices fling their so-called Transkei passports straight into their faces and tell them to return to their independent state. In fact one stands a better chance of getting a job if one produces a South African pass or the so-called reference book, than if one produces Transkei papers. On these poverty-stricken people the Matanzima brothers have imposed heavy taxes to ensure a comfortable life for themselves.

Throughout the Transkei the people are restive. They want to do something to bring their suffering to an end. Matanzima's army and civil service are all split in half with one section siding with Matanzima and the other taking the same position as the masses of the people.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am also President of the Transkei Democratic Party. This Party was formed in 1963 to unite and mobilise the people of the Transkei against the bantustan scheme and lead them in the struggle for a free and united South Africa. Matanzima is very much afraid of the Democratic Party because he knows it represents the opinion of the vast majority of the people of the Transkei. Therefore he consistently bans our meetings, arrests and tortures our activists and intimidates our followers. But because it represents the truth, Matanzima has failed to destroy the Democratic Party.

As for myself, last year Matanzima arrested me and had me charged with insulting the Office of the President of Transkei — this is, himself. All I had done was to ask the question: *What kind of passport is this, namely the Transkei passport, which nobody in the world is prepared to recognise?*

In order to travel Matanzima himself has to ask Pretoria to issue him travel papers otherwise all he can do is to shuttle between Transkei and Pretoria. I had also asked the question: *What kind of government is this whose ministers have pockets full of money when the ordinary people had to search garbage dumps for food?* Matanzima did not like this. Therefore he dragged me into court and had me fined and later dethroned as King.

At the beginning of August Matanzima once

more sent his police to arrest me. Fortunately, sources close to Matanzima had already warned me that I was going to be arrested again. They had also informed me that I would not come out of prison alive. I therefore decided to evade the police and, like my cousin Nelson Mandela twenty years ago, live the life of a fugitive.

I am now here and will continue the struggle for the liberation of South Africa from outside. But I would like to get this message to the people of Transkei that they must continue the struggle, refuse to submit to the terrorism of the Matanzima brothers. The struggle has to be conducted in the Transkei, and knowing the people of this area, I am convinced that they will stand on their feet in their millions and, together with the rest of the people of the Transkei sweep away the Matanzima's and their bosses in Pretoria.

Tomorrow the people of the Ciskei will be asked through a so-called referendum to decide whether they want to join the Transkei, Bophuthatswana and Venda as a so-called independent national state. The people of the Ciskei have of course been watching what has been happening in the Transkei. I know from personal experience that they do not want to impose on themselves the tyranny, poverty and expulsion from the rest of their motherland that comes with this so-called independence. I am convinced that the vast majority will vote no to fraudulent independence: if Sebe, the chief minister of the Ciskei bantustan announces any other result, it can only mean that, like Matanzima, he has falsified the will of the people by rigging the vote.

Finally, I would like to assure that people of South Africa, including those of the Transkei, that my presence outside the borders of our country is only a temporary retreat to ensure that I am able to continue the fight for our liberty. I will continue the struggle until our country is free. As long as I live, as long as I have so much strength as to lift my little finger, I will dedicate all my existence to the destruction of the apartheid system and its bantustan offshoot. My predecessors such as the Kings Ngqika, Moshoeshe, Sekhukhune, Magigwane, Mswati and Khama would expect nothing less than this.

**I thank you very much  
for your kind attention**

**KING SABATHA DALINDYEBO**

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# OBITUARIES

## REV. W.S. GAWE



*Rev. W.S. Gawe*

On October 16th, the Rev. Walker Stanley Gawe passed away at his home in Ncemera in the Ciskei. Rev. Gawe was born in 1900 in the Herschel district of the Cape. He attended St. Matthews College and later trained as an Anglican priest, and was ordained in 1935. He joined the ANC in 1926 and was later elected National Chaplain. In 1955 he was elected Cape Provincial President of the ANC, succeeding the late Prof. Z.K. Matthews. He was arrested the following year and was one of the accused in the Treason Trial of 1956-61. A militant activist during his early and middle years, he was detained a number of times, being one of the hundreds of detainees during the 1960 State of Emergency. Novelist, poet and lexicographer, in the early 1970's Rev. Gawe was misled into joining the so-called Ciskei Bureau of Xhosa languages and culture. The masses of the people will however remember him for the 40 years or more that he devoted to the struggle for the liberation of the motherland. Let his life of struggle be an example to the religious community of our country in particular, inspiring all men and women of conscience to take up his staff in the final onslaught on the fascist regime, for the victory of people's power.

**HAMBA KAHLE MFUNDISI!**

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## REV. MSIBI

On the 17th of October, 1980 we lost Comrade Rev. Mandla Mfundisi Abednigo Msibi. He died in Swaziland at the age of

36 years. Comrade Msibi was born in Bethal of a christian family. His father is also a minister of the Church.

He attended primary and secondary school in Alexandra Township where he grew up. His family moved to Springs. He had his share of hardship of the apartheid society. He was forced to leave school and start work so as to be able to study with UNISA through correspondence for his matriculation certificate.

He worked in a number of factories as a clerk until he decided to study for the Ministry motivated by his christian upbringing. He was ordained as a minister of religion in 1969 at the Union Bible Institute in Natal. He served for four years under the Springs Circuit of his church until he moved to Durban with his family.

In 1974 he was offered a post as the Secretary of the YMCA in Beatrice Street, Durban. It was at this time that he developed a close relationship with the executive of Black Consciousness Movement. He immediately became an active member of Black Peoples' Convention and worked closely with other patriotic church leaders such as the late Rev Mashwabada Mayathula and Rev Drake Tshenkeng.

He resigned from the YMCA to become Secretary-General of IDAMASA in 1976. By this time he was a member of the ANC of SA and one of its outstanding underground activists.

Comrade Rev Msibi left the country in 1977 on the instructions of the African National Congress to be of service to the movement externally. In his lifetime he was able to destroy the myth that for a christian to be a revolutionary activist is a breach of faith with God. For him to be a true christian was to identify with the suffering masses of our people and practically participate in the destruction of the apartheid regime in our country, so as to create a democratic society as outlined in the Freedom Charter which was adopted in 1955 by the people of South Africa, christians included.

He made an outstanding contribution to our struggle. He left an indelible imprint on us all his fellow comrades-in-arms, and he will not be forgotten. His cheerfulness, his courage, his love of life, his warmth

and compassion, his hatred of injustice and oppression, his devotion to duty all these were qualities he displayed in abundance. These were qualities in him we all came to love and admire. His life was eventful and full of meaning. His path to political consciousness and maturity has great relevance for our people — believers and non-believers, alike.

To his family we convey our heartfelt condolences on this immense loss. We are sure that his fallen spear will be taken up by other patriots of our country Christian and non-Christian alike, in continuation of his life-long work until final victory.

**HAMBA KAHLE QHAWE LAMAQHAWWE!**

## **SAMSON NTUNJA**



*Samson Ntunja*

The passing of comrade Samson Ntunja (Ngcaphephe) is yet another sad blow to the liberation movement and to the entire struggling people of South Africa.

He was born at Ntunja village Sterkspruit, Herschel Cape Province. Educated and trained as a carpenter at Bensonvale Institute Herschel

He was tremendously impressed by the

oratory and militance of the late revolutionary Mashabalala who was a great leader that time, and joined the African National Congress at a tender age of twenty (20) years.

From that time he moved to Port Elizabeth and worked both in the ANC and local organisations. He played a leading role in the reorganisation of the ANC not only in that region, but also in East London, its surroundings and the Transvaal. Among his comrades in arms in this titanic struggle were stalwarts like the late Rev Gladstone Tshume, Govan Mbeki, Caleb Mayekiso, Raymond Mhlaba, Matomola and others. He was imprisoned twice during the defiance campaign. Detained during the emergency in 1960, he was also a victim of the notorious so-called Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 which resulted

in perpetual banning until 1963 when he went into exile. A dedicated leader and cadre, highly principled and never wavered in his beliefs and convictions, he was a teacher, politician and steeled revolutionary.

In Tanzania and Zambia he was exemplary as leader and father to the young where he lived before taking up a post of Deputy Chief Representative at our Egyptian and Middle East mission in Cairo where he died.

We lower our revolutionary banner to the memory of this great freedom fighter and worthy son of South Africa.

HAMBE KAHLE JOLA OMHILE

# THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS



**Needs YOUR Support Now**

# ANC SIGNS GENEVA CONVENTIONS

DECLARATION FROM THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA ADDRESSED TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS.

It is the conviction of the African National Congress of South Africa that international rules protecting the dignity of human beings must be upheld at all times. Therefore, and for humanitarian reasons, the African National Congress of South Africa hereby declares that, in the conduct of the struggle against apartheid and racism and for self-determination in South Africa, it intends to respect and be guided by the general principles of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts.

Wherever practically possible, the African National Congress of South Africa will endeavour to respect the rules of the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the victims of armed conflicts and the 1977 additional Protocol 1 relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts.

O.R. TAMBO  
PRESIDENT  
ANC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The African National Congress of South Africa is deeply honoured to be received today by the International Committee of the Red Cross and by its President, M. Alexandre Hay. Our movement, the oldest national liberation movement in Africa, has had a number of meetings with the delegates of the I.C.R.C. in the past and we have come to respect their probity and fairness. The Red Cross has rightly been described as the guarantor of the impartiality and efficacy of the famous Conventions of 1949 whose reaffirmation and development in 1977, largely under the auspices of the I.C.R.C., has led to our presence here in Geneva today.

We recognise that your Committee, associated as it is with the work of the Conventions and the need to provide relief and hope to prisoners of war and civilians caught in the violence of war, must remain non-political if it is to retain the trust of Governments. But you will not, I hope, take it amiss if I explain the presence of the delegation of the African National Congress in Geneva today to participate in what is a solemn and historic ceremony for my Movement.

Apartheid, the policy of official discrimination enshrined in the law and constitution of South Africa, has now been legally denounced as a crime against humanity and has led to an international convention for the suppression of the crime of apartheid. Protocol 1 of 1977 itself recognises that "practices of apartheid and other inhuman and degrading practices involving outrages upon personal dignity, based on racial discrimination" constitute grave breaches of the Conventions and must therefore join the list of crimes identified at the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal.

The international community has therefore recognised that the war waged by this nefarious system against the vast majority of its population is not merely a matter of domestic concern and that any conflict which arises in South Africa cannot be described as a civil war.

The state of war which exists in South Africa is a war of national liberation, for self-determination on the basis of the Freedom Charter, of whose adoption we are celebrating the 25th anniversary this year. It is, as Article 1 of Protocol 1 of 1977 recognises, an armed conflict in which peoples are fighting against "colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right of self-determination."

In the past twelve years, since the Teheran Conference on Human Rights, the development of international law under the auspices of the United Nations has

led to a recognition that the concept of international armed conflict extends to cover wars of national liberation. The International Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, held in Geneva from 1974 to 1977, gave concrete expression to such a development.

We in the African National Congress of South Africa solemnly undertake to respect the Geneva Conventions and the additional Protocol 1 in so far as they are applicable to the struggle waged on behalf of the African National Congress by its combatants, Umkhonto we Sizwe. This Convention is one of the cornerstones of humanitarian international law.

In consequence, we demand that the South African regime stop treating our combatants as common criminals. The regime has no right to execute them as it did our noble patriot Solomon Mahlangu and as it would have in the case of James Mange if it had not been for the strength of international public opinion. It has no right to impose savage sentences of imprisonment, contrary to the rules and spirit of international law. There is, therefore, a heavy obligation and an imperative duty on States, parties to the Geneva Conventions, to ensure that the South African regime observes the basic tenets of civilisation in its treatment of ANC prisoners of war.

This is envisaged both in the Geneva Conventions (to which the South African regime is a party) and in Article 1 (1) of the 1977 Protocol where State parties to the Conventions undertake "to respect and to ensure respect for this Protocol in all circumstances". It is therefore incumbent on South Africa's major trading partners to encourage the South African regime, whether or not the regime ratifies the Protocol to stop committing war crimes by executing our combatants, torturing them and generally ill-treating them, contrary to international law.

We in the African National Congress have taken the serious step of making a solemn Declaration at the headquarters of the I.C.R.C. this afternoon because we have for nearly 70 years respected humani-

tarian principles in our struggle. We have always defined the enemy in terms of a system of domination and not of a people or a race. In contrast, the South African regime has displayed a shameless and ruthless disregard for all the norms of humanity.

In signing this Declaration, the African National Congress of South Africa solemnly affirms its adherence to the Geneva Conventions and to Protocol 1 of 1977. As we have done in the past, so shall we continue, consistently and unreservedly, to support, fight for and abide by the principles of international law. We shall do so in the consciousness and justice, of progress and peace.

It is therefore a historic duty that I fulfil on behalf of the African National Congress by signing the following declaration.

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Declaration that I have made has been made on behalf of the African National Congress of South Africa and Umkhonto we Sizwe, the combatants of the National Liberation Movement of South Africa.

I thank you.

## PROFILE:

### WILTON MKWAYI

Wilton Mkwai was born in 1923 at Middle-drift in the Eastern Cape, an area which has a history of resistance to white oppression dating back to the wars of the early period. In the village of Zihlahleni, his father was an influential senior counsellor in the Council of Elders of the Paramount Chief, Archie Velile Sandile. Mkwai's village had to resist removal to another area as ordered by the then Union Government.

When his parents died, Mkwai being the eldest in the family had to cut short his education at Standard IV and go to the towns and cities for a job. This family obligation took Mkwai to the gold mines on the Reef, Western Cape dynamite



factories and finally to Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage.

Mkwayi had strong national and working class ties. In Port Elizabeth he first worked as a stevedore and got involved in a dock-workers' strike soon after the 1948 victory of the Nationalist Party. Thus began Mkwayi's activity in the political and trade union fields. He took an active part in organising the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws in 1952 which was headed, in the Eastern Cape, by Gladstone Tshume as Cape Volunteer in Chief and assisted by Raymond Mhlaba, one of the leaders now serving life imprisonment on Robben Island after being arrested and convicted in the Rivonia trial.

When the Defiance Campaign was called off, Mkwayi found employment in a factory called Metal Box Co. Here he quickly organised the workers into a trade union and represented them during a strike for higher wages and better working conditions. For being the spokesman of these workers, Wilton was dismissed, but the workers won their claims. This took place in 1953.

The stalwarts of South Africa's working class, Ray Alexander, A. P. Mati, Solly Sachs, Johnson Ngwevela, Oscar Mpetha, were hounded and bans and restrictions were placed on them. But new leaders came forward. One of these leaders was Wilton Mkwayi. He continued the proud traditions set by his predecessors. He became Secretary of the African Textile Workers' Union and later rose to senior executive positions in the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

In the ANC and the ANC Youth League, he held the position of treasurer of the New Brighton Branch in Port Elizabeth, and was also a member of the Port Elizabeth Tenants' Association which was formed to fight against the frequent rent increases in the "Red Location" (elalini ebomvu) in New Brighton.

Mkwayi learnt his first lessons in political underground organisation when meetings of more than ten Africans and public gatherings were prohibited by the City Council of Port Elizabeth in 1953. This ban virtually drove the Port Elizabeth Branch of the ANC underground. Mkwayi, assisted by Florence Matomela and Frances Baard

and the late Vuyisile Mini (put to death by Vorster's hangmen) set about putting the well-known M-Plan (Mandela Plan) for organising the underground into practice. By this time Wilton Mkwayi carried the rank of Cape Volunteer in Chief of the African National Volunteer Corps.

Mkwayi attended many ANC conferences and worked as the Eastern Cape representative of the people's newspaper "New Age". He was arrested during the marathon "Treason Trial".

From 1960 to 1964 Mkwayi lived underground and continued his political work for the national liberation movement up to the time of his arrest in October, 1964.

Wilton was on trial late in 1964 when Mini, Mkhabela and Khayingo were languishing in the death cells awaiting execution. The last efforts to get a reprieve for Mini and his comrades had failed. During his detention and interrogation, Wilton was approached to give information against Mini. Wilton refused point-blank.

Now with all the avenues for reprieve from execution closed to Mini and his comrades and their time in the death cell passing in the knowledge that all that was left was for the regime to set the date of his execution, the Special Branch, in the desire to break the will of a freedom fighter made their last attempt: they approached Mini in the death cell and promised him reprieve if he would agree to give evidence against Mkwayi in the Mkwayi trial. Mini, without hesitation and with the dignity of a freedom fighter, refused to save his skin at the price of condemning a fellow comrade. The police managed to get Wilton sentenced to life imprisonment and Mini was executed but the victory of the state remains hollow.

There are many anecdotes about Wilton Mkwayi. During the State of Emergency in 1961 some of the Treason Trialists were detained that very night under martial law. Others were detained the following morning during the tea-break of the Treason Trial. Wilton was the only trialist not to be taken into detention. During the tea-break Wilton had gone across the street to the coffee cart. When he returned he found consternation outside the court room and a hustle of police activity. The police had

thrown a cordon around the court room. Wilton tried to get through the cordon and the police stopped him. Wilton demanded to be let through and informed the police that he was one of the Treason Trialists. The trigger-happy police, with all the arrogance of an oppressor, had no time for such "nonsense" and told him: "Kaffir, if you don't voetsek, I'm going to arrest you". Wilton accepted the threat, walked away from the court and disappeared straight into the underground!

A hunted man, he toured South Africa, reorganising the movement and eventually was instructed to head for Lesotho. There, he joined hands with another hunted man, Moses Mabhida. Together, they subsequently made a dangerous overland crossing from landlocked Lesotho to Swaziland, mandated by SACTU to proceed abroad to serve on behalf of SACTU at the headquarters of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Prague. They travelled extensively on behalf of SACTU to Western Europe, Socialist countries and Africa. They represented SACTU in Morocco at the Conference where the All-African Trade Union Federation was formed. Later, in 1961 Wilton underwent military training in one of the first batches of trainees sent out by the movement and after training returned clandestinely to South Africa in early 1962.

Once more, he resumed the life of an outlaw in the country of his birth. He assumed numerous disguises, changed his appearance and his name as often as people change their socks and continued to elude the massive hunt for him unleashed by the Security Police — at times by a hair's breadth. He narrowly escaped arrest at Rivonia in 1963.

Immediately after the Rivonia Trial, he set about reorganising MK and the ANC. At times he was shifting from one hide out to another hardly 12 hours ahead of the Special Branch. Wilton, having survived almost another 2 years in the underground, was captured in Alexandra Township in Johannesburg where he had taken refuge after sustaining a gunshot wound in his thigh a day earlier.

Wilton Mkwayi has an infectious

optimism about the certainty of victory. He inspired courage into the hearts of all who came into contact with him. A brilliant and energetic organiser and administrator, gifted with the power of sarcastic oratory he always had a ready sense of humour and presence of mind.

He is now serving life imprisonment on Robben Island. Where men sentenced to life imprisonment may be expected to view life ahead in prison as endless and filled with pain, Wilton chose to make his first battle with the prison authorities his right to marry. After a long period of representations he won his battle and from prison married Irene Kumalo who lives in Soweto and works as a nurse in a clinic. To this day he has no doubt that the revolution will triumph, that he will walk out of prison and build a life with Irene.



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