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DROUGHT IN SOUTH AFRICA

When summer rains failed to appear in Natal and parts of the Cape, drought came. The streams dried up, the river levels fell and the boreholes pumped from lower levels. According to the South African press this is the worst drought ever seen in South Africa and "the people are on the brink of starvation".

Surely starvation and poverty in these areas were ever-present long before the drought. But new and "insoluble" problems emerged: in Inanda typhoid broke out and the epidemic grew and spread. An immunisation campaign was instituted. Then there was an outbreak of rabies. Not only that. Gastro-enteritis and related health problems became rampant.

What about water problems? There were only a few bore holes and taps in the whole area which were under private control and water was sold at exorbitant prices. The long queues of women with plastic drums waiting for the water trailers became a regular and normal feature. Health conditions worsened as there was no proper sewerage system and the endemic overcrowding in the area made things worse. The people started to die in greater numbers. The few clinics in the area cannot cope with the deaths.

Typhoid poses problems for our people and the government (with different motives) has a headache. Typhoid does not respect the politico-administrative boundaries of separate development. The attempt to remove people from Inanda to another area has sinister implications because it is geared more towards "containing" the threat than solving the problem of conditions in Inanda.

Immunisation and "clean" water to the area do not help much. We should remember that ten per cent of those who contract typhoid remain carriers for up to ten years and four to five per cent are potential carriers for an indefinite period.

The removal of people from places like Inanda — without any liaison and consultation with them — does not necessarily help to solve the problem of typhoid.

What it does is to help the government authorities to be stricter in their control and surveillance of the people. The basic philosophy seems to be: let the people build their own homes and the government will just dig a few pit toilets! There are no schools provided.

This most crippling drought, threatening the people of Natal with large-scale famine and disease has caused a crisis situation affecting an estimated 2.5 million people across Kwa Zulu. Welfare organisations have made some contributions or sent some relief supplies.

Some of these are concerned with retaining their permanent labour force. The white farmers are making money out of the plight of the people, selling water at R2 for 200 litres.

The attitude of some Bantustan officials is very sinister not so much because of its ambiguity but precisely because of its cynicism. They are against removals because they own vast tracts of land which bring in a substantial income from shack tenants. They stand to lose should the people be moved.

The Kwa Zulu Government and the Kwa Zulu Health Department are silent. So is the State Health Department perhaps because it "has jurisdiction in non-black areas" of South Africa.

Whatever the case may be, the drought has once more revealed the reality and dirty face of Apartheid and the Bantustans. People die like flies and nobody cares. Those who show interest are either "motivated" by the profits they reap out of the situation or the fear that this "dangerous situation" might spill over to their white areas. As for the Bantustan "leaders" they are not bothered — their fat salaries are there to ensure that the drought and the famine do not affect them.

But the storm of people's anger will sweep them away and will bring an end to the drought!

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

It goes without saying that the Freedom Charter lays a good foundation for the solution of ethnic problems and the national question in our country. During the Year of the Freedom Charter we look back with pride on the road we have travelled the last 25 years. Our hearts are also filled with sorrow when we remember the millions who have perished through police and army brutality; state persecution and sheer hunger and poverty (euphemistically called malnutrition) and now through "natural" calamities and catastrophes such as drought. The dimension of human suffering and deprivation of our people cannot be adequately transmitted through words and statistics.

It now lies with us to develop the discussion on the national question and elevate it from the plane of programmatic declarations and general discussion on the issue to the stage of detailed analysis of concrete aspects and specific issues.

Unfortunately Nosizwe in "his" book: "One Azania, One Nation — the National Question in South Africa" did not or could not do this.

But before we attempt to deal with this issue in some detail we would like to mention some of the relevant factors which influence our thinking on either posing the question or on its solution. This problem can only be posed correctly and solved democratically when viewed in the context of our times — as the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC confirms — which is characterised by the transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale. The South African revolution is not floating somewhere in space — it is an aspect of this phenomenon.

There are also such objective and subjective factors as the role of the vanguard

in the process of nation-building and this should be related to broader issues and class questions which include manifold and complex issues of a social nature and ideological issues, political and organisational tasks, formulation of short term and long term perspectives and stages in the process of the solution of the national question and tasks to be solved at that particular stage. The "Strategy and Tactics" of the ANC is quite open on this question:

"The main content of the present stage of the South African revolution is the national liberation of the largest and most oppressed group — the African people. This strategic aim must govern every aspect of the conduct of our struggle whether it be the formulation of policy or the creation of structures The national character of the struggle must therefore dominate our approach".

The document goes on to say:

"... the national sense of grievance is the most potent revolutionary force which must be harnessed. To blunt it in the interests of abstract concepts of internationalism is, in the long run, doing neither a service to revolution nor to internationalism".

And on organisational aspects it emphasises:

"Whatever instruments are created to give expression to the unity of the liberation drive, they must accommodate two fundamental propositions: Firstly they must not be ambiguous on the question of the primary role of the most oppressed African mass and, secondly, those belonging to the other oppressed groups and those few white revolutionaries who show themselves ready to make common cause with our aspirations must be fully integrated on the basis of individual equality".

We have quoted at length from this important ANC policy document because this seems to summarise our approach on the national question at this stage of our revolution.

We are far from maintaining that this article will cover all the problems connected with this difficult question: it is an attempt at posing them correctly and suggesting solutions. But first of all let us deal with our approach to the subject.

Our Approach

The Bulgarians have a saying: The Living Close The Eyes of The Dead; The Dead Open the Eyes of the Living.

This is more than just an idiom, it is a philosophical statement. For us it means we must move away from the traditional approach of our enemies who are always ready to tell us that our history began in 1652, with colonisation, before that there was neither history nor culture in South Africa, at the most it was "pre-history".

The significance of the emergence of the pre-colonial states in Africa — and this includes that of the Zulus under Shaka — was historic, testifying to the so-often denied dynamism of African civilisation and culture. There is a need for research on our past and this should emphasise the continuity of our history which dates back to pre-colonial times and includes the culture of the now decimated San and Khoi, people who have been reduced to national extinction, because their achievements belong to our cultural history and heritage. These are people who lose nothing of their charm when historians strip away "legends"; they are people who produced and created a culture and art in the form of paintings which are of relevance to our present struggle for national liberation and cultural revival. They were not "Bushmen" or "Hottentots".

The re-evaluation of the distorted (by white historians) and romanticised (by some black authors) ethnogenesis of our people and the ethnic processes now taking place in our country and national specifics of the different ethnic groups which now inhabit South Africa and their common interest will belong to such a study.

Besides this historic and ethnogenetic approach there is a more topical relevance to the subject. Today we are living in a period rich in heroes, heroines and heroism; a period when not only revolutionaries — in a narrow sense — but also priests, teachers, artists, craftsmen and others live and work, and often die, to resurrect our people and to bring them national liberation and human dignity. We owe it to them to rise to the occasion and to sharpen not only our spears but also our grinding stones in preparation for the coming harvest.

The Freedom Charter

The national question has been the central theme of our organisation since 1912, to be more precise even before that. When the wars of resistance were fought in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries one of the grievances was exactly the solution of the national question. When the ANC was formed in 1912 this question featured prominently in the deliberations and the ANC Youth League in the 1940's articulated the aspirations of the masses in a more vocal way. Their ideas were developed and incorporated in the Freedom Charter which was adopted in Kliptown in 1955.

The Freedom Charter is quite explicit on this question. It starts from the premise that "our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and that "our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities; that only a democratic state, based on the will of all people, can ensure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief" to demand that the "national wealth, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people" and that "the mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people".

What this means is that the seizure of political power — and the ANC President O.R. Tambo has been emphatic on this aspect — is meaningless without economic emancipation. In other words our struggle has an anti-monopoly character because



In the days of legality: Congress meeting demands the right to freedom of association

without the destruction of state-monopoly capitalism it is impossible even to think of the envisaged democratisation of the internal and foreign policy of a new South Africa.

What this means in working class language is that national liberation is an aspect of the class struggle: the two are not identical but dialectically interconnected.

The Freedom Charter does not stop at that. It states:

“There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races.

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs.

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside”.

This demand for a democratisation of the state apparatus and other para-statal bodies, active participation of the Blacks in social, political and economic life of the country is not an attempt — as the PAC claims — to equate the oppressor with the oppressed. In any case such an attempt would be an impossibility since that would ignore the inequality that exists in reality.

What the Freedom Charter is dealing with are political arrangements after the destruction of the present political system under which it cannot be implemented.

The formulations in the Freedom Charter together with the declaration of the principle that: “South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white” express the consistency of the ANC in its non-racial and anti-racist approach. What the Freedom Charter implies is that since South Africa has never been decolonised, the question of decolonisation in South Africa means the liberation of the Africans and other nationally oppressed black communities. This is the essence of the national question in South Africa whose solution lies in the implementation of the Freedom Charter. In other words we are dealing with a nation-in-the-making and this should not be confused with a “national state”; a capitalist oriented, “stable”, “peaceful” and “prosperous” state which will be a satellite of international imperialism.

It is true that national liberation does not necessarily mean social emancipation or liquidation of classes and class struggle — as the experience of independent Africa shows — but it does mean the end of double exploitation of Blacks and opens the doors for a clearly defined class struggle which will end with the triumphal destruction of exploitation of man by man and the

liquidation of class antagonism.

What this means is that the abolition of national oppression lays a good foundation for the solution of the class question and yet the national question — at a higher level — will be with us for years after we have solved the class question. Therefore, the abolition of class antagonism is the best foundation for the solution of the national question. This is not juggling with dialectics but a simple truth derived from the experience of the socialist countries.

Ideological Problems

The drive to a democratic solution of the national question expresses itself ideologically in various forms. African nationalism — though it is not the only ideological trend — is the driving force. There are many trends within African nationalism itself. There is the healthy trend which finds expression in the African National Congress. This is due to the fact that genuine national feelings and aspirations of the Africans express themselves ideologically in the form of African nationalism, a healthy nationalism which is directed against national oppression and racism for national independence. Progressive African nationalism is an objective phenomenon which has its roots in the misanthropic system of apartheid and will not die out with the destruction of the system but will remain with us for a long time even after our national liberation. What the ANC has successfully done is to normalise the relationship between African nationalism and the national aspirations of the different language-cultural groups to which South Africans of all nationalities belong. But this is not the only trend in African nationalism.

There is also the reformist trend which is vocal especially in urban areas — they have their counterparts in the rural areas. They are complaining that Apartheid is a “stumbling block”.

The political and ideological eclecticism of some crude and vulgar ideologists of African nationalism ranges from Maoism (Ikwezi), Anti-whiteism, to Neo-Trotskyism and following on the footsteps of its

predecessors in the Unity Movement and PAC and despite the pseudo-revolutionary phraseology, is a cover for downright reformism reminiscent of Kadalie before his downfall. Whereas the revolutionary period of Kadalie is still remembered by millions of African workers from whom he emerged, these “nationalists” cannot by any stretch of imagination hope to inspire anybody except those who perpetuate our slavery.

The emergence of a black bourgeoisie in South Africa has been accompanied by a demand by this emergent class to portray its interests as “national” interests therefore giving a more pronounced class character to their brand of African nationalism. The aim is to tie the workers to their apron strings and to suppress working class ideology.

This trend cannot be said to represent the general-democratic content of the nationalism of an oppressed nation.

Ethnic Questions

According to statistics released by the South African authorities the population of South Africa consists of four (4) “races” and many “tribes” whose numbers are estimated at roughly 27 million with 19.5 million Africans, 4.5 million Whites, 2.5 million Coloureds and about 800,00 Indians.

There are problems with these statistics. Surely the Coloureds and Indians cannot be called “races”. These statistics tell us nothing about the social status of the “races”; nothing about inter-ethnic relations or the depth or degree to which inter-ethnic relations have gone. For example in Natal there are Indians whose mother tongue — and that is the only language they speak — is Zulu. Surely Gatsha Buthelezi does not include them when he says he “represents 5 million Zulus”! There are Coloureds in the Cape who speak Xhosa or Tswana or Sotho in other areas.

What about Bantustans and the attempt to arrest the process of “detrribalization”?

It goes without saying that our movement rejects Bantustans and all that they stand for. But we are far from denying the fact that there exist ethnic problems because an underestimation of the importance of

ethnic problems or the reduction of complicated ethnic factors to mere "tribalism" or inter-tribal enmity, can only lead to a narrow treatment of complicated ethnic factors and problems. What we do is to bring out the inter-connection between ethnic problems and socio-economic processes.

It is true that ethnic consciousness is still strong in South Africa — Apartheid is responsible for that. This explains Gatsha Buthelezi's "big tribe" chauvinism and this influences relations with other ethnic groups and even enhances "small tribe" clannishness.

Whilst we do not encourage "tribal pride" — in fact we denounce it — we are far from being indifferent to traditions, language and cultures of individual ethnic groups; we do not propagate ethnic nihilism but we formulate and implement our programme for economic and socio-cultural emancipation — the Freedom Charter — in consonance with our reality which is a multi-ethnic society. We respect and strive to develop all local languages and cultures and this helps us to combat all forms of reactionary nationalism, chauvinism and ethno-centricity; it also helps us to improve inter-ethnic relations thus facilitating the drive towards national and social emancipation.

The Language Question

With the advent of monopoly capitalism and imperialism the national question grew into the national-colonial question: the division of nations stood out more distinctly than ever before. In South Africa this was made more intense by the special type of colonialism where the coloniser and the colonised live side by side within the same geographical boundaries.

We have already dealt with some aspects of the national question. Perhaps we need to say something on the language question.

Bantu Education with its emphasis on "mother tongue" instruction cannot solve the language problem for it lacks any semblance of democracy and is not aimed at uplifting the lot of our people but at keeping them in ignorance. The language question is an integral part of the national

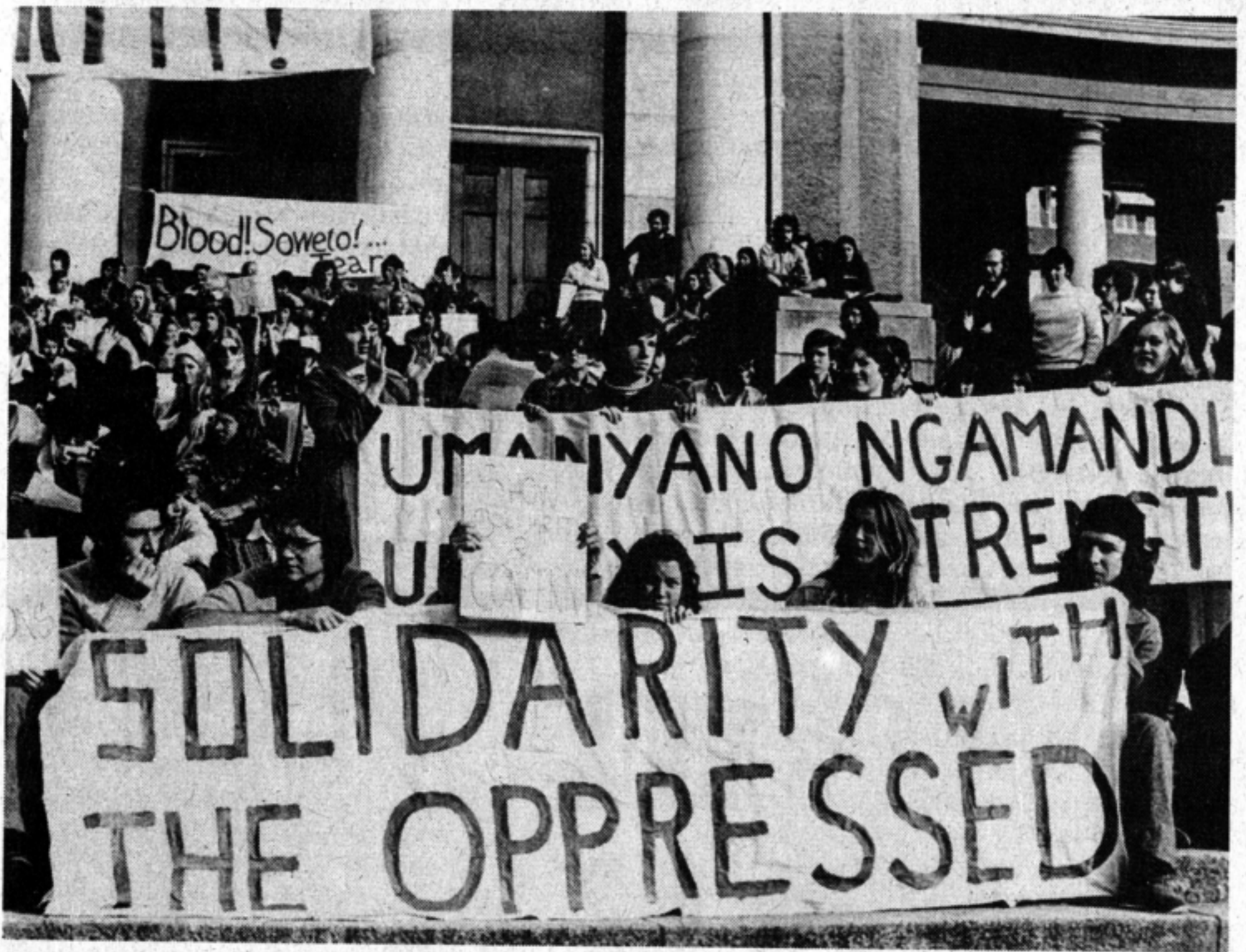
question: the Soweto uprising started off as a rejection of the imposed Afrikaans language and developed to be a mass rejection of Apartheid.

It is true that English does serve as a means of communication also with the outside world. But why is Afrikaans then another "official" language? What about African languages?

The development and equality of languages automatically precludes national privileges but this development and equality of languages is neither literal nor absolute because languages do not perform the same functions in all aspects of social life.

It is clear that the language question will be solved with the solution of the national question. But we must hurry to correct those who tend to equate a language with an ethnic group. In our poly-ethnic and culturally heterogeneous community things are not as simple as that. We have in mind the case of the Makgokwe (Sotho and Zulu) found in parts of Natal and the Orange Free State. They want their own identity from Sotho perhaps to avoid incorporation in Witziesshoek (Qwaqwa) and surnames eg. Mbele could be mistaken for Zulu but they do not regard themselves as such. The Bhacas — under different circumstances — value their identity. Their language is hardly spoken, their culture is less known (except for Gumboot Dance) outside their circles; the development of this ethnic community is a task facing our revolution. These people are hardly integrated into the "common" community as such and when they do go to the cities they remain on the fringes of society, doing the meanest and lowest paid jobs — if they can be called jobs. Schooling and education are almost nil. They "live" as hermits — "living" is probably the wrong word to use about them. To raise their living standard and cultural welfare to that of the rest of the Africans, let alone that of the Whites is a task we must tackle seriously.

It is true that these people — like the rest of the South African ethnic groups, black and white — are suffering from a certain amount of ethnic exclusivism but this is a result of apartheid and the resultant backwardness which affects all of us



especially the Africans.

As for psychological and ethno-psychological factors eg. black consciousness they are being resolved in the on-going national and class struggle. Black consciousness which is not necessarily diametrically opposed to the ANC philosophy, although it is different, is undergoing a transformation exactly because of its contacts with ANC ideas. There is a mutual enrichment of the two trends with the result that the younger generation is getting a clearer and sharper analysis of the present situation in South Africa, its economic roots, the question of alliances (temporary and permanent) and concepts about a future transformation of society — ideas which were seriously lacking in black consciousness. This and similar processes do not develop spontaneously and automatically; a consistent, continuous, cautious and conscious encouragement and development of these processes is necessary.

Our solution

Our approach to the national question

based on the firm belief in the two historical tendencies in this question namely:

a) advocacy of equality of nations and languages and impermissibility of all privileges in this respect

and

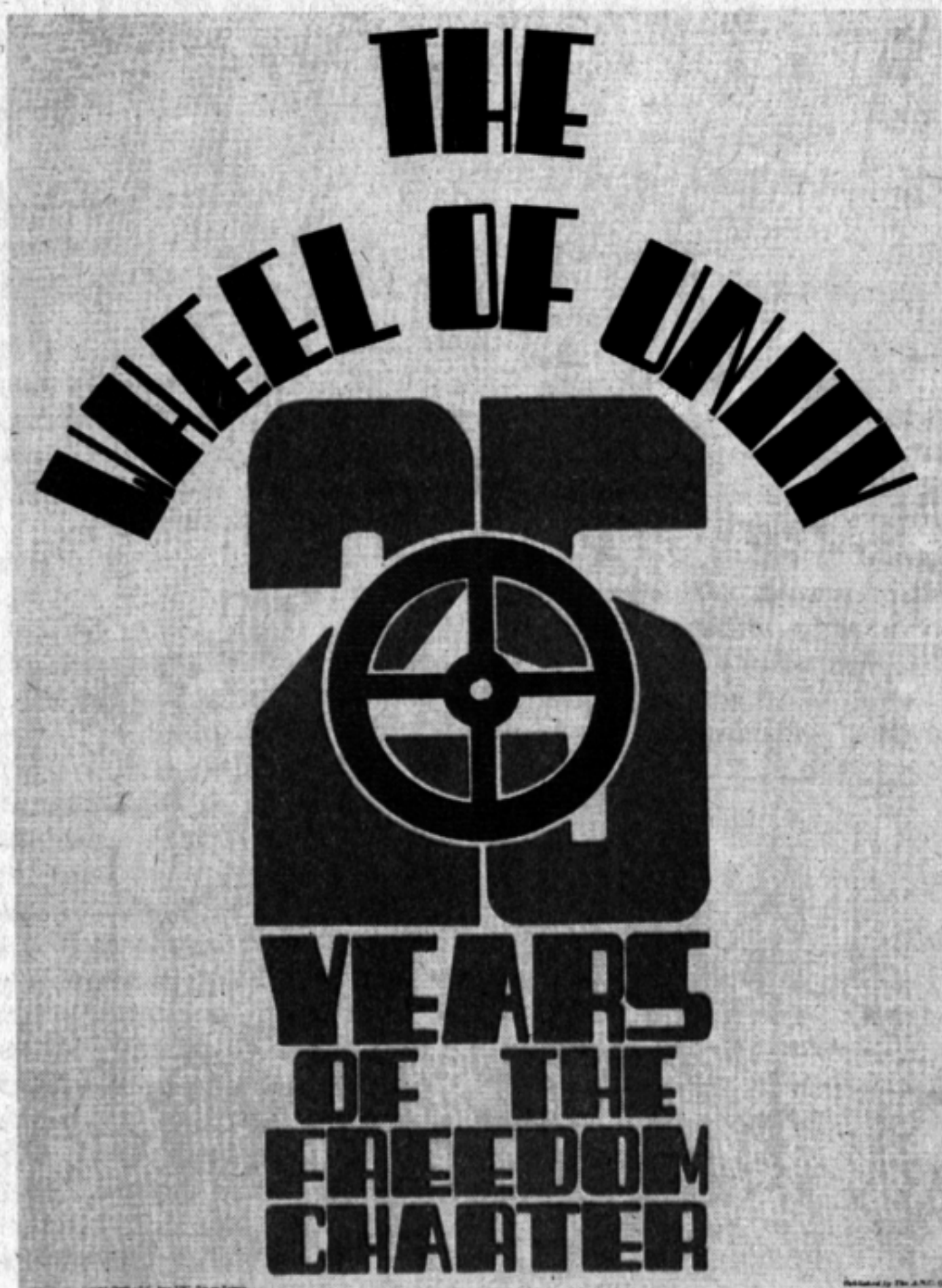
b) advocacy of internationalism and uncompromising struggle against all forms of wrong nationalism.

It goes without saying that whilst both principles are relevant to our struggle the more paramount at this stage of our struggle is the former. Since we have dealt at length with the former tendency it seems to us necessary to explain — albeit briefly — the ANC's position on internationalism. By the way this is all entailed in the Freedom Charter but for the sake of emphasis we shall repeat that the internationalism of the ANC consists in its ability to distinguish between the white people and the white ruling class and to recruit whites and other national groups to participate equally in

the common fight against the common enemy. The stand of the Freedom Charter on the question of our neighbours — Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland — is clear and has been developed in the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC adopted in Morogoro in 1969 to include Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Africa and the world. It is for this reason that we see our struggle as the continuation of the struggle of the people of Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Indeed the victory of our struggle will be an extension of a hand of friendship and solidarity to the peoples of the region of

Southern Africa who are daily threatened and killed by our oppressors who rule and ruin our country.

This is the spirit of the Freedom Charter, the ideas of Mandela, Mahlangu, Mange and many of our heroes and heroines who are languishing in jail or have laid their lives for our freedom. Let us fight for their release and their — or our — happiness in a free and independent South Africa.



TORTURE AND RESISTANCE

In recent months repression in South Africa has reached unprecedented levels in response to an upsurge of resistance whose depth, scope and unity across various sectors of the oppressed majority itself has been unprecedented and has marked a major advance in the struggle against the apartheid regime. Even a most superficial understanding of the nature of the repression requires consideration of some factors emerging towards the end of 1979; in particular the emergence of new legal organisations, the forging of unity between different sectors of the oppressed and major growth in the strength of working class organisation and increasing guerilla action.

These developments shaped the methods and actions of the regime and its agents. Repeatedly, in ways reflecting their assessment of the occasion, and in various combinations, those responsible for attempting to prevent and crush resistance adopted the following methods:

- 1) Destroying or disrupting the organisations, formal or informal which were involved in the struggles, by detentions, bans and harassment of activists and those occupying leading positions;
- 2) Disrupting the work of political and other forms of organisation and mobilisation by the prevention of meetings, and banning of publications;
- 3) Drastic physical repression against those who do take part in meetings or protests;
- 4) Widespread use of various repressive laws against those involved in such actions;
- 5) Bringing pressure to bear through those most immediately involved with the protests: for example by using the educational administration to threaten teachers and students, or by state encouragement of and support for employers and others

in direct conflict with those taking strike action or protest action;

- 6) Repeated intimidation and threats by the regime — backed up by action — relayed through the media, to intimidate resistance and encourage repression. At the same time the access of the press to information was still further restricted, in ways that both minimized the extent and successes of the resistance and concealed the nature and extent of the repression. It was also used to present the protest being attacked as the work of 'criminal' elements.

New Black Organisations

The emergence of new legal black organisations and a ferment of open political activity from the second half of 1979, provided the first indication of the kind of response to be expected from the regime.

AZAPO: The Azanian People's Organisation was formed in 1978. It suffered so much harassment by the Security Police that it could only hold its inaugural conference 17 months later in September 1979. The attack on AZAPO took the form of a series of detentions of AZAPO officers for questioning. Those detained included the Acting President (Nombulelo Melani), Administrative Secretary (Thoko Mphaphane), National Organiser (Letsati Mosala), General Secretary (Sammy Tloubatla) and an Executive Member (Manfred Yende). Other officers were detained later when the school boycott began, and one of them Curtis Nkondo (former President) was banned.

The first of these detentions occurred only two weeks after the Minister of Police had issued a threat, at a National Party meeting in February, 1980. Saying that



forces were at work in Soweto inspired by the South African Communist Party, the African National Congress and other organisations, aimed at stirring up unrest, he added:

“We are aware of what they are doing. Members of these organisations will burn their fingers very quickly. If they get hurt they must not ask for any sympathy and I want to assure you that some of them are going to get hurt”.

COSAS: The Congress of South African Students was founded in June 1979. Cosas became a target of a concerted attack by the Security Police as early as November 1979. In a period of three or four weeks a total of 16 of its officers and members were detained, some for questioning and

others being held for longer periods.

Those detained included the President (Ephraim Mogale), the National Organisers (Oupa Masuku and Vusi Gqoba), four (4) Executive Members (Motise Metseng, Baby Tyawa, Wantu Zenzile and another member of the Executive) and nine (9) other members (Johannes Motsena, David Jutumela, Kanakana Matsena, Nomi Mogase, Monde Mditwa, Titi Mthenjane, Thami Gqwetha, Joe Nong, Jabu Ngwenya). The President was subsequently charged, under the Terrorism Act with furthering the aims of the African National Congress, with encouraging the formation of youth clubs to foment unrest and with being responsible for the production of various leaflets.

AZASO, the Azanian Students'

Organisation, founded in November 1979, the Soweto Civic Organisation and the Solidarity Front, an organisation founded towards the end of 1979 and dedicated to campaign against the elections to the regime's South African Indian Council, have all been under pressure in one way or another. So was WASA, the Writers' Association of South Africa.

In October 1979, the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO) was founded, modelled on the Soweto Civic Organisation set up shortly before. The attack on PEBCO came shortly after its founding and was clearly linked to its role in mobilising support in the community for workers at the Ford factory during their strike in December 1979/January 1980 and in gaining support amongst workers at Ford for the campaign against the forced removal of people from Walmer Township.

The dispute at Ford began when Thozamile Botha, chairman of PEBCO and a trainee draftsman at Ford resigned from Ford after being told to choose between his job and his chairmanship of PEBCO. He was reinstated after the rest of the workers walked out. There were more walk-outs and strikes by workers to follow. The workers formed a committee affiliated to PEBCO to negotiate their reinstatement, which they achieved on 9 January, 1980. There were more arrests (over 20 workers) and banning orders: the Vice President of PEBCO, Lizo Pityana was banned for 5 years and Cekisani, a member of the Walmer Branch was also banned, so was Phalo Tshume, Mono Badela and D. Qeqe.

We deal with PEBCO at length because it shows the capability and power of increased militancy of black labour; the power of black solidarity locally and nationally and the influence of non-working class sectors of the society eg. students, especially when they link their grievances with workers' problems.

The services in March commemorating those who died at Sharpeville in 1960 also drew large numbers. Press reports indicated that those organising the services and represented at them were frequently the newly formed legal organisations, as was

with the case with the service on 16 April commemorating the death of Solomon Mahlangu, and the service on 20 April to unveil a tombstone on his grave or the funerals of political activists (among them those killed by police during the Silverton bank siege) etc. The last of these funerals drew a crowd of mourners estimated at between 10,000 and 12,000. Those in the funeral procession sang freedom songs and chanted. "He was a hero! He was not a terrorist!"

The Minister of Police issued another threat at this point. On 20 April he warned AZAPO, AZASO and COSAS that they were furthering the aims of banned movements. He named COSAS as an organiser of the commemoration of Sharpeville, which he connected to the Free Mandela Campaign, (which had been a frequent part of meetings during these months). This warning raised fears that further repressive measures would soon follow.

So during the first few months of the year the regime had used the security police to act against political organisations and activists, had renewed the ban on outdoor gatherings and had shown the readiness of police to attack gatherings that did take place. It had, through the Minister of Police indicated its belief that banned organisations were operating effectively inside the country, and it appeared about to engage in still harsher repressive measures.

At the same time it was evident that there was intense political activity directed against the apartheid system. Legal organisations of various kinds were forming: national political organisations, organisations to fight on issues like rents and removals, student and pupil organisations and organisations of workers. Meetings were drawing large numbers and there was a clearly demonstrated receptiveness to guerilla actions and a widely noted impact resulting from the Zimbabwean elections.

School Boycott

The beginning of the school boycott was on 20 April, 1980. The campaign which 11



Lungile Tabalaza - murdered in security police detention

had begun with protests over appalling conditions in a particular school in mid-March had one month later developed into a broadly based campaign against the whole education system. On 19 April a meeting attended by representatives of over 60 educational institutions in the Cape Peninsula decided to institute a boycott from the following week. The meeting was organised by the Committee of 61 which coordinated the campaign in the Western Cape.

As the boycott spread throughout the country, the police instituted a campaign of brutal physical attacks on gatherings and demonstrations of students; the Minister of Coloured Relations and Indian Affairs threatened to close all schools under his control and on 23 April the Security Police began a wave of detentions of people whom they believed to be involved in organising the campaign.

The Minister of Police confirmed on

May 7 that 20 people had been held in connection with boycotts. On 30 April, a peaceful meeting of the Committee of 61 was broken up by riot police with FN rifles, teargas canisters, dogs and pistols, and names and photographs of people were taken. The next day the Committee was told that the Minister of Police wanted a meeting with them -- to which about 20 members were fetched from their homes by Security Policemen and driven to a school in Athlone where they were addressed by a Captain Strydom of the Security Branch.

More and more meetings or demonstrations were being broken up by police who used teargas, batons or the "sneeze machine" to disperse the students as in the case in Newlands, Johannesburg on 29 April where over 700 Coloured students were charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act after riot police dispersed about 2,000 children at the Westbury High School.

The police had climbed over the school fence to break up the gathering.

Even the principals and teachers were not spared. More than 70 principals met the Minister of Coloured Relations, his deputy and departmental officials who asked them to use their influence to end the boycott. The principals insisted that they could not act as the government's agents in trying to end the boycott. Later on in the campaign the attempts to use the educational administration in such ways intensified.

By the last week in May the school boycott campaign had widened its scope from a protest about Coloured education to one against the whole system of apartheid education, indeed the whole apartheid system and was supported by every section of the black community, and all over the country. In Bloemfontein the conflict with the police had reached a point at which police opened fire on demonstrators - one man died and two men were injured. Batho, the African township there, was ringed by armed police, with the whole of the Northern Free State police command on full alert.

The Workers' Front

At the same time major strikes were developing. The strike of meatworkers in Cape Town over recognition of their elected Workers' Committee at one company had become a strike of the whole industry supported by a fast spreading boycott of red meat products by the black community. The strikers had called on 18 May 1980 for support from the community in the form of the boycott, financial support for strikers and discouragement of scab labour. A broadly based support committee was formed and through meetings, pamphlets and support committees elsewhere in the country, the strikers won support which by the last week in May was evidently growing fast and proving to be broadly based.

On 22 May another major strike began, following a protracted wage dispute at the Frame Group Mills in Natal. 3,000 workers

walked out, rising to 5,000 the following day.

With these different struggles coinciding and in various ways linking together, there was a considerable amount of activity in the regime and decisions were taken at the highest levels to intensify the repression. On 22 May, commenting on the arrests in Bloemfontein, the Acting Divisional Commissioner of Police said: "Police will from now on resort to tougher action". The Secretary for Coloured Relations warned principals that pupils not attending normal lessons the following week would be expelled.

The next day the meat employers were summoned to an urgent meeting with the Deputy Minister of Cooperation and Development, who afterwards told Parliament that the Government and employers had decided on a common line of action, though he disclosed no details. The same day the Director-General of Manpower Utilisation warned that if the wave of "illegal" strikes continued, his department would start identifying those involved in organising them and bring them to the attention of the Department of Justice. He added that: "Employers should put their foot down and refuse to negotiate with unregistered unions".

June 16th

As June 16 approached still more repressive measures were taken. It is not possible to report all the events that took place or in full detail what happened from June 16.

What we know is that the new wave of detentions started on 24 May. Over the next two days about 100 community leaders and activists were detained. This included 52 church figures who defied the ban on gathering to protest against detentions. By the end of June it was estimated that since April at least 393 people had been arrested and held under Terrorism, Internal Security and General Law Amendment Acts.

Amongst those detained were organisers of the Western Province General Workers'



Union. Action against the striking workers at the Frame Mills to the form of a teargas attack on a group of workers marching from Clermont township to the factory and arrests were made. Another group of strikers, 55 in all, were arrested on 26 May and charged with illegal striking, after being attacked by police with batons. This was at Rely Precision Castings in Boksburg 11 of the workers subsequently charged the police with assault. A further ban on a report-back meeting, for the Volkswagen workers in Uitenhage on 14 June, was said by a union organiser to have been partly responsible for setting off the wave of strikes there in the third week of June. The Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) was banned from raising funds by a proclamation in the Government Gazette on 6 June in terms of the Fundraising Act. It was not clear when this ban affected overseas finance or fund raising from its 14 affiliates with 45,000 members or both.

14 The continuation of attacks on meetings of students and pupils, detention and

arrest, threats of expulsion, suspension, loss of bursaries and closure of institutions occurred both in the case of the central government and in the bantustans.

In the Ciskei a wave of detentions of school pupils took place on 21 May, followed by a news blackout on detentions. Students were given an ultimatum to write exams or leave their school and apply for re-admission. In KwaZulu, Gatsha Buthelezi said that boycotting students should be expelled if not back in class by the end of the month and threatened to close all schools under his control if the boycott continued. He did more than that. A state of emergency was declared in the Transkei on June 5, with a promulgation confining all students to their schools or homes and outlawing virtually any kind of expression of support for the school campaign. In Natal, acting on a circular from the Department of Indian Education, principals suspended over 10,000 boycotting students.

This was happening everywhere, not only in the Bantustans. Teachers at Lenasia High School reported that an education

official had threatened them with loss of salary if the boycott did not end. Students at the University of Durban-Westville were sent home for 14 days after boycotting classes and the University of Fort Hare was closed indefinitely. Threats to the right of boycotting students to write exams were made at Turfloop, at the Medical School at the University of Natal and at the University of Zululand. The University of the Western Cape closed a week early on 13 June, and the Minister for Coloured Affairs announced he had ordered several Teachers' Training Colleges to close early. This was after a refusal of rectors of training colleges to carry out an instruction from the Secretary for Coloured Relations to suspend all students not back in classes. The Chief Inspector of Coloured Education in the Eastern Cape however said that over 600 students at two colleges there had lost their bursaries because of the boycotts.

As June 16 approached, and plans were announced for services to commemorate the events of June 16, 1976, the government on 13 June put a ban on all gatherings of a political nature of ten or more people, until 30 June, covering 25 magisterial districts. It was reported that in Soweto the army was ready to enforce the ban. During the period 15 June to 25 June conflict and violence by the police reached its highest point — 42 people were estimated to have died and hundreds were injured. The main places where this happened were

on the Reef (in Soweto and Noordgesig), in Bloemfontein, in the Cape Flats area and in Port Elizabeth.

The ban on meetings meant that commemoration services could not take place. 500 people who gathered on June 15 outside the doors of the Regina Mundi Cathedral in Soweto were dispersed by police with repeated use of teargas and baton charges, and teargas was used to disperse 400 youths gathering at Centenary Hall, New Brighton in Port Elizabeth on 16 June. The same was repeated in Bloemfontein and on the Reef. Scores were wounded and others died.

The reports from police about these

incidents usually conflict with statements from other sources.

For instance, in Noordgesig at least 20 people were injured by police fire, according to police statements. Although police said that 11 youths were wounded "when looting shops in the area" and that "another 9 had stoned public vehicles and buses", it was reported from the Coronationville Hospital that eight people receiving surgery for gunshot wounds included three women all estimated to be in their early 20's, and two boys of about 9 one of whom is mentally retarded. They were said to have been wounded with buckshot by cruising policemen.

On 16 June teargas was used to disperse crowds in Ravensmead, while in Knils river a baton charge on a crowd of 200 ended in the death of one of the policemen taking part. The following day the Cape Flats was said to be in a state of siege, with almost all the roads sealed off... there was a great deal of confusion in the press as to what occurred. The police said that the violence was caused by criminal elements, the tsotsis, and that a large propor-



tion of the injured were wounded with knives and stones which were not police weapons. Police figures for those who died were much lower than those accepted by papers like the Cape Times on the basis of reports from hospitals — moreover the papers reported that deaths on admission to one hospital, Groote Schuur, which accounted for about a third of the total, were mainly from bullet wounds.

The Commissioner of Police issued a statement warning that the police would “shoot to kill”. The final case of police violence against demonstrators to be recorded here was in Uitenhage near Port Elizabeth, the scene of a strike affecting at least 12 firms in the motor industry; by the 19 June, 7,000 were on strike. On 18 June police went into action seven times in 18 hours, in townships and outside factories. Tear smoke, batons and bird shot were used on gatherings. The following day papers reported two people wounded with birdshot, and the use of teargas again. On 20 June the whole of Uitenhage was declared an “operational area” and the press excluded except with the permission of the police, with no photographs being allowed. There were further reports of use of birdshot and teargas in various incidents. After dispersing 1,000 strikers marching through the town after collecting their pay, with teargas and birdshot, the police rushed in troops and armoured cars to the area to protect factories. According to a number of reports, soldiers were seen around the Volkswagen plant by a journalist who ignored the press ban — he said he saw armoured cars and troops in camouflage uniforms.

In another incident some days later (after the lifting of press restrictions) police used teargas and dogs to disperse 800 African and Coloured Goodyear Tyre workers waiting outside the factory for a report back from negotiations.

On 23 June the Prime Minister made a statement saying that South Africa had so far used “only a small proportion of its strength” and that it would “bring the full might of the state to bear, if necessary, and people would get hurt on a hitherto unprecedented scale”.

Since that date there have been further police actions against meetings of the kind described above with at least two deaths: a man was killed when police opened fire at the funeral in Grahamstown of a woman found shot dead after police dispersed boycotting pupils 10 days previously. The ban on gatherings of a political kind of 10 or more people has been extended for two months, till the end of August, and now covers 45 instead of the original 24 magisterial districts. The Minister of Police has said that the ban on gatherings will be enforced to prevent gatherings of pupils on school premises and the police have said that they will no longer allow large crowds to attend the funerals of “riot victims”. The state has intervened in strength in the strike of municipal workers in Johannesburg, sending over 1,000 contract workers to the bantustans and arresting one of the strike leaders in the corridors of the Supreme Court in Johannesburg. And a new commission of enquiry into the mass media has been appointed presaging further legislative restrictions on the press. According to the South Africa Institute of Race Relations only 63 of the 393 people arrested since April had been released by the end of June. Of those in detention about 25 were held under the “preventive” section 10 of the Internal Security Act.





Conclusion

From the above we may conclude that: 1) the people's resistance inside South Africa has not only reached unprecedented levels -- its depth, scope and unity across various sectors of the oppressed majority has marked a major advance in the struggle against the apartheid regime, 2) as the struggle escalates, it became clear that a new and more intense phase of repression had begun, marked most visibly by a new wave of detentions beginning on 24 May, involving students, trade unionists and political organisers. There

were also arrests of strikers and workers' representatives in various places. There were closures of universities, threats and violence against student boycotters by Bantustan administrators and widespread use of the educational administration to put pressure on students or close institutions. There were increasingly tough threats of action by the Minister of Police. Even the press was barred from reporting either on police action or on the upsurge of resistance. Pressmen and other representatives of the media found themselves either harassed physically or behind bars.

As more information emerged and names of victims began to be known it became clear that a feature of the victims was the number of girls and women — several mothers of small children — who were killed by police bullets. Some of them were people who happened to be in the “riot areas” but were not participants. According to eyewitnesses, the police at one stage were going around the streets firing at random. One resident of Elsies River told how police disgorged from a truck in front of his house and started shooting widely

into the darkened street in front of them. The screams that followed the shooting made it clear that some of their shots had found targets.

This shows quite clearly that the racist regime is in panic and finds itself in a crisis. Even its allies in the Bantustans are not in a position to cope with the situation. The people’s anger has reached a boiling point and no amount of repression, torture or harrassment will stop them from their envisaged goal — the national liberation of our people.

STATE VERSUS THE PRESS

The press in South Africa is at any time subject to very extensive restrictions which make reporting of repressive action by the regime both difficult and hazardous.

A few examples will demonstrate what we are talking about.

In February 1980 the reporting of the Silverton bank siege and the widespread publicity it gave brought the press in for criticism, and in particular the Post was taken to task by the government controlled SABC for using the term “guerillas” about those involved, saying that it was employing “the harsh negative techniques of journalism to promote confrontation”.

As the school boycott started, the Prime Minister, Botha, said he would take steps to curb the press if newspapers continued to give prominence to the activities of “subversive and revolutionary elements”. He said the Coloured boycott was being promoted by a section of the press and that he had written to the NPU (the proprie-

tors’ organisation) about it. By this time a number of journalists had been picked up in the course of their duties while covering the school boycotts: Willie Bokala, Willie Nkosi and Kingdom Lolwane of the Post on 27.4.80, and Ralph Ndawo, Rand Daily Mail photographer on the same day. Later detentions included a Bloemfontein journalist Ernest Motshumi (early in May) and M. Matsomela of Post on 26.5.80 and Marimthy Subramoney of the Daily News on 27.5.80.

The main measure by which information was kept from the press was by the exclusion of journalists from areas in which the police were taking repressive actions. This appears to have happened for the first time in Bloemfontein, when riot police closed the area around Batho township and refused to let journalists in. On 16 June 1980 journalists were excluded from Soweto, after an allegation that a foreign journalist had been seen inciting demonstrators.

Before the ban was imposed journalists were themselves the subject of police attacks. When police were dispersing demonstrators outside the Regina Mundi church some of the teargas canisters were aimed at journalists' feet, and a BBC cameraman reported a police attack on the BBC crew: "As children stoned buses and chanted, riot squad policemen fired teargas at the BBC crew on three different occasions". The cameraman who has many years of experience in the world's trouble spots added: "I have been in many unpleasant situations, but have never been directly attacked by police before."

The ban on journalists was quickly changed to a control by the police on access of all journalists to what they now termed "operational areas". Only selected pressmen at the discretion of Divisional Commissioners would be allowed into areas declared to be "operational" or "trouble spots". This was used to exclude journalists from Noordgesig, which, as described above, was an area in which police shot and wounded at least 20 people. It was used to exclude people from the Cape

Flats areas where 42 people are believed to have been killed during the June period.

It was also used to exclude the press from the Uitenhage area during the period of intense police actions and, apparently, a military presence, with repeated use of teargas, batons, dogs and birdshot against strikers.

On each of these occasions there are major discrepancies between the accounts given by the police of their actions and the accounts given by other sources, eye-witnesses or hospitals.

Whilst we were still shocked by these drastic measures which took place within a couple of months, on 24 June the restrictions on the press entering such areas were lifted, although the Minister made clear that the lifting of the restriction would be reconsidered "should circumstances warrant it". This was not all. Early in July the Minister of Justice announced the establishment of a commission of enquiry into the "mass media".

The South African racists, not content with murdering, terrorising and arresting our people are terrorising and arresting the journalists and murdering the press.



"Pulling it down? I'm trying to hold it up!"

CHURCH AND OUR STRUGGLE

Statement by the President of the African National Congress (South Africa), O.R. Tambo at the World Consultation of the World Council of Churches, Holland, 16-21 June 1980.

We have been asked to contribute to the process of consultation on how the churches should be involved in the struggle to combat racism in the 1980's. Of necessity we have to approach this subject both in a spirit of humility given the size and importance of the world Christian community as well as a spirit of frankness in recognition of the urgency of the need to abolish racism in all its forms.

Racism justifies oppression

Our own historical origins and our continued commitment to liberate ourselves make it inevitable that in the main we shall speak on the basis of the Christian experience in our country. We believe however that this experience is universal rather than national. Our words are therefore directed at the world community rather than the local.

In its extreme forms, racism is an institutionalised system of inequality between people who differ in genetic origin, skin colour and other inherited physical traits. Generally, it is a system of discrimination against black and brown people that came about when the countries of Western Europe invaded America, Asia, and Africa, conquered the indigenous populations, and enslaved some. As it affects the peoples of Africa, Asia and the Americas, racism therefore presents itself as a by-product of colonialism, an integral part of the process that led to the domination by European peoples of the rest of mankind.

Racism is thus not an autonomous social phenomenon. It is a product, a

component part and a reflection of exploitative social relations, a form of expression of these relations and a means for their justification and perpetuation. It encompasses actual structural relations between people as well as psychological attitudes which pretend to explain these structural relations.

Therefore it would be logical to conclude that the struggle to combat racism must aim fundamentally at the elimination of all exploitative social systems and at the eradication of racial prejudice. But, does this mean that the call for a struggle against racism constitutes a false perspective?

Our own national experience of racism leads us to answer this question in the negative, to affirm the necessity and urgency of the struggle against racism. Apartheid in South Africa illustrates the point clearly that racism as a system of structural relations among people and as an ideology has developed historically to the point where it has acquired its own internal dynamics which give it its own self-perpetuating existence.

The fact however remains that whenever it occurs, racism serves to justify exploitative social relations and is nurtured and entrenched by these relations. Therefore while it is perfectly justified and correct to speak of and wage a struggle against racism, it is also important at all times to seek a deeper understanding of this anti-human phenomenon the better to be able to remove its root causes rather than focus solely and exclusively on the effects.

Racism and Colonialism

Racism in South Africa is also a product of the colonisation of our people by European powers. In all the phases of its development, from the settlement of our

country by Dutch mercantile interests, through the stage of direct British colonial rule to the post-1910 period of administration of our country by a white settler minority, racism has served three principal purposes.

The first was to justify the seizure of our country, our land and wealth by the colonisers. The second was to establish the basis for the transformation of the dispossessed millions of our people into instruments of labour for the enrichment of the colonisers. The third was to legitimise the exclusive concentration of political power in the hands of the colonial and settler oligarchy.

The system has allowed of no overlapping between the coloniser and the colonised. The owners of wealth, the exploiters of our labour and the governors of our country are drawn exclusively from among the colonisers. The colonised constitute the masses of the impoverished, the exploited and the voiceless. The colonisers are of course white and the colonised, black. This system is unique in world politics in the clarity and rigour of its racist demarcations, its pursuit as consistent and deliberate state policy and the brutality of both the conception, its implementation and results.

From the earliest days to date successive colonial and settler regimes have pursued as a principal objective of state policy the defence, entrenchment and extension of this racist and colonial system. Any changes that have taken place in it have been those in the direction of its further refinement to improve its effectiveness for the further promotion of white minority interests. The changes so loudly proclaimed by the Botha regime today also pursue this objective.

While the World Council of Churches and the rest of the world anti-apartheid movement must of necessity continue to respond to the new brutalities committed by this regime, we believe it would be wrong for us to start looking for "qualitatively new features" of apartheid in the 1980's with the aim of directing all or most of our attention at combating these features. The principal aim must remain still that of the destruction of the

system as a whole.

We are convinced that the churches at home and abroad have an important role to play in the accomplishment of this aim. It is however common cause that in the period of imperialist expansion the church accepted as legitimate the concept of a civilising mission and for that reason justified the imposition of white colonial domination over many peoples throughout the world, including South Africa.

What was arrogantly described as a civilising mission in South Africa was in fact the genocidal destruction of the Khoi and the San people, the land expropriation of the rest of the indigenous people, the obliteration of their culture in all its forms, the application of a consistent policy for the impoverishment of the black people and their transformation into labour units for the enrichment of the coloniser and the political domination of the majority by a white settler minority.

It is this brutal reality of colonialism and racism which the Christian church in South Africa and the metropolitan countries accepted as a civilising mission. Pursuing its purely evangelical mission, the Christian church continued to hold out the promise of the good life to the poor, the suffering and the despised, but only after death. By refusing by and large to do anything about the life of these poor masses before death, it got itself further involved in what looked increasingly like a conspiracy to convince our people to bear their earthly tribulations patiently and submissively in the hope of a better future in the world to come.

A Faith Betrayed

In the midst of the great upheavals that the process of colonisation brought about, with centuries — old social system destroyed overnight, it was inevitable that many of our people would reach out towards whatever seemed to offer them peace, stability and human fulfilment in the new conditions. Of all the institutions that came with colonial rule, the Christian church seemed the only one that offered peace, stability and human fulfilment. Our people in good numbers therefore placed their faith in the

Christian church.

From this moment onwards and again almost inevitably, the history of the Christian church in South Africa is the history of a faith betrayed. We say almost inevitably because the church continuously refused to recognise the fact that the fulfilment of its black congregation lay in their liberation both from colonial domination and from what the church describes as sin.

While denouncing as sinful the covetting of their white neighbour's possessions by the black people, the church did not condemn as sinful the reduction of the black by the white into homeless and propertyless beggars. While issuing injunctions of forbearance to the black, urging them to eschew violence, it avoided condemning colonial state violence against the black people.

Many Christians among our people accept the meaning in its literal and direct sense that God made man in his image and gave him dominion over the earth. From the standpoint of these Christians, it must be obvious that the first and decisive task of a Christian and all ecclesiastic organisations, such as the church, whose *raison d'être* is the defence and propagation of God's purposes, as reflected in the Bible, must be the accomplishment of this equal dominion of all men over the earth.

Looked at from this Christian perspective, colonialism and racism must surely be seen as seeking exactly to remove the colonised and discriminated against from the exalted throne on which God placed the whole human race at the very beginning of creation.

Apartheid is truly diabolical

Colonialism and racism in South Africa as expressed in the apartheid system have placed in dominion both over nature and the black masses a white minority which claims it to be its divine mission to exercise this dominion over the black majority. Thereby not only does this white minority deny the universal validity of the thesis that "all men were created equal" more fundamentally, by appropriating to itself the right to subdue and by actually subduing the black people, the white minority

in South Africa appoints itself to a station in the universe higher than that of God Himself, and transforms the Creator into a handmaiden for the fulfilment of its own diabolical aspirations.

For apartheid is truly diabolical, embracing as it does all systems of inequality — discrimination against all black people on ground of race, denial of our right to self determination, and our subjection to harsh and excessive forms of economic domination and exploitation — system of inequality which are consciously and systematically maintained and reinforced, aimed at ensuring that the whites do in fact multiply and fill the earth on the basis of the debasement and enslavement of the blacks.

The more the church avoided placing on its agenda the uprooting of this system as an inalienable component part of its divine mission, the more justified the conclusion seemed that the Christian church was ineluctably doomed to betray the very faith which it professed.

The ANC and Christianity

To their credit, there were a few among the Christian leadership in South Africa who refused to take this path. These are men and women who read in the Scriptures a clear message that it was impermissible that he who had been made in the image



of God should be debased and enslaved.

It is part of the proud history of the African National Congress that among its founders and early leaders are to be found such true Christians as:

- † Rev. John Dube, first President of the ANC, minister of the Congregational Church;
- † S.M. Makgatho, second President of the ANC, Methodist leader and lay preacher;
- † Rev. Z.R. Mahabane, third President of the ANC, minister of the Methodist church and president of the Interdenominational African Ministers Federation, (today known as IDAMASA);
- † Rev. W.B. Rubusana, one of the four original vice-presidents of the ANC, co-translator of the Xhosa Bible and Vice-Chairman of the Congregational Union of South Africa.

Finding it impermissible in the context of their Christian beliefs that he who had been created in the image of God should be debased and enslaved, these men and women and others of their time and since, saw clearly that their won efforts to secure human fulfilment and salvation lay also in their personal involvement in the struggle for liberation.

As early as 1906, one of the predecessors of the ANC, the South African Native Congress passed a resolution which, *inter alia*, said:

“Congress believes that Ethiopianism (the African independent church movement) is a symptom of progress, brought about by the contact of the natives of Africa with European civilisation making itself felt in all departments of the social, religious and economic structure”.

It is therefore little wonder that among the leaders of the African National Congress and its official chaplains are to be found the leaders of this “Ethiopian” movement. For this movement represented not only a struggle for equality within the Church, but more significantly a struggle to reorientate the Christian Church as a whole such that by espousing the anti-colonial and democratic aspirations of the majority of the people, the church would once more bear true witness to the greatness of man.

It is a measure of the profundity of the damage that the church brought upon itself

during the process of the colonisation of our country that even today we still have to make the same point that was made by our predecessors 75 years ago that Christianity must inevitably concern itself with progress “in all departments of the social, religious and economic structure.”

Yet another organisation that preceded and laid the foundations for the formation of the African National Congress, *Imbumba yama Afrika* formed in 1882, drew attention to another issue which remains with us to this day. To quote one of its founders writing in 1883:

“Anyone looking at things as they are, could even go so far as to say it was a great mistake to bring so many church denominations to the Black people. For the black man makes the fatal mistake of thinking that if he is an Anglican, he has nothing to do with anything suggested by a Wesleyan, and the Wesleyan also thinks so, and so does the Presbyterian. *Imbumba* must make sure that all these three are represented at the (forthcoming) conference In fighting for national rights we must fight together.” (S.W. Mvambo in *Karis/Carter: From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 1 p. 12)

The question that was raised then and which we raise today, is the necessity of the unity of the Christian community in the struggle against colonialism and racism. Looked at from a different dimension this constitutes a call for the practical recognition of the ecumenism of the Holy Scriptures as opposed to their separate, denominational interpretation.

Given our historical experience, which has made the African National Congress play the role of virtual incubator of the ecumenical movement in our country, certainly among black Christians, it is natural that we should make this call for Christian unity in the struggle against racism. It is also natural that we should raise our voice against those within the Christian community who intentionally or otherwise are working to undermine the degree of unity achieved around the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism.

Even more disturbing is what seems to us a veritable offensive on the part of certain Western church circles to disengage 23

the World Christian community from the struggle to combat racism; to separate and oppose one to the other, the temporal and the sacred, the material and the spiritual; to deny that the Church has a task to create such conditions that mankind can, without distinction of race or nationality, "be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth and subdue it".

As a people we know that this constitutes a reversion to the principles and practices of the colonial church, justifying the perpetuation of racism and inequality and resurrecting the concept of a civilising mission. This is a church which exhorts the slave to remain on his knees and on his knees to pray for the peace and prosperity of the slave master.

We are of course not surprised that it is at this moment that the principles and practices of the colonial church are being raised anew. We are not surprised because it is at this moment that it has become clear to all that real change in South Africa is both imminent and inevitable. Therefore powerful political, economic and military forces in the West feel that their interests in an African country which is central to the success of their global strategy are threatened.

Bless the oppressor -- Damn the oppressed

These forces are naturally fully aware of the role that the Church played in the colonisation of our peoples when ministers of religion blessed the arms of the coloniser and damned the indigenous people for bearing arms to resist the rape of their country. At this moment of crisis for the apartheid regime, these Western circles hope to activate the Church to play the same role all over again —:

to bless the arms of the oppressor and to damn the oppressed for bearing arms in the struggle for liberation.

These Western forces feel an even greater sense of urgency to achieve this goal given that the Church had at last begun to identify itself with those who fight for freedom and thus added enormously to the strength of the active forces of change and, as we have said, on recruiting this community to the side of reaction.

Yet the present epoch calls for a church that is closely allied with the poor and the oppressed. It demands Christians of the calibre of Camillo Torres, the heroic Colombian priest who joined the guerrilla forces of that country in struggle against the tyrannical Colombian oligarchy of the 1960's. This is a church which must exhort the slave to rise from his knees and to assert what the Bible bestows as a right "to fill the earth and subdue it".

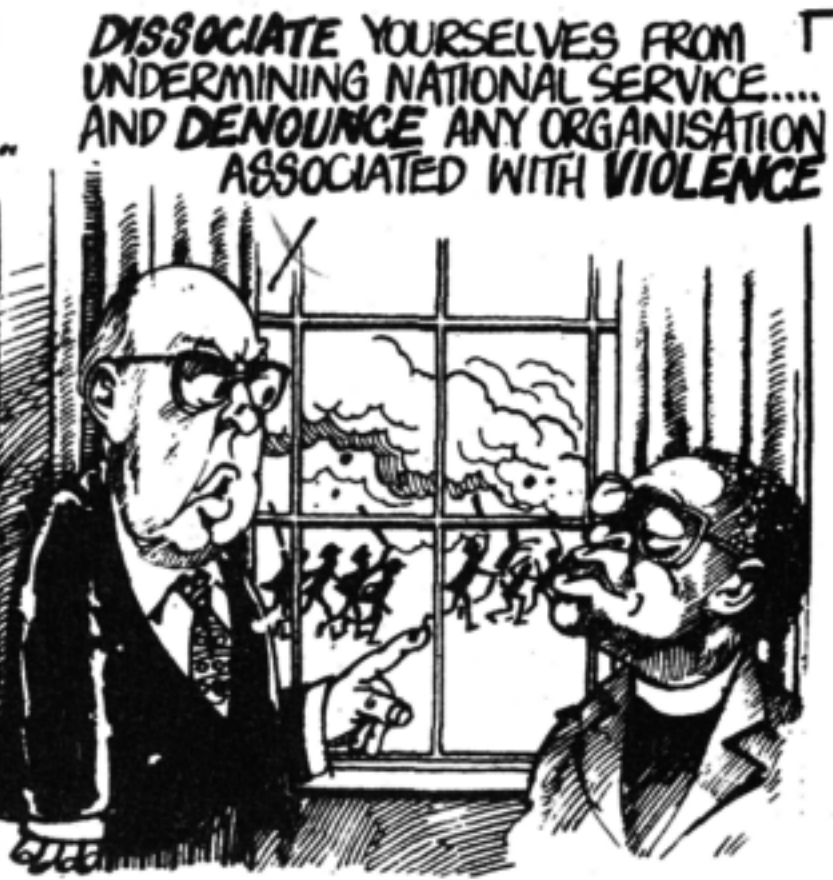
The victories that have been scored in Southern Africa which have left Namibia and South Africa as the only countries which are as yet unliberated as well as the heightened offensive of our people within South Africa and those of Namibia, are forcing the Pretoria regime to devise new strategies for the preservation of the apartheid system. By bringing about peripheral and inconsequential changes, the Botha regime hopes to give the apartheid system a more acceptable face as well as to delude our people and the rest of the world that the racist regime has started a process of amending this criminal system out of existence.

In other words, Botha and his henchmen want to project an illusion of change in order to ensure that the substance remains unchanged. That substance is national oppression, the super-exploitation of the black people and fascist repression to ensure that the people do not rise to regain their right to determine their political, economic and social destiny without let or hindrance.

The church that the oppressed people of our country demand is one that openly, publicly and actively fights for the political, economic and social liberation of man, as part of the world forces engaged in the process of bringing into being a new world order for those who are discriminated against, for justice, peace and social progress.

WCC and Freedom Charter

In this year 1980, the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter, which contains the demands of the vast majority of the people of South Africa, it would be appropriate that the WCC adopts the Charter as its own perspective of the



future South Africa which it is committed to help bring about. By this act the world Christian community would have taken an important step forward in joining hands with the world forces for genuine change in South Africa and helped to reaffirm the right of our people to determine their future.

The struggle for the realisation of the demands contained in the Freedom Charter means that the Church has to reassess its

role with regard to the South African struggle. That process of reassessment must lead towards the conclusion that it is insufficient, and indeed wrong for the church to view its participation in the struggle for the eradication of racism as that of a philanthropic institution.

Our movement and our people deeply appreciate the aid given to us by the WCC for maintaining refugees and other forms of humanitarian assistance within South Africa



and would like this aid to continue and increase. But we are arguing that for the WCC to stop at this form of assistance is to renege on its tasks. Indeed there is a sense in which the continuing handing out of alms to alleviate suffering is encouragement to the recipient to acquiesce in his condition. On the other hand this gives opportunity to the alms-giver to avoid confronting and changing the fundamental situation which gives birth to the need for alms.

The Christian Church in South Africa is called upon to produce its own Camillo Torres's. It is called upon to join in with other patriots to mobilise the masses of the people, including the millions of worshippers, to engage in struggle to change the fundamental situation which has given birth to the need for alms. The Christians of South Africa have need to recall the example of a Christian liberator represented by John Dube, Sefako Makgatho, Z.R. Mahabane, W.B. Rubusana, A.J. Luthuli, Ambrose Reeves, Trevor Huddleston, D.C. Thompson and others and follow in their footsteps.

Many among the present generations of South Africa, whom it is perhaps unwise to mention by name, have already heeded this call and are to be found at home and abroad among the ranks of the political and military fighting forces of our people.

Support our struggle

They and all of us will both feel and be stronger if we know that the rest of the world Christian community stands with us and is actively engaged in striving to accomplish the following programme in addition to what we have already mentioned:

† increase moral and material support to the African National Congress and other patriotic forces of our country, for the transfer of all power to the people;

† severance of all political, economic and cultural links with the apartheid regime of South Africa;

† ensure strict observance and enforcement of the UN Security Council arms embargo against racist South Africa;

† urge member churches of the WCC and all countries to withdraw investments from South Africa;

† encourage member churches of the WCC to contact and cooperate with one another at regional and local levels with the purpose of enhancing and strengthening the Programme to Combat Racism;

† the education and activation of every single Christian throughout the world to raise their level of personal and collective involvement in the struggle to eradicate racism;

† encouragement of the Church in South Africa to be fully involved in all aspects of the struggle against apartheid, for a democratic South Africa.

The masses of our people have risen in their millions in defiance of the brutal terror of the apartheid regime to wrest power from the racists. The young and the old, men and women, rural and urban people, believers and non-believers are waging political, military and economic battles to bring about the future which they themselves described in the Freedom Charter. Through the Free Mandela campaign they are asserting their right to decide who their leaders are and are thereby expressing the total rejection of leaders appointed for them by the oppressor.

It is these masses, the main and decisive force of genuine change in South Africa, that we are asking the WCC and the world Christian community to encourage, assist and support in all their endeavours.

Only thus can the Church be true to its professed ideals, tend to all the needs of its flock, both material and spiritual and once more claim with justification to personify the body of Christ the Liberator. When those who worship Christ shall have, in pursuit of a just peace taken up arms against those who hold the majority in subjection by force of arms, then shall it truly be said of such worshippers also;

blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God.

ANC SUMMER SCHOOL

The African National Congress Youth and Students Section held a successful Summer School at Balatonzemes in Hungary from the 28th July to 4th August. It brought together more than 60 ANC delegates from 16 countries of Africa, Europe, the Americas and Canada. It was the second gathering of Youth and Students of the ANC since the 1977 Moscow Conference.

The Summer School brought together a whole cross-section of the ANC youth those working in various structures of the movement, students studying in continents named above and the representatives of the People's Army — Umkhonto we Sizwe. Also represented was the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress and the Women's Secretariat. Present also were representatives of fraternal youth organisations from Angola, Hungary, Zimbabwe and Chile. Messages were received from many other fraternal youth organisations throughout the world.

The formal opening was conducted by the National Commissar of the African National Congress and messages of solidarity delivered by fraternal organisations represented.

Political Content

The Summer School took place in the context of a favourable historical stage of our struggle, characterised by decisive militant actions inside South Africa and the growth in strength and scope of the international solidarity movement. Most important, is that it took place during the Year of the Charter and at the height of the Mandela Campaign and students school boycotts. This healthy political climate influenced the deliberations and contributed largely to the high morale and the resultant

serious approaches to all political questions.

Various topics were prepared by the different centres for presentation. The document of the National Executive Committee, the Treasury department and the report of the Youth Secretariat formed the basis for most discussions. The deliberations varied from the examination of the current situation in the country and internationally; the role played by the youth and students inside and outside South Africa; the Women's Question; an examination of the ANC education policy; demands enshrined in the Freedom Charter and how the youth can contribute to their fulfillment. The understanding of the necessity for the existence and the unity of the two fronts (in which the youth are involved) — the military and the academic; the role of culture in the struggle for national liberation; imperialist conspiracies against the liberation struggle in South Africa as led by the ANC and the need for revolutionary discipline in the ranks of the youth and students. Two commissions were also set up to examine the political organisational and academic problems affecting the students and recommended solutions for these.

All the discussions were characterised by frank, sometimes heated but very constructive debates. This was only possible mainly because of the political and ideological unity of our movement. Though many were meeting for the first time, they all spoke one language — ANC politics. This marks a remarkable success in transforming mere patriots into partisan cadres of the ANC with one common purpose (effective contribution to the achievement of the strategic objective of) the armed seizure of political power and the fulfillment of the demands enshrined in the Freedom Charter. It is precisely for this

reason that the National Commissar was compelled to repeat the late Comrade Moses Kotane's words when he said: "with such a youth, the ANC can never die".

Solidarity and Cultural Manifestations

Besides the deliberations, there was a cultural evening given by the Art Assembly

and eye-opening discussion on the topic The Role and Place of the African Liberation Movements in International Life, presented by Prof. Dr Kende Istvan, This served to place on record the need, reality and importance of the unity in action of the anti-imperialist and progressive forces.

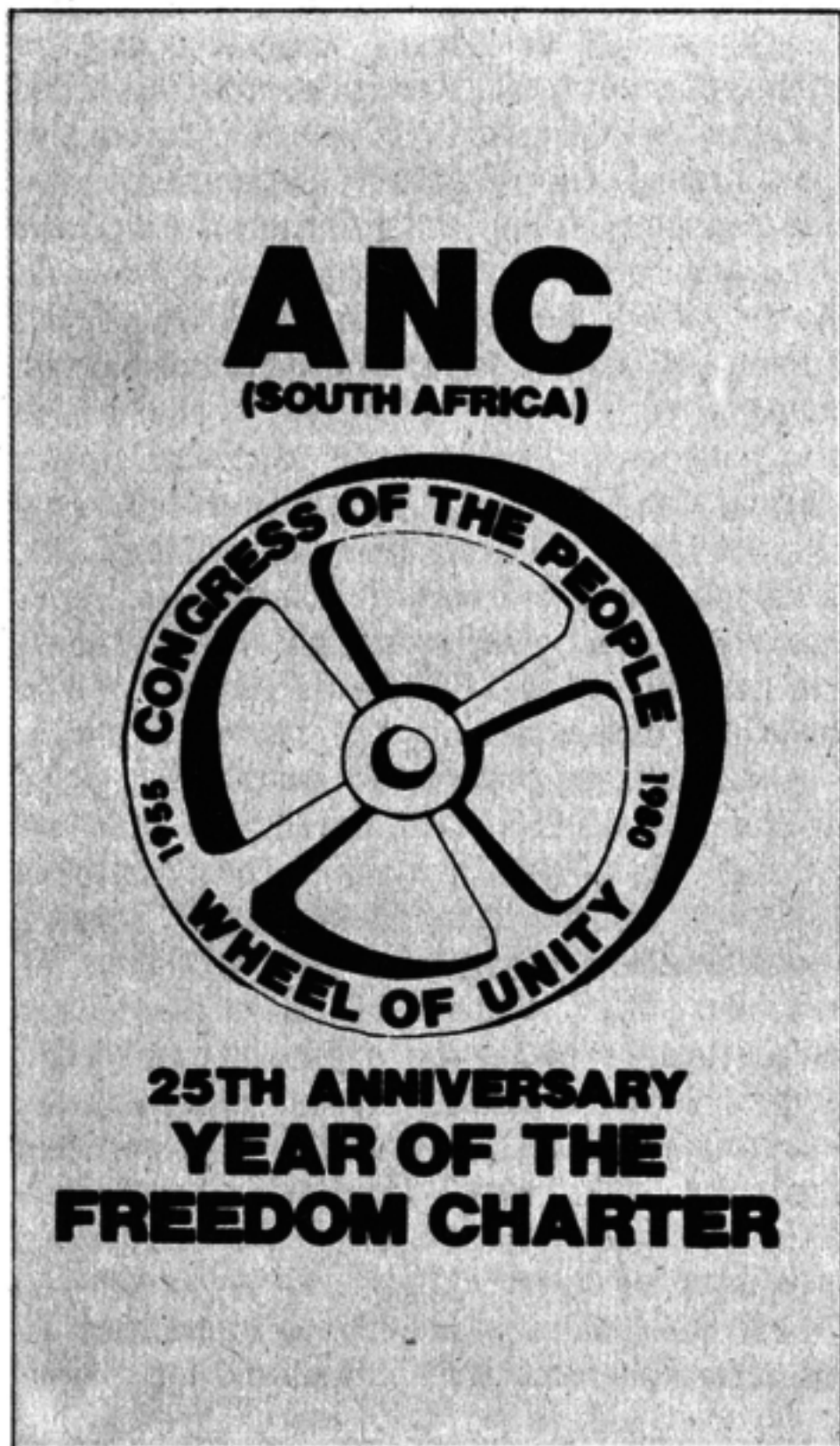
On the last day, the participants did solidarity work on a state farm at Balaton Boglar. On the same evening there was a solidarity meeting and a cultural programme presented by the ANC to a group of young people from all over Europe and America. They had attended a South African Solidarity Work Camp held in Szekszad. All these activities were a manifestation of genuine, active friendship, co-operation and solidarity.

Final Declaration

The success of the Summer School is reflected in the following summary of the final declaration.

In the analysis of the current students' battles inside the country the participants noted a "higher form of conscious organisation", and the clearly expressed demands of the students. This showed that they have learned "from the experiences of past struggles and effectively corrected some of the weaknesses of the 1976/77 uprisings". On the workers front it was noted that "the nation-wide industrial upsurge of black workers reflects a significant development from earlier actions in that they are both political and economic in character, underlining... a higher level of organisation. Meanwhile the heroic actions of workers at the Sasol III plant in Secunda confirmed the organic link between the armed struggle and mass actions..." The Free Mandela Campaign was also welcomed as a sign of "confidence our people have in the leadership of the ANC..." The heroic mass upsurge of the entire oppressed population was seen to "constitute the basis for transforming People's War into People's Power."

The declaration also examined significant international developments in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa with emphasis on the victories scored in the decade of the seventies and various battles



of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth Of Hungary. Their performing of the gum-boot dance added a more fascinating aspect to some common cultural forms of our different peoples and hence the affinity to one another. There was also a very exciting evening with the Hungarian youth where our friendship was cemented.

One of the highlights of the solidarity programme was a very intense, high level

won in the beginning of the eighties.

Special record was made of the victory of the Patriotic forces in Zimbabwe and the inspiration it serves to the "embattled masses of Namibia and South Africa, led by their vanguard organisations SWAPO and ANC respectively". It was further resolved to "strengthen ties between our youth and that of Namibia. We also hail the recent victories scored by the Namibian People's Army -PLAN- over the common enemy... and particularly pledge our solidarity with the people and youth of Namibia, under the leadership of their sole authentic representative SWAPO".

Full solidarity was expressed with the people of Sahara, East Timor, El Salvador, Puerto Rico and Bolivia and the victories of the people of Grenada, Kampuchea, Iran, Nicaragua and Vietnam (against Maoist aggression) were hailed.

Whilst commending the Front line states for their determined and courageous stand in support of our struggle, the racist aggression against them was vigorously condemned. Full appreciation of the "consistent, unswerving and disinterested support of the Socialist community headed by the U.S.S.R. and all democratic forces in the progressive world" was expressed and imperialist countries, particularly the F.R.G., France, United States and the United Kingdom were condemned for their collaboration with Apartheid.

The participants paid tribute to the great actions, courage and bravery of young militant fighters in particular those who were martyred on the battlefield. "We especially salute heroes of the calibre of comrade Solomon Mahlangu, the brave martyrs of Silverton and those that have fallen in the remote areas of our country".

Finally, the following pledges were made:

† increased loyalty to the demands of all struggling students of our country;

† to fight on, side by side, as committed youth and students of South Africa, under the leadership of the ANC;

† reaffirm our determination and dedication to re-inforce and consolidate our efforts on all fronts in the attainment of our total liberation;

† unswerving loyalty to our organisation,

its tried and trusted leadership and our glorious and heroic youth fighting in the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe;

† to make every sacrifice in the campaign to save the life of Comrade James Mange in demanding that his right as a prisoner of war be exercised and respected;

† to make this YEAR OF THE CHARTER the beginning of a decade that will see the uplifting of our own political consciousness and our own revolutionary practice. We promise to arm ourselves with revolutionary discipline, inculcate loyalty and partisanship to our movement and conduct ourselves in a manner befitting dedicated young revolutionaries and in keeping with the principles and policies of our movement so that actions may bring honour to our great movement -- the ANC of South Africa.

In this regard the correct policies and programmes that the National Executive Committee, has put forward, will continue to guide and direct us in our quest for national and social emancipation.

We therefore endorse and further adopt all the decisions of the NEC pertaining to youth and the NEC document as presented at this Summer School.

We also pledge to abide by the decisions of the 1977 Moscow Conference, especially with respect to the decision on the unity of the two fronts -- the military and academic -- to bring to fruition the aspiration expressed by Comrade Nelson Mandela when he said; "Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of the armed struggle we shall crush apartheid and white minority racist rule".

The Summer School revealed that the South African youth organised under the banner of the African National Congress shall not betray those who sacrificed their lives for freedom "in our lifetime" and for a better future for all. The challenge has been accepted, what remains is the implementation of all the decisions taken. Let the youth make available to the ANC all their talents, which are not their individual possessions, but the common property of our struggling people.

WOMEN IN GUINEA BISSAU

Urdang, Stephanie, "Fighting Two Colonialisms: Women in Guinea-Bissau", Monthly Review Press, New York & London, 1979.

"Women are potentially a formidable revolutionary force. They are so totally oppressed that once they do begin to move for change, the momentum begun in order to unload the burden of their own oppression may simply keep going until the structures that support both their oppression and the oppression of the whole society under colonialism is toppled."

If this statement reminds us of Lilian Ngoyi: "Now you have touched the women, you have struck a rock, you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed," this is not surprising. It describes the experience of the struggle for liberation amongst the women of the People's Republic of Guinea-Bissau. Urdang, a South African journalist living in New York and working with anti-apartheid movements in the US, spent two periods in the country, once before independence, when she travelled in the liberated zones, and once after independence in 1976. This book is the product of those visits.

The book is very readable. Urdang lets the women of Guinea-Bissau speak for themselves, about their lives and struggles. It also tells us a great deal about the fight for freedom in Guinea, the ideology and practice of the liberation movement, PAIGC. Conditions in this small, peasant based Republic are obviously very different to the conditions we face in South Africa. But what is especially important for both women and men to gain from this book is the close focus it brings onto the relationship between women's liberation and socialism. As such, it gives much food for thought to all who are fighting for social

change in South Africa. It puts flesh on the old slogan: no national liberation without women's liberation, and no women's liberation without national liberation. In Guinea-Bissau Urdang found that the women's struggle was an explicit and integral part of the overall struggle. At the same time, it was considered to be a "protracted struggle, to be waged by the women themselves..."

Urdang looks closely at the way PAIGC sees the question of women's liberation. She quotes comrade Amilcar Cabral, and shows how the political line has been developed by women cadres of the movement. For PAIGC, women's liberation referred to the need for women to play an equal political, economic and social role with their men in both the armed struggle and the construction of the new society. The Guineans called the women's struggle the "fight against two colonialisms". This slogan expressed the double oppression suffered by women: oppression by the Portuguese and by men. But the slogan also emphasised the fact that the men were no more the enemy of women than the Portuguese people were the enemy of the Guinean people: the real contradiction was the system of colonialism. This system entrenched male domination, and had to be overthrown. The women saw it as a question of both fighting against reactionary attitudes, and changing the economy.

There is lots of detailed information about how PAIGC began to carry out these ideas in practice. For example, in the liberated zones, they found it necessary to recognise the massive burden of "anonymous daily work" carried out by women in village life: agricultural work, childcare, daily domestic labour of pounding, cooking, cleaning. This heavy burden prevented women from playing any major

role in political affairs. On this question, PAIGC insisted on the election of at least two women to the five member village council set up in the liberated zones. In this way the movement gave a new status to this work which reflected its value in society. It also gave women a chance to participate in what had traditionally been a male sphere. Women were generally encouraged to try everything, not just the usual occupations done by women, such as teaching and nursing. Some PAIGC women also discussed with Urdang the need to go even further than this: to draw men into what had traditionally been seen and scorned as "women's work".

This book can really inspire women who want to challenge their subordinate position in South Africa. For the PAIGC women showed clearly that it was not until the revolution began that they saw any possibility of change in their position. The Guinean people told Urdang that women were some of the most eager supporters of the revolution. This readiness to join the struggle was not based on any abstract slogans. They could see for themselves that the movement offered them some results. Comrade Cabral had always emphasised that "war on colonialism", "independence", would remain meaningless to the people "unless it brings a real improvement in conditions of life". In this book we get a chance to see what this could mean for the women of Guinea-Bissau. Besides recognising women's role in production and politics, for example, PAIGC began to struggle against those customs which they saw as trapping women into oppressive marriage relations: forced marriage, absence of divorce rights, and polygamy. They were aware that great patience was needed to change these traditions: "We have to move, but we have to move slowly or the people will turn against us". But in the new legal code, the new educational system, in party organisation, they worked to make these practices and restrictions redundant for the coming generation. This was not lost on

the women, many of whom saw the liberation movement as an avenue to freedom and dignity in their personal lives.

But perhaps most important of all, the book should help to provoke us to think more closely about the relationship between women's liberation and national liberation in our own struggles. Urdang points to the material basis of women's oppression which lay in the pre-colonial and colonial economy. She contrasts the movement forward being taken in Guinea Bissau with the negative pattern of underdevelopment in neo-colonial Africa, where there is little hope for changing the material or ideological bases of women's subordination. "What is certain, is that unless socialism is achieved, the liberation of women cannot be realised," said the PAIGC women over and over again. PAIGC also argued the reverse: Women's emancipation is vital for the advancement of the whole society. But Urdang adds her own point, for the outside: there is nothing automatic about achieving this freedom. It requires conscious analysis and commitment from both party and people to fight this struggle on all levels, inside all the other battles. Urdang found this in Guinea-Bissau, but she is also conscious that there is no easy solution, no smooth road ahead. After independence new problems have emerged. But if we cannot be utopian about the Guinean women, this book gives us cause to be optimistic, that it is possible to change the position of women within and through the struggle for national liberation.

J.K.

IN PRAISE OF ILLEGAL WORK

The following poem was translated and sent to us by a West German comrade.

Beautiful it is
to take the floor in the class struggle
to loudly and noisily call for the struggle of the masses
to crush the oppressor, to liberate the oppressed.

Difficult and useful is the day-to-day hardship
the tenacious and clandestine knotting of the party's net
confronted with the employers' barrel of the gun
to speak, but
to hide the speaker.
To win, but
to hide the winner.
To die, but
to hide the death.
Who wouldn't do much for the glory, but
who does it for the silence?
For the glory asks in vain
who the authors of the great action are.
Step forth
for a moment
unknown authors, with hidden faces, and receive
our thanks!

Bertolt Brecht 1934

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