

JULY 1983



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20 YEARS AFTER RIVONIA WE SALUTE OUR LEADERS



MANDELA



SISULU



MBEKI



MHLABA



MOTSOALEDI



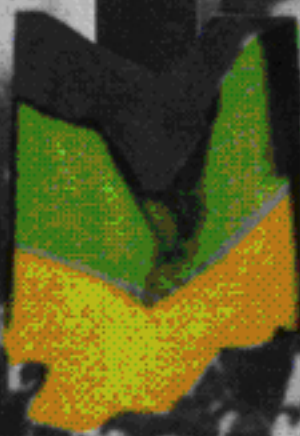
MLANGENI



KATHRADA



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JULY ISSUE 1983



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Nelson Mandela, We Salute You!

On July 18th, Nelson Rohihlahla Mandela celebrated his 65th birthday in Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town. On August 5th, Nelson Mandela will have spent 21 of these years in prison — 20 of which were spent on Robben Island.

Nelson Mandela is an unchallengeable leader of the South African people. Internationally, he is regarded as such. He has received many international awards; the Jawaharlal Nehru Award in India; a doctorate from the University of Lesotho; a particle was discov-

ered and named after him at Leeds University; the cities of Athens, Rome and Glasgow conferred on him the Freedom of the City; the Jamaican workers have called their study groups the Nelson Mandela Study Seminars; student hostels and public places and squares have been named after him; painters, artists and sculptors have used Nelson Mandela as a 'model.' This explains why the campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela, a campaign which includes all political prisoners in South Africa, has assumed greater significance and an international dimension.

Only recently we received information about the conditions in which Mandela and five other Rivonia trial prisoners are being kept at Pollsmoor Prison. It should be remembered that Mandela, Sisulu, Mhlaba and Mlangeni were moved from Robben Island to Pollsmoor in April 1982. Some time later, Mbeki, Motsoaledi and Kathrada were also transferred there. This means that all seven Rivonia trial prisoners who were on Robben Island are now in Pollsmoor on the mainland.

According to our information, Mandela is being kept in a cell with five others. We do not know who they are, but the implication is that at least one Rivonia prisoner has been separated from the others, and is possibly being held in solitary confinement.

Mandela is reported to have said:

"It is now clear to me that we were transferred for the purpose of further punishment and harassment."

This means:

They are now kept from the other prisoners, and can see only the sky from their cells; the prisoners are not taken outside at all, and have no possibility of walks, as they had on the Island; they are expected to exercise in their cells; they have to study inside the cell with the five other prisoners.

* The prison gets flooded with water on rainy days. The water does not only come through the door but seeps through the cement floor. This is unhealthy to say the least.

* Mandela and his comrades are not allowed to buy sports equipment, even though the Brigadier in charge is the same one who was in charge of sport on Robben Island. Mandela had to undergo an operation on his right toe for the removal of the toenail, because for months he had been wearing the wrong sized shoe and was not allowed to buy a pair that fitted him.

* On Robben Island they saw films twice a week, but in Pollsmoor they have been shown two silent films made in the thirties, that is, in eight months. These were shown in their cells and not in a common hall as was the case on the Island. The officer commanding refused to receive a memorandum in which the prisoners could file their complaints to be forwarded to a higher authority.

We are far from suggesting that things were 'good' on Robben Island, but Pollsmoor is a hell on earth. This is the reality facing political prisoners in South Africa. After more than two decades of incarceration, these men are not only still in prison, but they are being kept in much worse conditions than they had on Robben Island before their removal.

Once again, the international community must play its role and ensure that these new barbarities get maximum publicity. Letters to the Officer Commanding; Pollsmoor Maximum Security Prison; P.B.X.4; Tokai 7966; South Africa, and to the Commissioner of Prisons in Pretoria, can help to bring about improvements. Mandela and his comrades are suffering new deprivations as a result of these disabilities.

Mandela and Our Struggle

Mandela's spirit is very much alive in the ANC, and among our people in general. The very fact that the Freedom Charter, in whose

formulation he featured prominently, is publicly distributed at home, and that many people of different walks of life come to associate themselves with the ANC, is evidence of this.

Gatsha Buthelezi has taken a more anti-popular stance, whereas Bishop Tutu is moving in the right direction. Not that we agree with everything Tutu says and does. We might agree with Tutu when he says that Mandela is destined to be the first black Prime Minister in South Africa, but when he says this will take place in five years, we are forced to query his over-optimism.

Since 1980-81 the ANC has stepped up its political and military offensive, attacking fuel storage tanks, and so on. The message was clear: racist South Africa's dependence on oil imports was emphasised and a warning made to those who violate sanctions against South Africa. The burning of the racist flag in 1980 and the hoisting of the ANC flag is another example. What about the demonstrations by the Coloured and Indian youth in 1980?

The ANC introduced a new element in the Soweto uprising, namely the combination of armed struggle with unarmed demonstrations. The incident involving the arrest and execution of Solomon Mahlangu — the hero of the revolution — was directly connected with this process.

These developments point to a change in the weapons used; to a determined attempt at parity in strength; to a shift in the relationship of contending forces, a shift in our favour — a characteristic feature of the present stage of our struggle. The very fact that ANC guerrilla units have been active inside South Africa for longer periods of time indicates a shift in our forms and methods of operation — a higher stage in our armed operations.

The recent attack on Pretoria, in which the enemy suffered heavy losses, is a signal of greater things to come.

This is how we celebrate Mandela's birthday — by putting his theories, ideals and aspirations into practice.

THE UNITY OF OUR PEOPLES

The following is the speech made by ANC President, Comrade O R Tambo, at the Fourth Congress of FRELIMO, at Maputo in April, 1983.

On behalf of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress, its militants and combatants inside and outside South Africa, on behalf of the workers, the peasants, the women, the youth, the revolutionary intellectuals and progressive church people, on behalf of the whole struggling population of South Africa, we bring warm fraternal greetings to this Fourth Congress of the FRELIMO Party.

To you, comrade President, outstanding son of our Southern African soil, dedicated freedom fighter, resolute defender of the Mozambican revolution, and steadfast companion of all throughout the world who engage in just struggles, to the comrade members of the Central Committee, and to all the delegates gathered here, go our heartfelt wishes for the success of your Congress. Your reports, debates and conclusions, dealing with five years of rich and turbulent history, will have repercussions going far beyond your country. The heroic people of Mozambique, under the leadership of their vanguard party, FRELIMO, together with their bro-

ther people in Angola under the leadership of the MPLA, have struck out in new directions and accumulated an invaluable storehouse of experience which is of deep interest to all those involved in the task of revolutionary transformation.

We can assure you that the proceedings of this congress will be analysed with special attention by our whole movement. You have had your difficulties, but also your triumphs in tackling the twin scourges of our continent, namely under-development and neo-colonialism: in a creative manner you have embarked upon building a single nation, with a strong common patriotism and a vigorous cultural personality, out of a population formerly divided by racism, regionalism and tribalism: you have built up your Party, created new organs of people's power, and laid the foundations for a planned economy: right on the doorstep of the world's most vicious system of exploitation, you are creating a new kind of society free of all forms of exploitation of man by man.

The Unity of Our Peoples

We also come to affirm our solidarity, to be at your side during these historic moments. Relations between our two peoples are as ancient and as deeply rooted as is our presence in this part of Africa. It is no simple physical proximity that unites us; we know that neighbours can be united in oppressing and exploiting others. But what unites us is the geography of shared goals. How many Mozambican workers have not been entombed side by side with South African workers deep in the gold mines of our country, or had their lungs eaten away by dust, so that a handful of exploiters could live in splendour? How many of our finest combatants have not shared danger as they marched off to their different fronts of a single struggle to liberate our continent? And how many dreams were not shared by Eduardo Mondlane with members of the ANC Youth League when he studied in our country — dreams whose materialisation forms the subject matter of this congress?

Anti-Imperialist Forces Stand Firm

Comrades, the Fourth Congress of FRELIMO Party takes place at a time when international imperialism is mounting a global political and military offensive threatening world peace and security, with Central America, the Middle East and Southern Africa itself as the focal point of its attack. But the anti-imperialist and progressive forces are standing firm in their defence of peace, and are resolutely advancing towards a new world order. The Socialist and other peace-loving peoples of the world are a bulwark against international reaction, a mighty force for progressive change. The Non-Aligned Movement has gained new strength; the Organisation of African Unity has recovered from a state of temporary impotence, and in Africa, the people are in unison in declaring, "A LUTA CONTINUA!"

In the Middle East, the greatest single issue is the struggle to assert the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people under the tried and tested leadership of the heroic PLO.

The Nazi-style massacres of Sabra and Chatilla, conceived and presided over by the Zionists, will inevitably, like the massacres of Nhazonia, Chimoio and Tembe, be rewarded with victory for the cause of justice.

The reactionary forces in Latin America — in El Salvador, Guatemala and elsewhere — receive the same sort of United States Administration support. United States-trained Somozistas, relics of one of the most bloody dictatorships of recent times, are being pushed into Nicaragua, while counter-revolutionary invasion is also being threatened against the courageous people of Grenada. Cuba, beacon of liberty, is under constant siege.

In East Asia the story is the same: the people of West Timor, under the leadership of FRETILIN, are engaged in a courageous and bitter struggle for the liberation of their country.

In Southern Africa, the effective role of the U.S. Administration has been to inspire and encourage the Pretoria regime to resort to more violent repression in South Africa and commit new and unprecedented acts of aggression and destruction in neighbouring states, and has blocked the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 435.

Pretoria's Record of Barbarism

The catalogue of racist Pretoria's crimes against the people of Southern Africa is a grisly record of invasions, assassinations, massacres, destruction of the economic infrastructure of countries, attempted coups d'etat and general destabilisation. It is also a record of barbarism.

The children of tomorrow, living in freedom and peace — black, brown and white together — will learn with shocked disbelief that the apartheid regime, claiming to have the largest army in Africa, decided, in 1982, to invade, and subsequently subject to economic torture, not Nigeria, but a small country, a small, peace-loving and singularly courageous nation — Lesotho, which, completely surrounded by South African territ-



President O R Tambo and President Samora Machel meet at the Fourth Congress of the Frelimo Party in Maputo, on 30th April, 1983.

ory, is at a greater geo-political and economic disadvantage than any other opponent of apartheid domination in the world. It is this natural weakness which brave and militarily mighty Pretoria is delighted to exploit. How incredible!

It is the challenging task of the ANC, Umkhonto We Sizwe and the masses of our people, by the intensity of the struggle within South Africa, to compel withdrawal of the fascist occupying army from the People's Republic of Angola, from Namibia and from its campaigns of murder, terrorism and destruction elsewhere in Southern Africa. But equally, the international community, not least the peoples of Africa, should spare no effort to ensure that every single racist soldier has been driven out of the sovereign state of Angola and out of Namibia, particularly by providing massive material assistance for SWAPO's liberation war, and that the Pretoria regime is deterred from continuing in its crimes against African independent states.

In the Indian Ocean, we see Pretoria is deeply enmeshed in conspiracies against the Seychelles, in pursuance of the regime's expansionist and aggressive designs against Africa, and in aid of imperialism's global strategy for war. The ANC adds its voice to

those of Mozambique and other littoral states in demanding that the Indian Ocean be declared a zone of peace – free of foreign military and naval bases, nuclear arms and other instruments of war that endanger peace and security.

Exploitable Hinterland

Comrades, when imperialism held unquestioned sway over Southern Africa, it constructed within our region a sub-system of exploitation, with its centre in racist-ruled South Africa. Within this sub-system Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho and other countries were assigned a special place as an exploitable hinterland from which the centre could draw human and material resources while not obliged to give anything in return. The legacy of under-development against which the Mozambican people have been mobilised, resulted from a grand design imposed upon the whole region by our common enemy. Mozambique's struggle to conquer under-development has thus opened up a vital new front of struggle, with a significance going well beyond the purely economic, and an impact well beyond the borders of this country. All the peoples of Southern Africa, united in our common effort to create a new

regional order based on relations of equality among nations and mutual co-operation for mutual benefit, form part of a world-wide struggle by the peoples of the developing countries to shape a new international economic order, free of the restrictive and exploitative practices of imperialism.

The states of Southern Africa have taken a number of positive steps to pool their strength to resist the pressures emanating from the racists. We have recently seen the birth of a dynamic new association, SADCC, whose express purpose is to break out of the constraints imposed by dependence on the racist economy. The ANC and all the democratic forces in South Africa look forward to the day when our country, liberated at last from apartheid-colonialism, will join SADCC as an equal among equals, co-operating for mutual advantage. We are confident that the sound beginning already made lays the basis for broader areas of co-operation and mutual assistance.

The Vision of Peace

Comrades, one of the many visions which unite all our peoples is the vision of peace; peace so that we can grow food, peace so that we can study, peace so that we can build hospitals and schools instead of spending our resources on weapons of destruction and war. And yet the daily experience of our whole region is one of violence, of continuing episodes of the unceasing war that we have lived with ever since imperialism sent its first soldiers to our soil. Our land was taken from us by war, our independence was destroyed by war, and when we peacefully asserted our claims to the most elementary rights, we were gunned down with the instruments of war. Now, when our peoples have answered the brutality of the racist and colonial regime with spear in hand, when the goals we seek are supported by the whole organised international community, we are attacked as obstacles to what is called a peaceful settlement of the South African problem. There is only one source of war in our region, and that is the racist and fascist regime. Apartheid is synonymous with war; it makes war on the

people of our country; it shoots down children in the streets, it murders trade unionists and others in prison, and wages undeclared war against African independent states.

Pretoria Attacks to Destroy Freedom

As we have repeatedly stated, the Matola and Maseru massacres had nothing to do with the existence of military bases in either Mozambique or Lesotho, for there are none. The regime's practice of displaying weapons taken from its own stores but presented to the Press as captured in mythical ANC bases is patently and notoriously cheap. And Ruth First was a social scientist of international repute — not an ANC military base! Neither were the victims of racist assassination in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Lesotho.

But these and others, are countries in which the people breathe the air of freedom, in which they are judged by their work, their integrity as human beings, their courage and patriotism, and not by the colour of their skin. It is for this reason that the Pretoria racists have placed them under siege, that they have recruited, trained, equipped, financed, transported and commanded bandits to wreak destruction, to kill, to mutilate, to destroy food and shoot up buses and trains. The bases from which these countries are attacked are to be found in Northern Natal, the Orange Free State, the Eastern Cape and the Eastern and Northern Transvaal. It is in these bases that officers of the racist South African army train their murder battalions, it is from these bases that operations against all the Front-line States are directed, that supplies are sent, radio communications maintained and military instructions given. The bandits emanating from these bases are nothing more than an extension of the racist South African army, bribed with the promise of one day being the gauleiters of conquered territories. Their hope is to crush the Mozambican Revolution, to set back the gains of independence and to turn this country into a Bantustan. Even the briefest acquaintance with the ongoing struggle here shows that, as

FRELIMO has so clearly pointed out, the only choice facing the Mozambican people is between defending the Revolution and becoming a Bantustan, between building a new society based on revolutionary principles or going back to being a backyard brothel for the delight of the racists.

Let us Reveal a Secret

We are going to reveal a secret that is no secret at all, we are going to reveal where our military bases really are. Gentlemen of the Press may take note: our bases are in a country not far from here, where members of Umkhonto We Sizwe, military wing of our organisation, and spearhead of the struggle against apartheid, can be found. Our bases are in South Africa itself, our bases are among the people of our country, our bases are everywhere, in the cities, in the mountains, near to Koeberg Nuclear Power Station in the Cape, a thousand miles from any border, near to the SASOL petrol tanks in the heart of the country, and, yes, right in Pretoria itself, close to the Voortrekkerhoogte military headquarters, which we have successfully shelled. The regime cannot find these bases. Therefore it invents mythical bases in neighbouring territories. For, it is easier to massacre refugees in their beds or to send bandits to murder teachers and health workers in Juham than it is to stop the revolutionary process inside South Africa itself.

This is why we have war in Southern Africa, and why we will never have peace in our zone as long as apartheid exists. And this is the greatest pledge we can make to the people of Mozambique, as represented here at this Congress: we will spare no effort to increase our blows against the apartheid system to unite the broadest sections of the South African people in concerted action against it, and to destroy once and for all the most direct and pressing source of oppression and war in our zone.

Our Future in South Africa

The defeat of Portuguese colonialism by the people of Mozambique under the leadership

of Frelimo gave a great impetus to our own struggle in South Africa. The victory ushered in an unprecedented growth of mass action by all classes and strata of the oppressed people of South Africa, and witnessed the soaring prestige and influence of the ANC as it led the oppressed and exploited people in the struggle to destroy the system of racist exploitation and tyranny.

We in the ANC and the revolutionary alliance which we head, have never considered freedom to be the substitution of Black for White faces in the corridors of power, while leaving unchanged the exploitative economic infra-structure from which racism receives its sustenance. We have always understood that the uprooting of the oppressive system must necessarily entail the seizure of the key centres of economic power – as stipulated in our Freedom Charter – and their transference to the common ownership of the people. The radical restructuring of the economy will also require dismantling the white minority's monopoly over the best agricultural land, and its redistribution among those who work it.

We envisage a totally new state system in which the army, the police force and the judiciary serve the interests of the people as a whole and not those of an exploitative minority.

Finally, we conceive of our country as a single, united, democratic and non-racial state, belonging to all who live in it, in which all shall enjoy equal rights, and in which sovereignty will come from the people as a whole, and not from a collection of Bantustans and racial and tribal groups organised to perpetuate minority power.

We in the ANC already live according to the principles we espouse. The embryo of the new nation is already maturing in our ranks, in the underground struggle, in the prisons, in our cultural activities. It is a nation forming itself on a large scale, pushed ahead by the struggle of the masses of our country. The objective conditions for the new nation have existed ever since the creation of a single

and highly integrated economic system. The subjective conditions are being achieved by common sacrifice in a common struggle.

The ANC and the People's Struggle

Combining legal and illegal methods of struggle, the ANC has been able to draw into mass action millions of oppressed people of South Africa. Defying harassment, imprisonment and other acts of intimidation, our workers have organised themselves into militant, independent and democratic unions — a powerful and growing detachment of the national liberation struggle — struggling for full trade union and democratic rights.

At the same time the intensification of our armed struggle has led to an important qualitative development in our struggle for national liberation and social justice. The heroic actions of our combatants inside our country have heightened the mass upsurge that has become a permanent feature of our struggle. Despite being banned for over twenty years, the ANC has been able to impose its own legality in the country. The Freedom Charter has become the rallying point for all democratic forces in South Africa.

The ANC re-affirms its solidarity with the valiant struggle of the Palestinian people, led by the PLO, the struggles of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, fighting to restore democracy and defend the revolutionary gains already registered in their continent. We salute also the peoples of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and East Timor, who are waging courageous struggles to liberate their countries.

While recognising and re-affirming that

the primary responsibility for the liberation of South Africa rests with the ANC and the people of South Africa, we nonetheless wish, at this Fourth Congress — itself a product of the victorious struggle of FRELIMO and the Mozambican people — to acknowledge with deep gratitude the internationalist support, and encouragement our liberation struggle enjoys from the countries lying within striking distance of the fascist regime's aggressive army, from the rest of Africa, and from our allies and committed friends across the seas, so many of them represented at this most historic event.

This support has not been given in vain. The ANC wishes today to assure its reliable ally and comrade-in-arms, the FRELIMO Party, and to pledge to all our supporters, that as June 26th follows June 25th, so will South Africa, in the fulness of time, be transformed, like the People's Republic of Mozambique, into a **LIBERATED ZONE OF HUMANITY**.

Long live the heroic Mozambican people, who never flinched in the face of attacks by the colonial-fascists who occupied their country!

Long live the Mozambican people, who never flinched in the face of attacks by the illegal Smith Regime!

Long live the Mozambican people, who are showing the same steadfastness and wisdom in the face of attacks by the racist regime of Pretoria!

Long live the unity of the thirty-five million people of South Africa and Mozambique!

Long live the Fourth Congress of the Party FRELIMO!

A luta Continua!

A Victoria e Certa!

Amandla Ngawethu!

We Will Intensify the Armed Struggle

We print here some excerpts from the statement made by the President of SWAPO, Sam Shafiqhuna Nujoma, at the International Conference in Solidarity with the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, on the 25th-29th April 1983. The conference was held at UNESCO House in Paris, and was attended by more than 500 delegates from about 140 countries. Liberation movements, national bodies, including non-governmental organisations, and international organisations were present

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I have the distinct honour and I am most pleased to participate in this important Conference.



President Nujoma

This morning we listened to important statements by outstanding personalities who are involved, in one way or another, in the question of Namibia. We are studying and digesting their messages and will refer to them in the course of the Conference.

Enlarged Central Committee Meeting.

This important International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence is taking place immediately after the successful conclusion of the Second Enlarged Central Committee Meeting of SWAPO, held in the People's Republic of Angola, attended by 138 delegates consisting of SWAPO National Leadership, Senior Commanders of the People's

Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), Deputy Heads of Departments, Wings, SWAPO Representatives abroad, the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), Functionaries representing our Movement in International Organisations, Representatives of Regions, such as the warzones, Namibian Health and Education Centres in the People's Republic of Angola and the Republic of Zambia, and Senior Officers from the Provisional Headquarters in Luanda, Principals of SWAPO schools and representatives from the National Headquarters in Windhoek, the capital city of Namibia.

The Second Enlarged Central Committee Meeting critically and systematically reviewed the liberation activity of the Movement over the past six years, which activity was based on the decisions and programme of action adopted by the First Enlarged Central Committee, held at Nampundwe, Zambia, in July 1976.

The convening of the Second Enlarged Central Committee was preceded by thorough preparations carried out over a year by a Preparatory Committee, whose work was reviewed by the National Executive Committee (now renamed Political Bureau) on 14th and 15th April 1983. In turn, the National Executive Committee submitted its review of the work of the Preparatory Committee to the outgoing Central Committee, sitting in its regular session on 16th April 1983.

Mr President, it was against this background that the Enlarged Central Committee carried out its deliberations. And I am, therefore, pleased to inform this august assembly of friends and supporters, as well as the representatives of the media, that the said Meeting was representative in its composition, comprehensive and critical in its analysis of all aspects of the national liberation struggle in Namibia, and was unanimous in consolidating the unity of the rank and file of our Movement.

On this basis, the Meeting adopted new guidelines, including an amended Constitution and a Programme of Action for the

next five years; in addition, the Second Enlarged Central Committee re-elected the President of SWAPO, elected the Vice-President, in the person of Hendrik Witbooi, and re-elected David Merero as the National Chairman. Similarly, the majority of the members of the former Central Committee were also re-elected, including eleven new members.

I have gone to a considerable length to describe the process involving SWAPO's consolidation of unity of SWAPO ranks, adoption of new strategy and tactics, sharpening of perspectives of the struggle, in order to deal more effectively with the situation in and relating to Namibia.

Washington's Imperialist Global Ambitions.

The Conference is being held at a critical time, when the independence of Namibia is being held hostage, and the suffering of our people is being used by the Reagan Administration to achieve Washington's imperialist global ambitions. Therefore, the oppressed but struggling Namibian people are following with keen interest the deliberations of the Conference, and are hoping that its conclusions and resolutions will reaffirm the active solidarity and support of the international community for our just cause for national liberation.

When we met here in the same hall in 1980, in another International Solidarity Conference on Namibia, hopes and expectations were high that Namibia would be independent by now. Equally, those same hopes and expectations prevailed when the International Conference on Sanctions Against South Africa was held again in the same hall in 1981.

Regrettably, Mr President, the situation in and around Namibia has taken a negative turn as the racist regime of Pretoria has intensified its brutal and generalized repression in South Africa itself, and in Namibia, and has embarked upon a campaign of aggressive military attacks and destabilisation throughout Southern Africa.

The ever-more aggressive and arrogant policy and actions of the Pretoria racists are

a direct result of the advent of the reactionary Reagan Administration in Washington, which has publicly embraced apartheid South Africa as a friendly country.

In Namibia, the last three years have seen the massive South African military build-up turning Namibia into a garrison state. The obvious consequence of this state of affairs is the untold suffering of the Namibian masses, in the form of cold-blooded murder, abductions, torture, incarceration in concentration camps, massacre of innocent villagers, rapes and constant acts of intimidation.

In the same fashion, the racist Pretoria regime has embarked upon a generalized and calculated campaign of destabilisation against independent African States in the region. To this end, the regime has been recruiting, training, financing, arming, transporting, deploying, commanding and rescuing puppets and bandits from these countries. These acts of destabilisation are being perpetrated against Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and other African States as far afield as the Seychelles.

Illegal Occupation of Angola: Threat to International Peace

The People's Republic of Angola is one country which the Pretoria racists and their imperialist allies have singled out for all-out destabilisation, counter-revolutionary sabotage and diplomatic blackmail. Using occupied Namibia as a springboard, the racist regime of South Africa has launched massive and destructive military attacks inside the sovereign Territory of Angola. From these criminal and savage armed attacks, the racist expansionists have since 1981 occupied militarily parts of Southern Angola.

In short, Mr President, the continued illegal occupation and massive concentration of racist South Africa's armed forces in Namibia, the intensified apartheid reign of terror, the constant acts of aggression and destabilisation against independent States in the region, taken together, constitute a

serious threat to international peace and security.

This is the present situation in and around Namibia, to which this important and timely Conference is called upon to give an urgent and appropriate consideration. The negative developments which have continued to impede progress towards Namibia's independence in the course of the last three years reflect the overall negative developments on the world scene. It is sad but proper and necessary to state here that the past three years have seen the resurgence of the ugly cold-warmongering, reactionary policies of confrontation, threats of intervention and intensified covert activities against progressive governments and, above all, the most dangerous threat of nuclear holocaust by the aggressive circles of imperialism. This is, indeed, an ominous international situation.

But the champions of liberation, justice and peace the world over should never succumb to these outrageous policies of those who are busy trying to convince the world that nuclear war is not only thinkable but that it is actually winnable. In this connection, it is heartening and encouraging to note that millions of people have taken to the streets in North America and Western Europe in active opposition to such irrational policies. They are doing so to help save the world from total destruction.

Socialist Countries: Supporters of Democracy and Transformation

One of the direct consequences of the latest irresponsible and dangerous behaviour of the aggressive circles of imperialism is the calculated distortion of the legitimate demands of the oppressed and exploited masses in Southern Africa for their right to self-determination, freedom and national independence. In other words, their demands for liberation, justice and independence have been relegated to the lowest point, if at all, on the list of priorities by the major capitalist powers and their monstrous transnational corporations whose greed for world domin-

ation and profits supersedes every other consideration.

In the face of this critical development, it has become quite apparent that liberal democracy in the West seems to have lost moral force, such that the leading Western power is more concerned with military superiority than with moral and ideological persuasion.

Undeniably, the true and consistent supporters and defenders of the ideals of democracy and meaningful transformation of societies of oppressed and exploited peoples in the world are the countries of the socialist community, and other progressive forces. On the other hand, the capitalist powers have earned themselves the shameful reputation as heartless proponents of world domination, defenders of the exploitative systems and supporters of tyrannic regimes throughout the world.

Here we are in the land of Voltaire, a land which is widely acknowledged for having made a significant contribution to world history and civilization, including the universally proclaimed ideals of liberty, fraternity and equality of man.

It is from here, the birthplace of these noble ideals, that we are now questioning the intentions of the Western powers who shamelessly pursue selfish policies, in collaboration with the apartheid clique of Pretoria, in order to ensure free access to the mineral wealth and the African cheap labour in Southern Africa, in total disregard of the legitimate demands and just struggle of the millions of the African majority in the region. How can we be expected to trust them if all that they are after is plundering our wealth by keeping us in bondage and by prolonging our suffering?

The Contact Group: Enough is Enough

Enough is enough. We condemn these countries for their criminal policies, we reject their hollow promises and unfounded claims about progress in the process of decolonization of Namibia, which is our primary preoccupation. We renew our appeal to the whole of

the peace-loving and justice-upholding sectors of the world community to condemn and reject the delaying tactics of the imperialists and their racist clients in Pretoria.

I now wish to say something about the role of the so-called Contact Group. This group of countries is at the core of all the unwarranted and negative developments that I have spoken about before at various places and just right now in this Conference. The Five Western Powers - Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, France, United Kingdom and the United States, said to be a Contact Group, have offered themselves over the past six-year period to assist the United Nations to achieve its primary objective in Namibia, that is, freedom and genuine independence. To this end, the Security Council adopted a settlement plan as endorsed in Resolution 435 (1978). This Plan was to be, and remains still, the final and only basis of a negotiated settlement of the Namibian problem.

In this connection, I have been mandated by the Central Committee of SWAPO to categorically and clearly state that our Movement, having reviewed the history of the negotiations and the role of the so-called Contact Group, led by the U.S., has concluded that this Group has lost proper contact with the letter and spirit of Resolution 435, and that the whole exercise has now turned out to be a mere rescue operation for the white racist, illegal occupiers in Namibia. In particular, the Central Committee of SWAPO has singled out the Reagan Administration which, because of its public embrace of apartheid South Africa, has injected in the decolonization process of our country, an extraneous issue, by linking the independence of Namibia to a withdrawal of Cuban forces from the People's Republic of Angola. The Central Committee categorically rejected and vehemently condemned this unjust, arrogant and irrational and objectionable policy of linkage. The position of SWAPO is that the oppressed people of Namibia are entitled to independence without any further delay, precondition or prevarication.

It is in the light of this that SWAPO has

come to the conclusion that the role of the Five Western Powers ceased to be that of honest brokers in terms of the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435 (1978). These powers, and the Reagan Administration in particular, must be prevailed upon to desist forthwith from their sinister attempts to hijack and misuse the Namibian negotiating process for their own selfish ends.

We thus call upon this august gathering to endorse the recent decisions of the OAU Liberation Committee and the Seventh Summit of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, which have urged the United Nations Security Council to urgently exercise its authority and to resume full responsibility for the speedy implementation of Resolution 435.

The Angolan Bandits

The recent decision of the European Community has caused great apprehension for the struggling Namibian people. By adopting a reactionary and hostile resolution with a view to providing direct financial and material assistance, under false pretexts, to the Angolan bandits and mercenaries based in occupied Namibia, the European Community has taken a public position in favour of further strengthening the hands of the Pretoria regime in its campaign of destabilisation and subversion against the People's Republic of Angola. We strongly condemn the sponsors and supporters of this reactionary resolution, and reject its import as an act of hostility against the peoples of Africa.

We Shall Leave No Stone Unturned

One more customary but sincere duty before I conclude, I take this opportunity to renew SWAPO's militant solidarity with the struggling people of South Africa, under the leadership of the African National Congress, whose military wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe, is challenging daily the military machine of the racists inside the country; the people of Saharawi, under the leadership of Polisario Front; the people of Palestine, under the

leadership of the PLO and all other anti-imperialist and democratic forces the world over who are struggling for liberation, justice and social progress.

Finally, I wish to state that the patriots of Namibia, led by SWAPO, their sole and authentic representative, have always been realistic and sober-minded about the difficulties inherent in the struggle, and have accordingly resolved to wage a protracted struggle until we have achieved the total liberation of Namibia. I pledge, once again, here before this august world assembly, that we shall leave no stone unturned in our struggle to liberate Namibia. We will intensify the armed liberation struggle for as long as the racists prevent a negotiated settlement. We will, in other words, continue to make the price of illegal occupation higher than its benefit for racist South Africa.

Notwithstanding the concentration of the racist South African troops in Namibia, the heroic combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) continue to engage the enemy forces on a sustained and ever-broadening scale from the Zambesi river in the North-Eastern part of our country to the Atlantic, and from Northern frontiers to the district of Windhoek, deep in the central part of Namibia. Not a single day passes without armed encounter between our liberation forces and the occupation troops in our country. PLAN has not only succeeded in maintaining the initiative but also in demonstrating its high calibre of fighting ability. Racist South Africa has failed to contain the ever-broadening and deepening advance of PLAN's armed operations throughout the country. Our heroic combatants have successfully managed to pin down more than 100 000 enemy forces and to steadily raise higher for the enemy the price of continued illegal occupation of our country. Recent months have seen brilliant victories being scored by PLAN and high casualties being inflicted on the enemy. Pretoria is now being forced to spend over three million rands a day in its doomed attempt to perpetuate its occupation of our country.

RIVONIA: TWENTY YEARS ON

by
HAROLD WOLPE

It is twenty years this month since the arrest, at Rivonia near Johannesburg, of a number of leaders and other cadres of the ANC. The trial that followed, at which eight leaders were sentenced to life imprisonment, came to be known as the Rivonia trial.

Harold Wolpe was one of those arrested, and was detained in Johannesburg. He escaped, together with Arthur Goldreich, Abdulhay Jassat, and Moosa Moolla.. Here, he briefly discusses the place of the Rivonia trial in the history of the South African liberation struggle.

The Sharpeville massacre of 1960, the mass upsurge which followed throughout the country, and the state's utilisation of emergency military and police powers forcibly to win back control of the situation, marked the beginning of a new phase in South African politics.

The 1950s were dominated by the development, despite state coercion, of mass struggles against the apartheid regime. These were reflected, not only in the growing strength and mobilising power of the Congress Alliance led by the ANC, as shown in the Defiance Campaign, the Congress of the People, and so on, but also in the country-wide mushrooming of people's organisations formed to campaign on specific demands against the state – such as trade unions, and organisations concerned with such issues as civil liberties, education and living conditions.

State Repression and the Armed Struggle.

State repression in 1960 established the political conditions in which it became possible for the regime to develop, extend and utilise ever more coercive powers, in its attempt to cripple all the major centres of revolutionary opposition and, at the same time, effectively to eliminate the terrain of non-violent political struggle in South Africa. The consequence of this was to drive our movement in the direction of armed struggle.

The turn towards armed struggle, by way of urban sabotage in the first instance, presented a major threat to the apartheid state, for, despite the state's success in curtailing the independent political organisations of the masses, the militancy and high level of political consciousness of the people, which had developed in the 1950s, remained. Umkhonto We Sizwe provided the means for mobilising the militancy of the people, in a direct challenge to the state's coercive power.

In these circumstances, the arrest, by the security police, of many of our top leaders at the headquarters of our underground organisation on the farm, 'Lilliesleaf' in Rivonia, near Johannesburg, on the 12th July 1963, represented a momentous defeat for the national liberation struggle. With one blow, the state completed its grip on the political arena, by capturing key leaders of the ANC and MK.

The People Rise Again

For ten years the state held the people of South Africa in a vice-like grip of political immobility, but then, in 1973, the great workers' strikes revealed something of what was occurring beneath the surface – the growth of a large, confident and militant black working class, determined to struggle against state and employers for a living wage. This was only the beginning, for, in the context of the weakening of imperialism in Southern Africa in the 1970s through the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, and of the racist regime in Rhodesia, there followed, over the next ten years, a resurgence of the peoples' struggles and organisation inside South Africa.

Thus, struggles in the factories, in the schools and communities (reaching a high point in Soweto in 1976) have become an everyday feature of South Africa. The growth of the independent black trade unions, the formation of black student organisations, the revival of the Transvaal Indian Congress, the politicisation of cultural activities and of

black churches, are merely part of the picture.

The ANC Survives and Leads.

The struggle of the ANC to survive the defeats of the 1960s, to rebuild its organisation, and to effectively and concretely resume its leading role in the national liberation struggle inside South Africa, was carried on in the face of formidable obstacles, including the unconstrained power of the state's security apparatus. Nevertheless, our movement not only survived, but continued to operate on an ever-expanding scale, in both the political sphere and in the armed struggle within South Africa.

Indeed, the political and trade union resurgence in South Africa, and the direction it has taken, owes much to the determined and courageous work undertaken by our cadres throughout the worst period of state repression, and in the most adverse conditions. The role of our movement is testified to by the fact that its leadership has been spontaneously recognised by individuals and organisations alike engaged in the struggle for national liberation in South Africa.

Much Remains to be Done.

Yet much remains to be done, and undoubtedly we are up against a ruthless and determined militarised regime, which has the backing of the major imperialist powers. On this twentieth anniversary of the Rivonia arrests, we must recall the words and deeds of our comrades, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki, Dennis Goldberg, Elias Motsoaledi, Andrew Mlangeni, and Raymond Mhlaba, who are serving life imprisonment now, and re-dedicate ourselves to the struggle for the release of all political prisoners, and for the liberation of South Africa.

Victims of APARTHEID AGGRESSION

*On May 23rd, aircraft of the Pretoria regime attacked Maputo, capital of Mozambique,
killing innocent Mozambican citizens.*



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STOP REPRESSION

On June 6th, 1983, 73-year-old trade unionist Oscar Mpetha was found guilty and sentenced under the Terrorism Act. SECHABA reprints an article by R. Matojo, which first appeared in DAWN, the journal of Umkhonto We Sizwe.

Comrade Oscar Mpetha was born at Mount Fletcher, Transkei in 1909. His parents, at great sacrifice, sent him to Adams College in Natal. During the hungry thirties he came to Cape Town and worked as a waiter, docker, hospital orderly and road worker. Whilst in Cape Town he attended classes to learn

Afrikaans, and at the same time taught Xhosa to his Afrikaans tutors.

In 1945 the Food and Canning Workers' Union (FCWU) organisers went to Vredenburg, Veldrift, Laaiplek and Berg River Mouth hamlets to organise the workers in the newly opened fish canning and processing factories. At that time the FCWU had already organised the workers on the Namaqualand coast, Saldanha Bay, St Helena Bay and Pateroster. The Union had won higher wages, better working conditions, housing, clinics and schools, by the militancy and unity of the workers. When the FCWU organisers vis-



INCREDIBLY BRAVE MEN

Below is an extract from a letter written by the late Comrade Bram Fischer, who was leading defence counsel in the Rivonia trial. The letter is dated 24th June, 1964, and was addressed to a young comrade in exile.

"I must tell you of one important event. Some days before the end of the argument in court, Govan, Walter and Nelson came to an early morning consultation to tell us of a decision they had taken with regard to the sentence if it turned out to be capital punishment. They had made up their minds that in that event there was to be no appeal. Their line was that, should a death sentence be passed upon them, the political campaign around such a sentence should not be hampered by any appeal for mercy ... or by raising any vain hopes ... We lawyers were staggered at first, but soon realised the decision was politically unassailable. But I tell you the story not because of its political wisdom. I want you to know to what incredibly brave men you and others will have to be successors."

OF TRADE UNIONISTS

ited Laaipek during the long week-end in October, most of the men workers had gone to a football game in Paarl. The union organisers went from house to house, talking to women workers and housewives; left leaflets with application forms and the union constitution, and urged them to have a meeting and resolve to join the union.

About two weeks later, the FCWU head office received a letter in response to the union's appeal, expressing the desire of the workers to join the FCWU. This letter was signed on behalf of the workers by Oscar Mpetha, who asked for more application

forms.

The union not only sent application forms, but sent him money to attend the next NEC meeting. At this meeting a full discussion took place on conditions in the factories and ways and means of organising the unorganised workers. The Union grew. Branches of the Union were established, with functioning factory committees. Comrade Oscar Mpetha was elected branch secretary at Laaipek.

There were many complaints in the factories, such as contravention of the Factories Act of 1941, and Wage Determination. Not



This photograph of Nelson Mandela was taken during his tour of African states, before his return to South Africa and his subsequent imprisonment.

only did the Union demand that these complaints should be corrected, but demanded higher wages and better working and living conditions. In January 1947, the employers felt the workers' restlessness and called in the Department of Labour inspectors. The employers called in Comrade Oscar and the factory committee to meet the inspectors.

Employee

The FCWU, though registered, had defied the definition of employee in the 1927-37 Act that **AFRICANS ARE NOT EMPLOYEES.**, it was one Union of all workers irrespective of race. The then Smuts government had appeased the Nationalist Party; it brutally shot down African miners during the historic African miners' strike in August 1946. It had exposed itself during this strike as the enemy of African workers. It arrested and prosecuted the central executive members of the Communist Party, and members of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions who led the African miners' strike. The Smuts government generally began to harass the people's organisations - the ANC, Indian Congress and progressive trade unions. It demanded that the FCWU should abide by the Industrial Conciliation Act. The Union refused, and the Department of Labour threatened to deregister the Union and to turn down all the Union's applications for Conciliation Boards. The FCWU has never had an Industrial Council. The Union had forced employers by united strike action to sign with the Union private (gentlemen's) agreements.

For six to seven months the Union debated the threat by the Department of Labour at factory, branch and at the National Executive Committee meetings and quarterly branch delegates' conferences. Finally, at a Branch Delegates' Conference held on 27th November, the decision was taken to establish the African Food and Canning Workers' Union, and that the two unions were to work in complete unison in their relentless struggle against the exploiters, for higher wages and better working and living conditions. It was a bitter decision to

take, but the membership regarded this as a necessary step to retain the unity of the workers. In fact, Ray Alexander, the General Secretary of the FCWU, was elected also the General Secretary of the A-FCWU.

Following the National Party victory in 1948, the oppressed and exploited black people faced a vicious government bent on suppressing the trade unions, particularly the African trade unions, and the people's organisations fighting for democratic rights. The Nationalist regime introduced the Suppression of Communism Act and a host of other oppressive legislation.

At the Annual Conference of the unions in 1950, the conference agreed to empower the incoming NECs to select and train new office bearers in the event of the regime's banning Ray Alexander and others from the Union leadership. Comrade Oscar Mpetha and Lena Avontuur were chosen to work in the HQ. On the 1st of September 1950 both came for training in the HQ. In 1951, Oscar Mpetha was elected as a paid general secretary of the A-FCWU, with Ray Alexander as the Honorary General Secretary. By September 1953, no less than 12 leaders of the FCWU were banned from holding office, or in any way assisting in the work of the union. Among those banned were S V Reddy (late Durban branch secretary), Betty du Toit (Johannesburg branch secretary), Sarah Wentzel (Worcester), general secretary Ray Alexander and other branch leaders.

The union carried on with new officials. By then Comrade Oscar was the most experienced of them all, and a great deal of responsibility rested on him.

ANC

He was elected President of the Cape Western Province ANC in 1959. He was detained in April 1960, banned and forced to give up his trade union work. He then opened a laundry depot.

In 1976 and 1977, during the Cillie Commission of Enquiry on Soweto, and after the death by torture of Comrade Elijah Loza, Chairman of SACTU's Cape Town



Oscar Mpetha (standing) is seen here in 1952, when he was General Secretary of the African Food and Canning Workers' Union. With him (from left to right) are Bettie du Toit, Ray Alexander, Maria Williams and David Jaantjies.

Committee, he came forward. Not only did he make an indictment against the regime to the Commission on the death of Elijah Loza, but demanded to investigate its cause.

In 1978 the FCWU/A-FCWU asked him to return to the Union as national organiser. The people needed his leadership, and he came. He participated in 1979 in leading the Fatti's and Moni's strike. The strike, which introduced new forms of struggle, gained wide national and international support, combined with a successful boycott of all Fatti's and Moni's products. This strike was followed by other successful militant strikes led by the two unions, with Comrade Oscar in the leadership.

The people's militant mood was expressed in the struggle against rent increases, and in 1980 there was a successful boycott of the city tramway buses in Cape Town. Oscar was Chairman of the Nyanga Residents' Association, which led the struggle.

On the 11th August 1980, fire was set to some vehicles by a group of protesters, injuring two whites, who later died.

On the 13th August, Oscar issued a statement to the press in which he condemned the role of the police in the unrest. He was detained, together with 18 young African freedom fighters. He was held incommunicado in Pollsmoor dungeon, the place where

Comrade Elijah Loza died, and where today our great leaders like Comrades Mandela, Sisulu and the others are incarcerated. In March 1981 they were charged in the Cape Town Supreme Court on two counts of murder and terrorism.

Whilst in prison, Comrade Mpetha has had two main illnesses: diabetes, and he has had to have an operation to remove a prostate gland. He is 73 years old and his life is in danger. The regime knows this. The union lawyers have asked the attorney-general seven times to let Comrade Oscar out on bail. This request has been supported by trade unions, and community, church and women's organisations, and international pleas have come from the World Federation of Trade Unions, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the International Labour Organisation. He has now been in gaol for two and a half years and has not been found guilty of any crime. The regime wants him dead of 'natural causes' and 'old age.'

The oppressed and exploited people want and need Comrade Oscar alive. He is one of our great leaders of the struggle in our country, despite all the government's attempts to break him over the past 38 years — by banning orders, detentions and trials. They have not succeeded to break his fighting spirit. He remains undaunted, defying the brutal white racist regime.

We urge our people at home and our friends abroad to renew support for the immediate release of Comrade Oscar and the 18 others, and to give support to all their families. Let the accused and their families know that they have friends at home and abroad!

PRETORIA'S

On the few occasions when commissions have produced reports which could come up with no other conclusion than that government policies were untenable, or come up with conclusions out of line with policy or with recommendations too extreme, they were simply put on the shelf and forgotten.

Besides giving justification to planned policy changes, inquiries also serve as a deceptive device aimed at appeasing critics. When criticism becomes too loud, the government can call for patience until the commission has completed its work. In this way, a commission of inquiry is often used as a substitute for genuine change. By pointing out that 'something is being done' the regime can actually postpone change, and in the interim step up repression, and root out the most vociferous critics. If this requires a long period of time, submission of the report is delayed until the government decides that the time is right — for carrying out its recommendations, or when its recommendations have become irrelevant.

Since 1948 the racist government has called many commissions of inquiry. A number of these were cast aside when they came up with suggestions which did not correspond to the Nationalists' preconceived ideas. There are too many of these to consider here, so the emphasis will be on the period from 1976.

The apartheid regime responds to crises in one of two ways: it steps up repression or it institutes a commission of inquiry. Over the years the Nationalist government has launched dozens of commissions of inquiry, always in response to a crisis and always to strengthen their grip on power; never to benefit those who are being inquired into.

COMMISSIONS OF ENQUIRY

Devices to Support Pretoria's Policies

The crises which the apartheid government responds to with the announcement of a commission of inquiry are not only social crises, such as the Soweto uprising of 1976, but crises of policy. From the moment the Nationalists came to power in 1948, the architects of apartheid have used inquiries to justify their actions. The commissions are used to give new policy or change in policy a 'scientific' legitimisation — to make it seem that new legislation is justified in terms of the findings of thorough research by a group of erudite and respectable professors.

It is doubtful whether in fact any commission has ever been responsible for any major policy shift. The appointment of a commission by the government at a particular time, and the issuing to it of a brief, is sufficient to indicate what sort of result is expected. Major changes in policy are contemplated at much higher levels, and usually prior to the appointment of the commission anyway. The appointment of a commission, however, is often a pointer that the government is considering new legislation. The findings and recommendations of inquiries are for the most part highly predictable, if consideration is taken of the shortcomings of existing policy, and the events leading up to the appointment of the commission.

Of course, commissions are not policy-making bodies. They can at most influence the policy-makers. But looking at the people who are appointed to commissions it is clear that they are appointed because they know what to produce. Every Pretoria commission of enquiry is no more than a 'think tank' composed of intellectual supporters. Even on the very few occasions when black mem-

bers have been appointed, they have been the most extreme sell-outs, who are paid handsomely not to come up with anything too radical.

Cillie Commission

From 1976 when apartheid entered its most severe and final phase of generalised crisis, the number of commissions appointed has increased drastically, as the regime seeks justification for zigzags in policy in an effort to find a way out.

Just one day after the police massacre of school students in Soweto on 16 June 1976, the government announced the appointment of a one-man commission to investigate the 'disturbances.' The person appointed was the Judge President of the Transvaal, Justice Cillie. Demands by the Soweto Parents' Association for the inclusion in the commission of one or two people nominated by Soweto parents were contemptuously rejected by the government, which declared that the commission would limit the inquiry to the 'riots' and would not include an in-depth inquiry into socio-economic factors.

When the uprisings spread to all corners of the the country, the scope of the commission broadened somewhat. The commission sat in all the major centres, and ended its hearings on 30th June 1977. The report was not presented to parliament till 21st January 1980.

Blame for the uprisings was not attributed to apartheid as such, but was placed at the feet of officials and police, for failing to foresee the eruption. Because of this, the police were unaware of 'preparations' for the 'riots' and were therefore themselves not

properly prepared to control the 'rioters.' It was the duty of the police to maintain 'law and order,' but, due to their unpreparedness, they overresponded to the initial events. The police were not found to be responsible for the continuation of the 'riots' — this was the doing of 'agitators.' The police were acquitted of all charges of brutality, and of shooting indiscriminately. Where this did happen, it was attributed to individual 'errors of judgment' and 'overreaction.'

Most of the recommendations implied by the report were carried out long before it appeared. These related to improvement of police riot-control capabilities. The report was used to back up measures already taken.

Theron and Viljoen Commissions.

A number of politically significant reports were tabled by commissions in 1976. The most important of these were the reports of the Theron Commission of Inquiry into matters relating to the 'coloured' population group, and the Viljoen Commission of inquiry into the penal system.

The Theron report is possibly the classic example of a report which came up with recommendations too far-reaching for its time, and which consequently ended up in Pretoria wastepaper baskets. Amongst its most important recommendations was a call for the repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act and/or the clause which prohibits intercourse between whites and others.

The Viljoen Commission's report resulted in a more rigorous Criminal Procedure Act being passed, but did little if anything by way of penal reform. It recommended that the pass laws should be 'depenalised' — meaning that offenders should be dealt with administratively rather than be sent to prison. Pass law convictions are still the main cause of prison overcrowding.

Wiehahn, Riekert and De Kock

1977 saw the appointment of a spate of commissions. The most important of these were the Wiehahn Commission to investigate legislation relating to labour matters, the Riek-



ert Commission to inquire into all other legislation relating to the utilisation of manpower, the De Kock Commission into monetary policy and a Cabinet Committee to investigate the position of urban Africans.

The Wiehahn Commission tabled its report in seven stages from 1977 to 1982. The recommendations made by this commission have been followed by a number of 'changes' in the labour and trade union fields. While the regime likes to pretend that these 'changes' followed directly from the Commission's recommendations, they were introduced as a result of working class struggles, especially from the early 1970s. In no way have the fundamental structures of the apartheid cheap labour system been altered — the migrant labour system remains intact, the pass laws remain in force, and the bantustan programme is going ahead at full pace.

The one-man Riekert Commission's report was also hailed by supporters of the racist regime as a 'breakthrough' and a move away from rigid apartheid traditions. As with the Wiehahn report, the laws that were changed as a result of the Commission's recommendations were designed chiefly to benefit employers, to streamline the apartheid-capitalist administrative apparatus which controls the movement and status of black labour. No African workers are better off under the new legislation, which has placed much stiffer controls on migrant workers, and others living outside the 'white urban areas.'

Erasmus

In 1978 only one commission of political importance was appointed. This was the Erasmus Commission of Inquiry into malpractices, which investigated unauthorised expenditure by the Department of Information. The 'Information scandal' was instrumental in deepening rifts in the Nationalist ranks, but most of the exposure were made by investigative journalists rather than by the Commission.

A Year of Commissions

1979 saw the appointment of more commissions than in any previous year. The Viljoen Committee was appointed to inquire into higher education for Africans in 'white areas.' Nothing much was heard of the enquiry after a number of organisations had made contributions, and it appears to have been superseded by the 1981 De Lange Committee (Human Sciences Research Council) report on education. Clearly, the commissioning of these committees was brought about by the severe shortage of trained labour in industry, and by the school boycotts up to 1980.

After two bantustan areas had been declared 'independent,' puppet groups in other areas were clamouring to be given 'independence' too. The Quail Commission was announced to investigate the viability of 'independence' for the Ciskei area, and it produced its report in February 1980.

The commission found that chronic health problems existed in the area, especially malnutrition. There was also a severe housing shortage, overcrowding of land and high unemployment. It found that the majority of people in the area did not favour bantustan 'independence,' but universal adult suffrage in a unitary political system. Overall, it could not recommend 'independence' unless certain (impossible) conditions were met.

Megalomaniac Chief Lennox Sebe ignored the Quail recommendations, held his own referendum in which — miraculously — he recorded a result opposite to the Quail findings, and opted for 'independence' in December 1981.

Also connected with the bantustans, a commission was established in 1979 to inquire into the consolidation of these areas. The commission was called the Central Consolidation Committee (Van der Walt Commission). Its main recommendation was that bantustans should not be viewed as autonomous pieces of land, but as economic regions integrated into the overall economy of the country.

The Schlebusch Commission was set up to look into and report on the introduction of a new constitution for South Africa; the National Manpower Commission (recommended by Wiehahn) to make recommendations on labour matters; and the Du Preez Commission to investigate the Coloured Representative Council's view on constitutional matters. This latter commission, composed of Coloured members, produced a report which, for all intents, rejected totally the constitution being drafted by the apartheid government. It is strange that some of those consulted, who had earlier rejected the new 'white' constitution, have now accepted it.

Two commissions on security-related matters were appointed in late 1979. These were the Rabie Commission on security laws, and the Steyn Commission, reporting on the security forces.

The Rabie report appeared in February 1982, complete with a new Internal Security 25

Bill in its appendix. This Bill became the new Internal Security Act in July 1982, and is now the major piece of security legislation. It replaces practically all the previously existing security laws, and, instead of limiting the powers of the security police, as some hoped it would, it extended them. Like its predecessors, the Internal Security Act is the regime's response to the stepping up of the revolutionary struggle to overthrow apartheid.

As a result of Rabie, two other new security laws were introduced in 1982. These were the Intimidation Act and the Demonstrations In or Near Court Buildings Prohibition Act. The former was designed to be used against trade unionists and school boycotters, while the latter was aimed at preventing demonstrations in support of political trialists.

The Steyn Commission's report recommended controls over media reporting of 'security' matters. It analysed the imagined external threat to South Africa, and concluded that the freedom of the press was subordinate to the promotion of the national interest — which it implied was apartheid, and assumed had the backing of all the people of South Africa.

Steyn was a clear example of a commission being used by the regime to sell its ideology — in this case, the ideology of the 'total onslaught.' Steyn, pretending to stand above partisan interest, was used to promote the idea that the 'onslaught' was against the interests of everyone in South Africa.

1980 Commissions

The following year, 1980, saw several more commissions getting off the ground. The Hoexter Commission looked into the structure and functioning of the courts, and made several recommendations in 1981 relating to the streamlining of court procedures to overcome the chronic staff shortage in the courts. Again, a plea was made to the commission to 'decriminalise' the pass laws, but since 1981 the number of such convictions has increased dramatically.

Chief Gatsha Buthelezi rejected the recommendations of the Schlebusch Commission on the constitution, and produced his own proposals (Buthelezi Commission). The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) held two inquiries, one into education and one into sport. The Browne Committee of Inquiry into the financing of local authorities, and the Yeld Committee of Inquiry into the establishment of autonomous local authorities in coloured group areas, both produced reports. The Browne Commission commenced an inquiry into the health services. All of these were promoted, because of the crises in their various spheres of reference.

A new Bill, the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, designed to tighten the pass laws, appeared in 1980. The outcry over its proposals led to its being referred, along with two other bills, to a select committee, the Grosskopf Committee, for further changes.

The Committee reported in May 1981, but details were not made public. It appears that its main proposals have been ignored by the government. Some sources claim that these were, amongst others, the abolition of passes, and their replacement with controls at the place of work and residence.

De Lange, Steyn, Eloff.

In 1981, two major inquiries were launched, while in 1982, no inquiries of relevance were started, although reports were submitted by several which had begun the previous year.

The De Lange Committee (HSRC) report on education in 1981 has yet to receive any practical response from the government, which claims to have accepted the main principles. Most of these principles are nebulous, such as equal educational opportunities for all; easy to agree on, but difficult to implement within the framework of apartheid. The gulf between expenditure on black and white education remains as large as ever.

Another Steyn Commission, this time to investigate the mass media, began its work in 1981. It produced a massive three-volume report in February 1982, along much the same



lines as the earlier report. It recommended the establishment of a council to control the enrolment of journalists. The report was strongly condemned by leading newspaper editors, as a threat to press freedom.

Steyn looked at all the imagined threats to South Africa – i.e. the apartheid regime – and considered how the press portrayed these threats. The controls on journalists it proposed are aimed at making it more difficult for them to portray the course of events in any terms other than the official version.

The Eloff Commission of Inquiry, appointed in 1981, began an investigation into the finances of the South African Council of Churches in 1982. While claiming merely to be investigating financial irregularities, this commission was instituted as part of the racist regime's campaign against the SACC, which has shown itself over the past few years to be a staunch opponent of apartheid. The SACC also runs a fund to help pay for the defence in political trials, and prisoners' upkeep, and to assist the families of political prisoners.

Can Pretoria Afford Such Luxuries?

There is no doubt that the apartheid regime will set up more commissions of inquiry in the future, in an attempt to fool South Africans and the world into thinking that it is moving away from hardline apartheid and the use of open repressive measures to eliminate political opposition. However, in future, the regime will have less time to call its phoney commissions into existence, as the forces of national liberation, headed by the ANC, exert increasing revolutionary pressure in the regime. The niceties of having 'scientific authorisation' for actions will fall away, as the apartheid regime will resort to more dictatorial methods of introducing its panic 'reforms.'

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*To King Moshoeshoe II, Leabua Jonathon,
and the people of Lesotho.*

*What I am teaching
My white oppressor
In my country
Is his right
To be human like myself.*

*I am teaching him
To be beautiful at heart
To have a heart
As white as mine
To be just, accommodating
In the wide open arms
Of my Freedom Charter.*

*I am teaching
My white oppressor
To sing the song of freedom
From the rule of capital
The way we
Freedom fighters
Do
By dancing in the sun.*

*What I am teaching him
Is to let him see
The beauty and joy of life
The value of human life
Why we love life so much
Why it has taken us
So long to shoot at him*

*What I am teaching
My white oppressor
In my country
Is to let him do things
The way we do
For the love of all
Like Luthuli
The man of peace
Who loved life so much:
'Let my people go!'*

*It is a pity
That to let him
Drink deep
From the spring of life
The fountain of life
To let him regain
His lost humanity
He should
First see his own blood flow
When deep
Down in our hearts
We value human life so high.*

*I don't
Want to turn to him
The other side of my cheek
To be a lamb among wolves
Not my last cloak
Shall I give unto him
No! No! No!
I do not love my enemy.*

— James Pitse

BOOK REVIEW

"War and Conscience in South Africa: The Churches and Conscientious Objection," published by CIIR, 1982, price £2.95.

This book deals with the growing confrontation between many South African churches and the state and its military apparatus. It covers the period between the 1960 Cottesloe Conference and late 1982, when an Anglican seminarian publicly objected to conscription into the white racist army "on the grounds of a commitment to the liberation of South Africa."

Within the context of South Africa's militarisation, it deals largely with those "liberal" denominations, mostly English speaking "from which many black Christians draw their political themes." The increase in the number of black ministers and church officials has forced these denominations to confront the causes of "the humiliating lack of political and human rights experienced by all blacks." Confrontation with the South African Defence Force was inevitable.

However, it was not until 1974 that the South African Council of Churches (SACC) adopted a resolution on selective conscientious objection or war resistance. The resolution did not concern war or violence in general but "the particular context of apartheid." This stemmed from "an analysis of the purpose and consequences" of fighting for the racist South African state.

The state responded to the SACC initiative more harshly than was expected, making it an offence punishable by up to six years' imprisonment to encourage an individual to conscientiously object. Plans were also drawn up to double the size of the Permanent Force over the following four years. However, over the next few years the Methodist, Anglican and Congregational churches all passed resolutions supporting war resistance — albeit not in as strong terms as the original SACC motion — and

took firmer stands against apartheid.

But reactionary elements in the churches remain strong, especially among Defence Force chaplains. In May 1976, black Christians in the SACC urged all churches not to recognise chaplains whom the SADF appointed and paid, and to appoint ministers also to individuals involved in the liberation struggle. However, in 1978, the SADF chaplains declared that "the uniformed chaplain performs the more effective ministry." Such divergences restrict the churches' capacity for progressive action.

This is the situation in which war resisters such as Moll, Steele and Paddock, who oppose conscription into the SADF on political and religious grounds, have acted. They have exposed as heresy the religious basis of the South African 'national security state,' and have forced white youth to examine its role in the SADF.

In answer to a question in Parliament, General Magnus Malan reported that on the 22nd of March 1983, there were 355 men in detention for refusal to undergo training in Citizen Force or commando units.

But the advances in this field are still limited, and serve to show how far the churches must progress before they meet the needs and wishes of the majority of their members. In this regard, the book is too concerned with resolutions and individual statements rather than analysis of the democratic forces within the churches and the barriers that must be overcome.

Despite this shortcoming, and some uneven editing, the book is an encouraging history of an important aspect of recent church-state conflict in South Africa. As the book concludes: "The church cannot and must not seek a 'third way,' reconciling oppressor and oppressed, without removing oppression."

G.C.





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of
ANGOLA*

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TO
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