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UMSEBENZI



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Voice of the South African Communist Party

What's happening in the Soviet Union?

The crisis in the Soviet Union is serious. But the need for democratic socialism is underlined more clearly than ever.

The illegal coup, the outpouring of nationalist and chauvinist forces of all kinds, rabid anti-communism, the banning and suspension of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the break-up of the union — these are all signs of a very deep crisis.

The speed with which events are moving has caught observers by surprise. But the events in the Soviet Union over the last weeks are not a new crisis. They form a very dramatic chapter in a crisis that has been unfolding over the last few years.

The basic reasons for the crisis are those already well analysed by the SACP:

- Socialism cannot be built in an undemocratic climate.
- A highly centralised economic command system is unworkable in today's world. This is not an argument against a socialist economy, but against a bureaucratic economy.

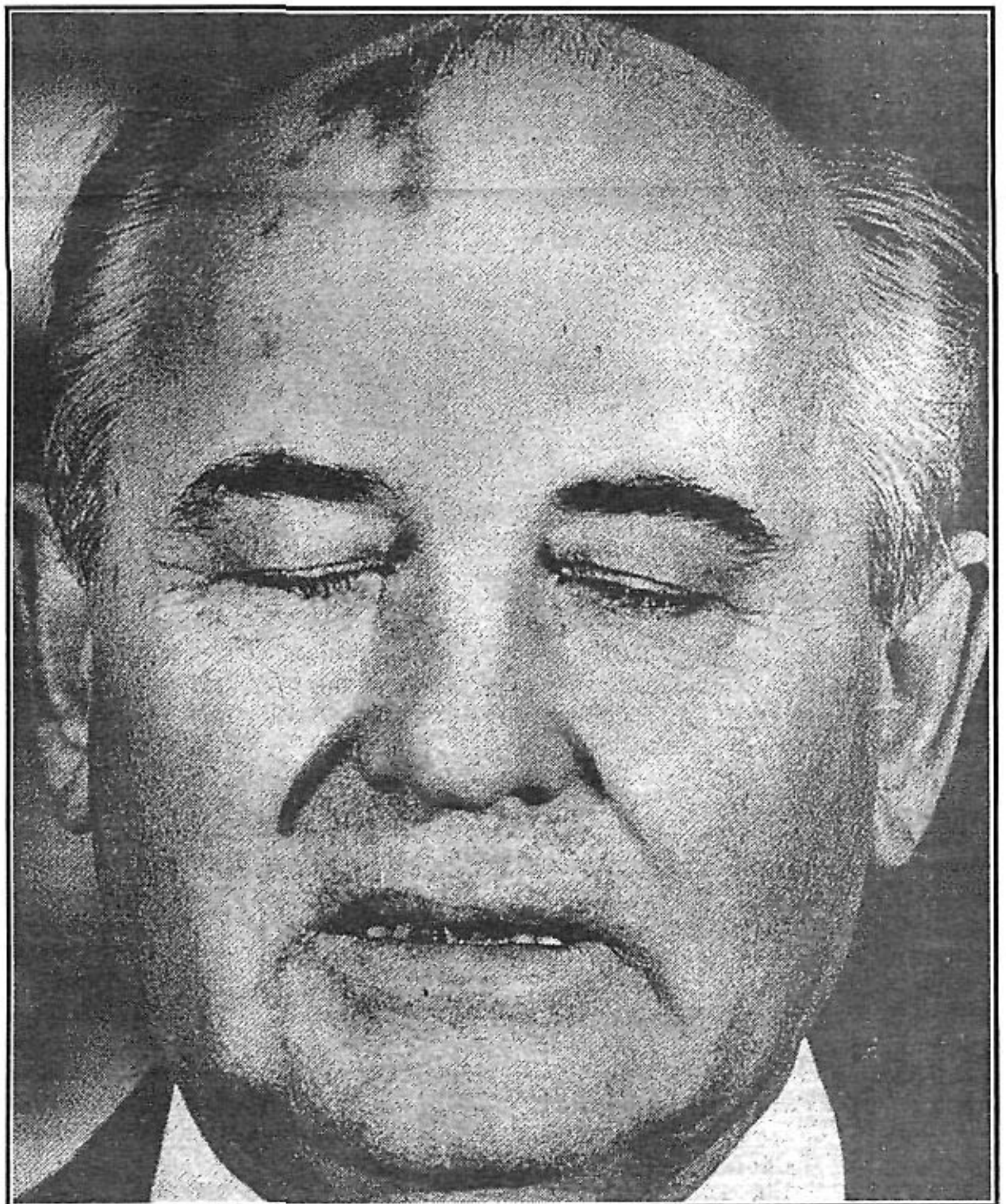
Without the active and ongoing participation of the working people in all areas of society, socialism stagnates.

One thing is certain: All the 'free market' voices who are crowing over the crisis in the Soviet Union offer no hope to the working people of the Soviet Union and of the world at large. We know from our own experience here in South Africa: Capitalism is not the answer.

Don't privatise, democratise!

SOCIALISM IS THE FUTURE!

★ **UMSEBENZI COMMENT:**
Pages 5, 6 & 7



SPECIAL

The SACP Draft Manifesto

A SPECIAL 12-PAGE SUPPLEMENT INSIDE THIS EDITION OF UMSEBENZI

PARTY NEWS

SACP delegation visits China

Four members of the SACP recently paid a visit to the People's Republic of China, to exchange ideas and to discuss ongoing links between our two parties.

The SACP delegation was headed by ILG member Raymond Mhlaba, and held several meetings with top-ranking members of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Among other things, the delegation visited the capital, Beijing, and visited several economic growth points. The CPC expressed satisfaction with its relationship with our party, and stressed the need to deepen the relationship. ★

10 000 at Fort Beaufort rally

More than 10 000 people turned up to hear SACP leader and Umkhonto we Sizwe chief of staff Chris Hani address a rally in the small Border town of Fort Beaufort recently.

Hani told the rally — organised by the party — that Ciskei military ruler Oupa Gqozo was a "stooge" who would soon be

★ ORGANISATION

"dumped by the boers."

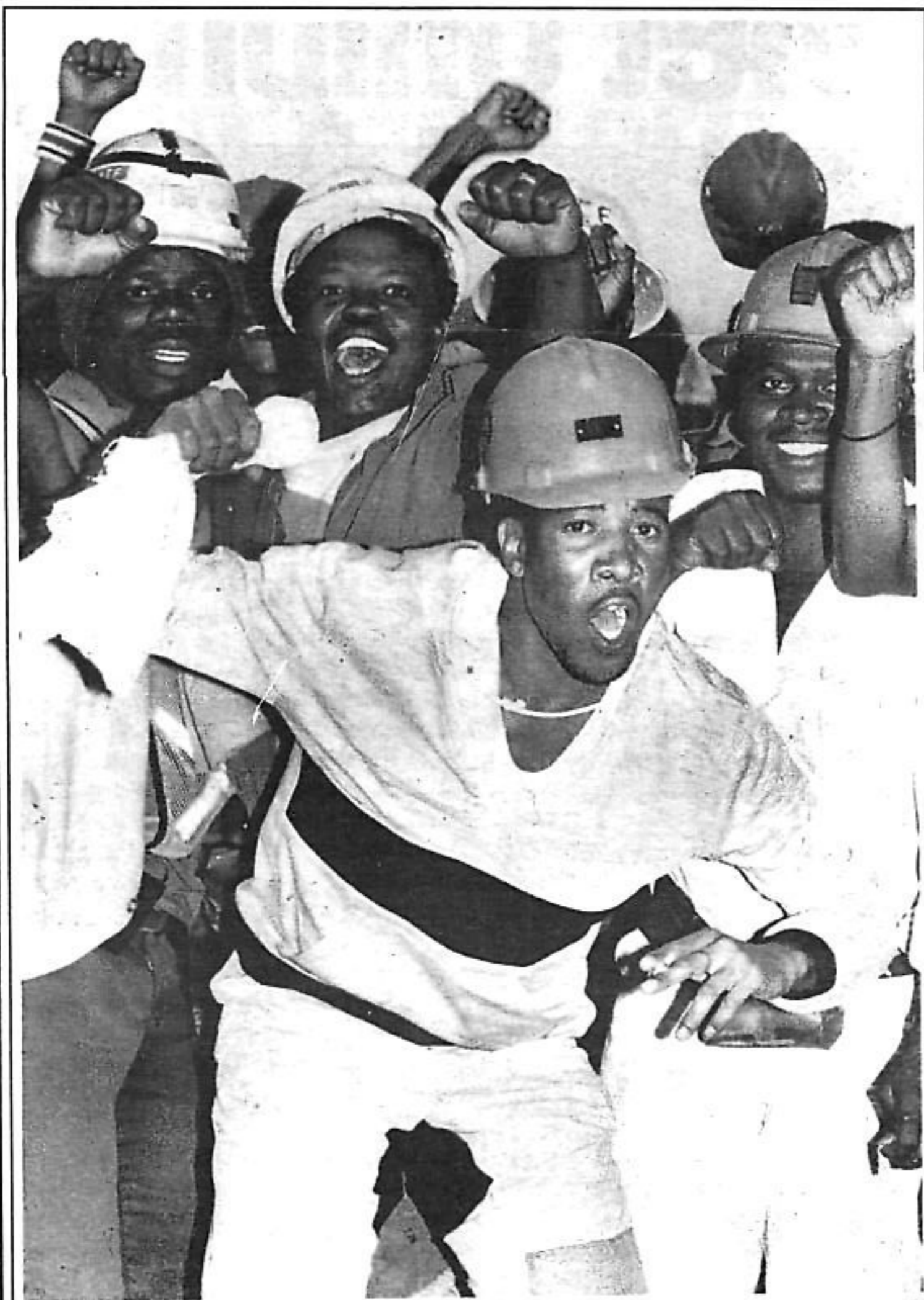
"Like Sebe and others, he is an enemy of freedom," Hani said.

"We should rather pity them. They are blind. And boers do not respect stooges"

Hani stressed the impor-

tance of the campaign for an interim government, as the De Klerk government is the major obstacle to a negotiated political settlement in this country.

"They cannot be player and referee at the same time, because each time we are about to score they will penalise us for being offside," he said. ★

Idabi lase-Impala Platinum

★ Abasebenzi base-Impala: Amandla Ngawethu!

Photos: WILLIE MATLALA (Cosatu)

★ REPRESSION

★ I-Rally yeNUM e-Impala Platinum

Abasebenzi baseImpala Platinum balwe iintsuku ezisixhenxe besilwela amalungelo abo, njengabasebenzi kuqala, nanjengabemi beli lizwe, okwesibini.

Abasebenzi bayixelele iGenmin ukuba banlungelo lokuququzelelwa kwimanyano yabasebenzi abayithandayo. Banlungelo lokubandakanywa kwintetha-ntethiswano ngemivuzo yabo neemeko abasebenza phantsi kwazo.

Aba basebenzi bacacisile ukuba imithetho yaseBophuthatswana ayinakusetyenziswa njengomqobo kwilungelo lokuququzelwa yiNUM.

Abasebenzi ngoko balwa nokusetyenziswa kwemithetho yamaphandle ukubaxhaphaza nokubancukutha. Balwanokubambisana kongxowa-nkulu nocalucalulo ukuxhaphaza abasebenzi. Eli dabi liyabonisa ukuba abasebenzi abaliboni idabi labo liphelela emgodini kuphela, bazibona benoxanduva lokuqhawula imixokelelwane yocalucalulo yeli lizwe.

INUM nayo izibona inomsebenzi omkhulu wokuququzelela abasebenzi bangaphezu kwama-40 000, ekuthiwa baseBophuthatswana. Abasebenzi abangaphezu kwama-20 000 sele bengamalungu azeleyo eNUM. Usaqalanje lomkhanaso abasebenzi bayacacisa ukuba ukulwela amalungelo abo njengabasebenzi abaluleke

ngokulinganayo nokulwela ukuwisa umbuso wonomogwana kaMangope, nokuzazi ukuba bangabemi ngokuzeleyo belizwe elingacakacwanga loMzantsi Afrika.

Ngenxa yomanyano lwabasebenzi i-Impala Platinum ivumile ukuxoxisana nabasebenzi ngonyuso-mivuzo yonyaka-mali ka-1991-92. Ngaphezu koko bavumile ukuba abasebenzi bancedwe yiNUM kumalungiselelo abo engxoxo ezo.

Kuyacaca ukuba abasebenzi bayakubona ukubaluleka kokuthabatha ulawulo lwempilo yabo nobutyebi ababuvelisayo. Eso sisiseko seSOCIALISM elawulwa sisininzi. ★

Seventieth anniversary celebrations in the Cape

★ ORGANISATION

Cape Town hosted a big party for our party's 70th birthday.

It was, many said, a celebration befitting a ship that has weathered so many storms, fought so many battles, and been the home of so many fighters for the socialist cause.

It was a celebration which looked back with pride at the years gone by and tried to add its bit to charting a way forward into the difficult waters which lie ahead.

The celebration kicked off with a rally co-hosted with the University of the Western Cape's Historical and Cultural Centre. The rally, which was addressed by ANC Deputy President Walter Sisulu and Joe Slovo, included the screening of videos on the SACP's history and a photographic and historical exhibition. Among the many photographs and items on show, the original telegram sent by Mao Tsetung congratulating Bill Andrews on his 50th birthday aroused keen interest.

A conference the following day brought together individuals from SACP branches and a host of fraternal organisations. Delegates critically examined the golden threads and the dark patches of the SACP's history and linked these lessons to the many challenges of building the SACP in legal conditions.

Guest speakers included Connie Braam of the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement, who spoke on internationalism, raising among other things what our future commitments to internationalism will be.

A fund-raising concert and rally in Khayelitsha the following weekend rounded off a Communist Week of Action in the Western Cape.



★ Angela Davis chats to the party's Chris Hani during her visit to Johannesburg. During her meeting with the SACP leadership, Davis congratulated the party for being 'in the forefront of the struggle for justice and democracy'

Photo: CECIL SOLS, Dynamic Images

'We'll be watching you - you cannot let us down'

"For as long as I've been a communist I've looked to the SACP, and I've been inspired by the SACP." With these words, Angela Davis, the celebrated black American (African-American, as she describes herself) activist and academic, greeted the SACP Interim Leadership Group (ILG) in Johannesburg.

Angela Davis and Charlene Mitchell, two leading members of the Communist Party of the USA, are presently touring South Africa.

★ SOLIDARITY

Angela Davis received international attention in 1970 when she was placed on the US "Ten Most Wanted People" list and subjected to an intensive FBI hunt. In one of the most famous trials in US history she was charged with "kidnapping, murder and conspiracy", but finally acquitted.

She is a founder member of the National Alliance Against

Racist and Political Repression (NAARPR). She serves on the central committee of the CPUSA, and has stood as the party's candidate for vice president in US national elections.

In the forefront

"Here is a part of the world where the party is in the forefront of struggle for justice and democracy," she told the SACP leadership. "You are our demonstration that communist parties and socialism are his-

torically relevant. We'll be watching you. You cannot let us down."

Charlene Mitchell, a veteran communist who joined the party at the age of 16, and who was responsible for Angela Davis's recruitment into the CPUSA in 1968, expressed similar views.

"We come from a country where we can't imagine how anyone can accept capitalism. There has to be a better system. And there has to be an organisation to do it." ★

Roar, young pioneer!

These young comrades, members of the Tembisa ANC Youth League Pioneer Section, were among a crowd of several hundred who braved the winter cold to attend a 70th anniversary rally at the township's local stadium at the end of July.

SACP general secretary Joe Slovo joined the local Party leadership in commemorating the party's anniversary. ★



★ Send an article about developments in your party branch to Umsebenzi, PO Box 1027, Johannesburg 2000. You can write in any South African language.

PARTY NEWS

Ka la August, motseng wa Soweto, ho ile ha kopa na matshweletshwele a batho ho tla keteka ho hlahlwa ha mokga wa Makomoni se mmuso.

Lena he le tsatsi lekeke la fetantle le ho hopolwa. Ka mora ha hore bahatelli le dinwamadi ba kwale mokgatlo ona molomo lemo tse fetang mashome a mane. Mona ka hara holo ya Ipelegeng, ka Soweto. Hone ho utlwalala mohoo wa pina e neng e

Tsatsi le le holo la Majammoho Soweto



binwa ke batho pelo di ile mafisa, eka thaka dine dire ha la la! La tjhaba leo rene re le lebeletse.

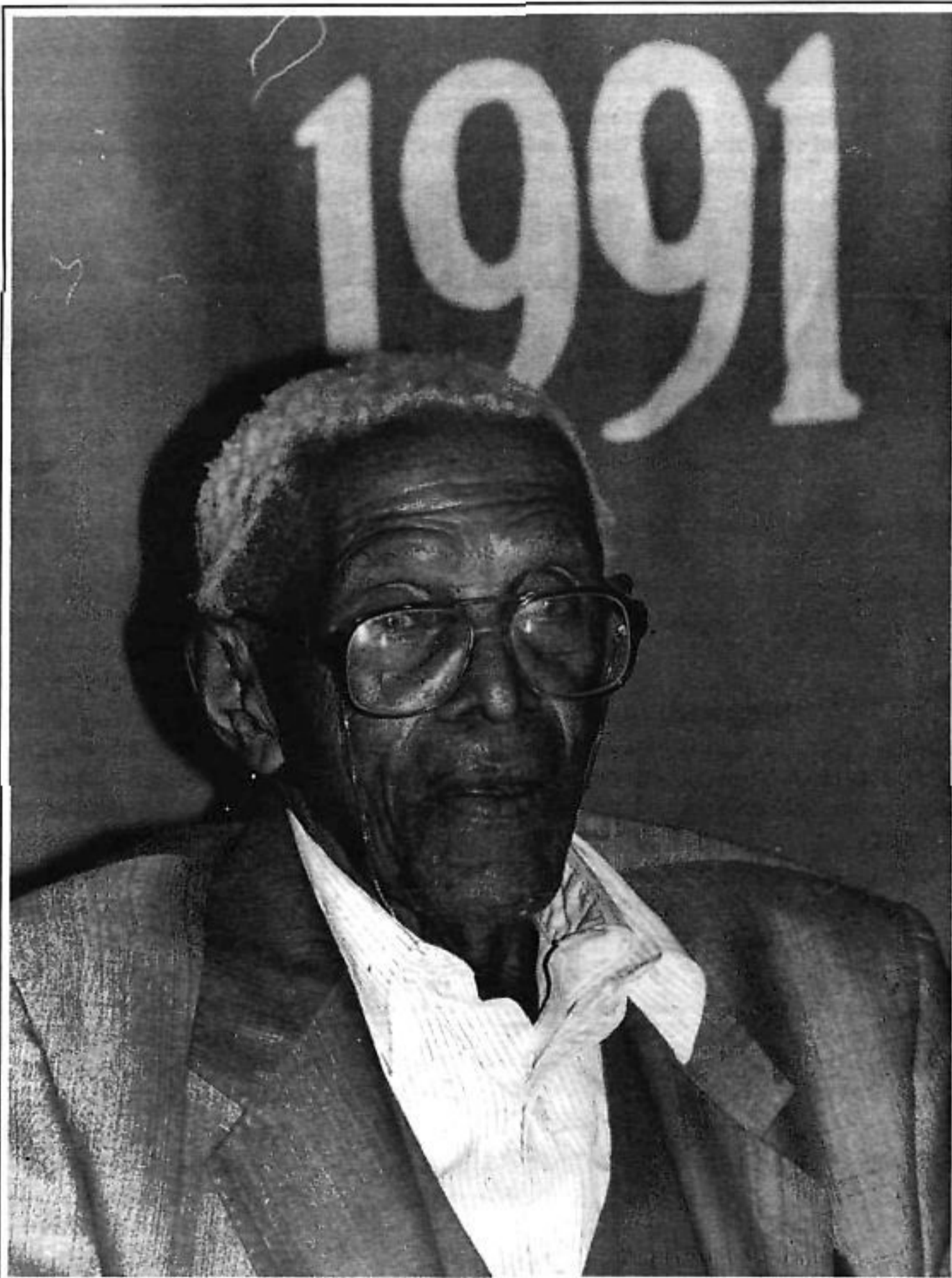
Ngwaneso ere ke o tsopolele tse ding tsa diketsahalo tsa tsatsi leo. Jwalo ka tlwaelo re ile ra

tsejiswa baetelli pele ba mokgatlo Soweto. Hone ho le monate ho kgahlisa. Ho ena le dikgalala le dinatla banna bo Chris Hani banna basa tshabeng ho bua nnete eseng mofuta ona wa dinwamadi. Ha ele ona mofuta hao utlwane le ho tshwauwa diphoso tsa bona dia patwa ha ba rata ho pepesa tsa

ba bang, ena ntlha moetelli pele emoholowa makomoni (Chris Hani) oile ae hlaba. Mehlolo ena ya batho e rata honna e bua ka maemo a mafatshe ajwalo ka bo Soviet moó bokomoni bonang le mathata teng. Ba le bala hore ba busitse lemo tse fetang lekgolo moo ho bona-hetseng hore mmuso wa dikgo-

ka le dinwamadi o tlisitse hosa lekalekane moruong le masisa pelo bophelong ba batho ba hatelletseng. Ke nnete ha ho potang hore ha ele mmuso ona wa kgethollo le hose leka lekane moruong o bonahetse kgale hore okeke wa loka lefatshe ka bophara. Baheso, hare ikemiseteng re lwane ya kgumamela mmuso ona o fediswe moruo wa lefatshe lena ore ananele kaofela ha rona le bana ba rona. ★

The oldest living Bolshevik on the African continent



★ Edwin Thabo Mofutsanyana: Back in Johannesburg at the age of 91 Photo: WILLIE MATLALA (Cosatu)

Edwin Mofutsanyana was born in 1899 in the Witsieshoek district. He came to Johannesburg as a young man where he worked underground on the mines. He joined the ANC in 1921, and the Communist Party of South Africa in 1926.

Mofutsanyana recently returned on a visit to Johannesburg, after an absence of over 30 years. Although his sight and hearing are now failing, the 91 year old veteran is otherwise fit. He follows the news closely, and has rich memories of the old days.

In the early 1930s he studied at the Lenin Party school in Moscow. He served as CPSA general secretary at one time, and edited the party journal *Inkululeko*. He served on the national executives of the ANC and All Africa Convention.

Although Mofutsanyana is almost certainly the oldest surviving communist on our continent, he nearly did not survive his first three years in the party.

On December 16 in the year 1929 the party organised nationwide rallies. Mofutsanyana and JB Marks were the keynote speakers at the party rally in the Potchefstroom township. Mofutsanyana was the first main speaker. During the course of his speech a gang of about 100 whites arrived. They

★ STALWARTS



East Rand stalwart

Meet another party stalwart: Zebediela Legodi, who joined the then-CPSA in 1940. Legodi was banished to Hammanskraal in 1960, but returned home to Tembisa in 1991, for the launch of the SACP branch there. ★

began to heckle and interrupt his speech. But Mofutsanyana continued undeterred.

He had no sooner finished speaking, when he turned round and saw one of the whites pointing a gun at him. As a shot rang out, Mofutsanyana dived off the platform, followed in quick succession by Marks.

The two comrades lived to fight another day, but tragically the shot killed a bystander. ★

The three-day, illegal coup in Moscow was, according to its leaders, designed to save the Soviet Union from chaos and anarchy. There has certainly been much chaos in the Soviet Union over the last years and months. But the coup has only plunged the country into deeper trouble, and gravely threatened the cause of socialism in that country.

The Interim Leadership Group of the SACP, meeting on the weekend of August 31/September 1, collectively analysed recent events in the Soviet Union.

The ILG identified the following significant features:

■ It is not a new crisis

The coup and its crumbling, the rising star of Boris Yeltsin, the emergence of a whole range of rabid anti-communist and narrow nationalistic elements, the banning and suspension of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), these are all symptoms of a deep crisis.

But this crisis is not new. The SACP has, over the last years, identified and analysed this crisis. Its essential cause is the separation of socialism and democracy.

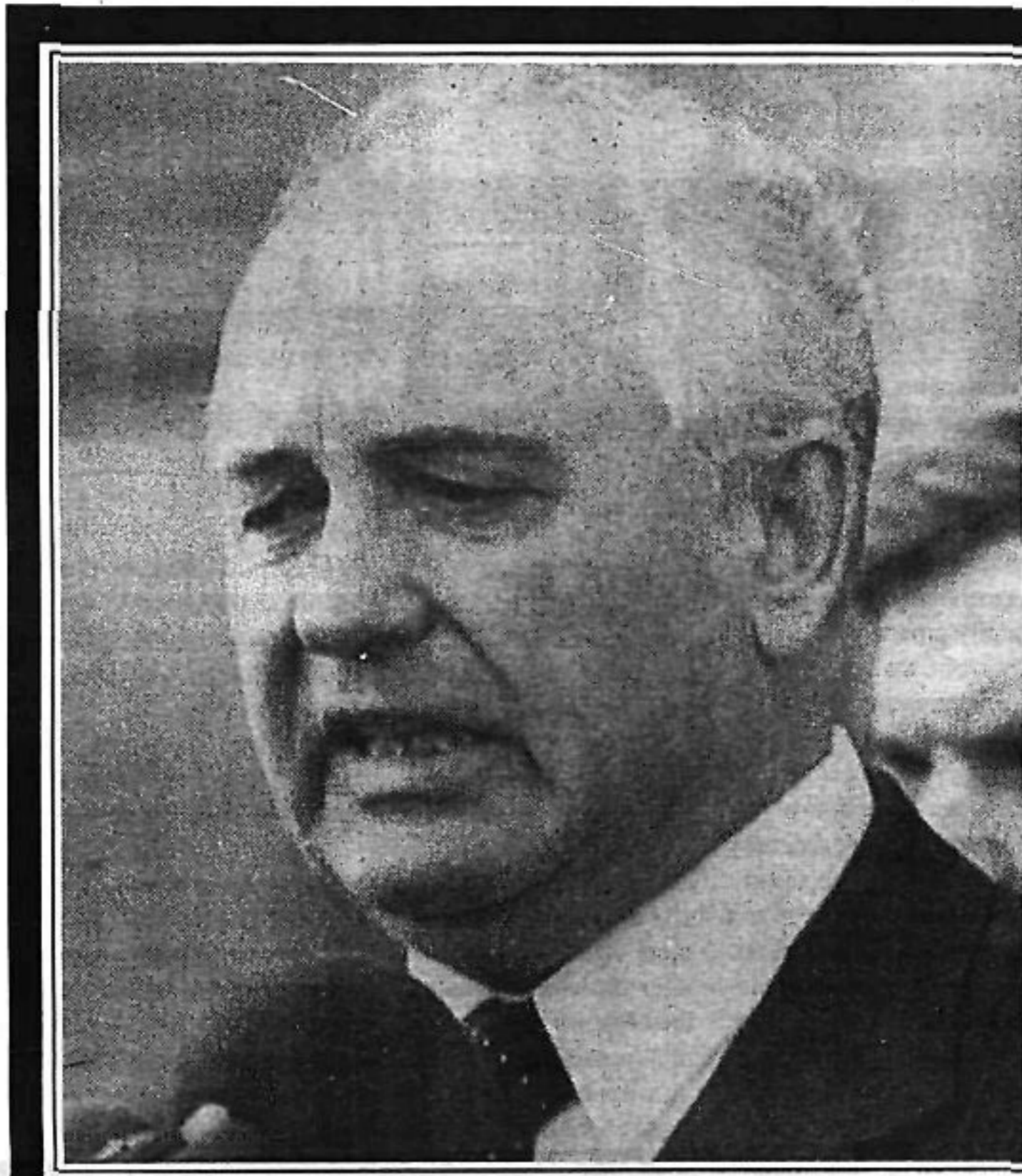
While the depth and speed of these latest events need to be taken very seriously, there is no call for a dramatic U-turn by the SACP.

The fundamental correctness of our analyses of the crisis in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe are confirmed by the latest events.

Instead of a deepening of democratic participation, the brand of socialism that had developed in these countries was stifled by massive bureaucracies.

Their economies were highly centralised, administrative command systems.

These economies, after initial successes, simply failed to



THE SOVIET UNION Understanding the crisis

UMSEBENZI COMMENT: A REPORT FROM THE SEPTEMBER I.L.G. MEETING

keep pace with their own growth and with the new technological advances.

■ The weaknesses of perestroika

The SACP has supported Gorbachev's attempts to democratise and restructure socialism in the Soviet Union. However, these attempts have had their own weaknesses and limitations. In the first place,

Gorbachev tried to democratise society, without paying sufficient attention to democratising the instruments for carrying out his policy (the state and the CPSU). The bureaucracy within these formations has often actively slowed down and blocked democratisation.

This has been all the more serious because the reform process was, as Gorbachev

acknowledged, a "revolution from above". Years of bureaucratic rule had stifled mass activism. Instead of being powered from below, perestroika was led from above.

Another feature of Gorbachev's reforms has been their ad hoc character. While restructuring was essential, the process has been one of zig-zags, changes have often come tactically, now in response to

one set of pressures, now in response to another. An overall, coherent plan has been lacking.

Some of this ad hoc zig-zagging has also been apparent in Gorbachev's stand since the coup. In the early hours after his return to Moscow he spoke of a socialist renewal. But since then, very little has been heard of the word "socialism". Gorbachev has seemed to be far more concerned with preserving his presidency, at whatever price, than with rescuing the socialist project.

These criticisms of Gorbachev's attempted reforms in no way underrate the enormous objective difficulties, nor are they in the least a justification for the illegal coup which has simply derailed the process of socialist reconstruction even more.

■ Different social forces

The ILG also noted some of the major social forces at play in the recent events. Two social strata in particular have played a significant role.

On the one hand, it was a bureaucratic stratum that lay behind the coup. This is a stratum that depended for its power and prestige on the massive Soviet state and party structures. The fact that the coup was launched just days before the new All Union Treaty was to be signed is significant. The Treaty would have given more power to the republics, but without breaking up the Soviet Union federation.

These bureaucratic forces are portrayed in our commercial media as "hard-line communists", but their social interests and perspectives often have little to do with communism. The language of the coup leaders was the language of law and order, not the language of socialism.

• Continued on page 6

EVENTS IN MOSCOW CONFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

CURRENT AFFAIRS/THE SOVIET UNION

With the exception of action by coal miners, the Soviet working people were generally passive observers of the recent events

• Continued from page 5

Elements of the bureaucracy, while they show some nostalgia for the strong central state, will also be quick to jump on to the bandwagon of privatisation and the "free market", hoping to use their still considerable bureaucratic advantages to position themselves as local agents of transnational corporations. This is a process in evidence in eastern Europe.

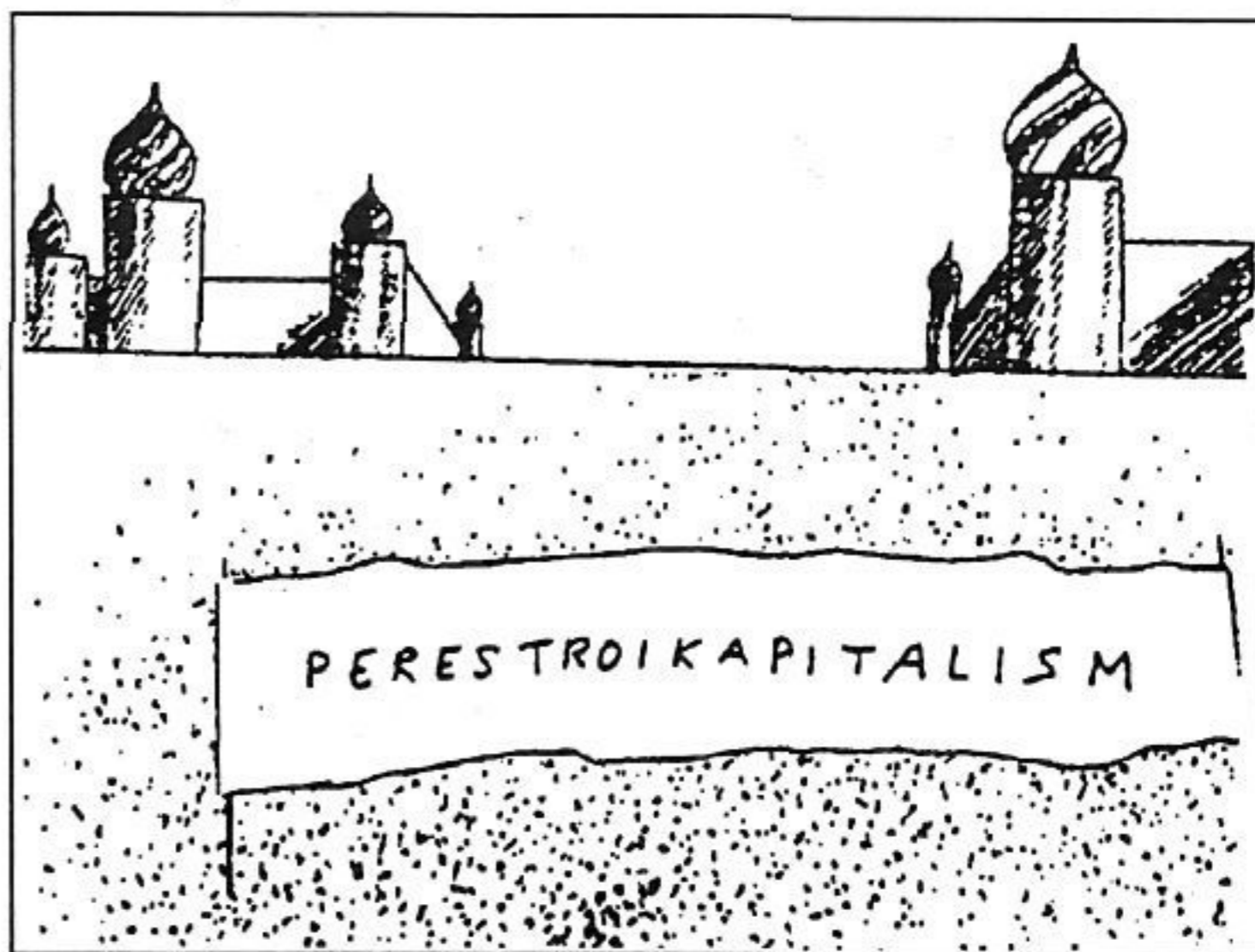
This is not to say that there are not also many sincere communists, some of them heroes of the anti-fascist war, in state structures and in the former party administration.

Another significant social force in the past weeks events has been a stratum of technocrats - factory managers, engineers, professionals of various kinds. In their ranks too there are some who are, undoubtedly, aspirant bourgeois. This technocratic stratum has been extremely hostile to the bureaucracy, seeing in it a block to "westernising" and the "free market". Such elements, drawn from this technocratic stratum, are among Yeltsin's inner circle of advisers.

Overlapping with this current, both in many of the smaller republics, and increasingly in the Russian Republic itself, has been an outpouring of chauvinistic and petty bourgeois nationalisms. It was primarily around this kind of nationalism that the stratum Yeltsin represents was able to rally a wider range of social forces.

With the exception of action by coal miners, generally the Soviet working people were passive observers of the recent events. The working class engaged in no significant independent class action in defence of socialist democracy (or, for that matter, in defence of the coup). Insofar as working people were mobilised, it was behind chauvinistic nationalist aspirations that will not serve their long term interests.

In fact, there was considerable mass passivity. It is true that Yeltsin mobilised a crowd estimated to be some 110 000 strong during the coup. Whatever their political leanings, these 110 000 people were undoubtedly courageous. The possibility of a massacre could not be ruled out. But 110 000 is



Graphic: AGAINST THE CURRENT magazine

a relatively small crowd for a city the size of Moscow. Still more significant was the fact after the coup's failure, and therefore when the danger of a massacre had receded, the crowds turning out in celebration in Moscow were not significantly larger. A large number of working people remained passive spectators.

■ The failure of the party

At the time of the coup the CPSU had a massive membership of 15-million.

The question is: where was this 15-million-strong party? It failed to bring its membership out in decisive action, still less did it mobilise the wider working class it claimed to

represent. It said and did nothing - either against the coup, or even in favour of the coup. And it was absent as a political force in the crucial hours after the crumbling of the coup as well. It is clear that the CPSU was internally divided and paralysed.

In February 1917, on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, the party had 24 000 members. Those 24 000 proved to be a million times more powerful than the 15-million of 1991.

It is clear that many party members had become time-servers, people who joined the party as a platform for personal advancement. But we also know there are many sin-

cere and heroic communists who were in the ranks of the party. We are sure that sooner or later they will regroup.

Having noted the massive failure of the CPSU, at the same time we condemn absolutely the anti-democratic banning of the party in many republics, and its unconstitutional and summary suspension by Gorbachev. The SACP also notes the deafening silence on this question from the side of all those local voices, all the "champions of multi-party democracy", who condemned (correctly) the illegality of the coup. Apparently their democratic fervour does not extend to the right of existence of communist parties.

As general secretary, Gorbachev had no power to unilaterally suspend the party. That right belongs to the party congress alone.

What the SACP said about the coup

On Monday 19 August, as news of the Moscow coup began to trickle in, the SACP issued a statement containing two main points:

- Information was still too scanty to comment in a coherent way on the events;
- But, against the background of all kinds of crazy cold war, total onslaught rumours (that the coup would bring the Red Army into Mozambique and Angola, and such like) the party reaffirmed its commitment to the negotiations process in South Africa and to a multi-party democracy.

The following day, Tuesday August 20, SACP general secretary Joe Slovo gave an extensive interview on *Voice of America*, in

which he strongly criticised the coup.

First thing on Wednesday morning, August 21, the SACP issued a full press statement signed by Slovo. The statement said, amongst other things:

"Events in the Soviet Union are very disturbing, and on the face of it endanger the future of democratic socialism. The seizure of power was clearly unconstitutional.

"If a state of emergency was necessitated by conditions, it could only have been legitimately imposed by the elected people's representatives who have the constitutional power to do so.

"We express the hope that this is not a

signal for a reversion to everything which in the past did so much to discredit the socialist cause and the image of the CPSU. Indeed it appears that the CPSU itself was side-stepped."

Although the coup crumbled later on Wednesday, at the time of issuing the statement such an outcome seemed more than unlikely. Wednesday's *City Late* edition of *The Star*, for instance, had a headline which read: "Demos crushed by tanks in Moscow".

The next day, even the *Business Day* commented favourably in an editorial ("Party line") that "the credibility of its (the SACP's) claims to stand for political democracy has been strengthened." ★

■ What does the future hold?

What is the future for the Soviet people? This is very difficult to predict in any detail. The union of different republics is eroding fast. Although many smaller nationalities are jumping on the bandwagon, the less developed republics must be fearing domination by great Russian chauvinism which Yeltsin is already fanning. The spectre of right-wing,

• Continued on page 7

Yeltsin's policies will not benefit the mass of the people

• Continued from page 6

chauvinistic forces in possession of the still considerable Soviet nuclear arsenal is a frightening prospect for the entire world.

It is probable that a highly distorted capitalism will begin to emerge, along lines presently witnessed in eastern Europe. In many eastern European countries, the people are not marching, as they were promised, into the First World. They are dropping down into the Third World. Transnational corporations buy up cheap the most viable companies and collaborate with the local bureaucracy in dividing up the booty.

On the other hand, a whole rash of small-time, Third World entrepreneurs mushroom. This is a "booty and boutique" capitalism. For the mass of the working people living standards drop drastically and unemployment soars.

But, whatever the distortions of socialism in the Soviet Union, millions of working people have had a taste of its potential.

It was the Soviet people who turned the tide of Hitler's war in the 1940s, saving the world from fascist domination. Before the centrally planned economy stagnated badly in the 1970s, the working people of the Soviet Union experienced enormous social advances.

The "free market" that Yeltsin and others are promising will not benefit the majority of the working people.

Sooner or later, we are confident that socialist forces and working people will regroup to defend what is left of their revolution, to learn from errors, and to advance once more on the path to democratic socialism. ★

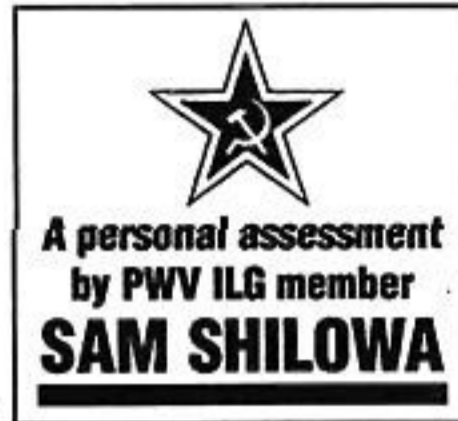
What does it mean for the SACP?

Ever since party general secretary Joe Slovo wrote *Has Socialism Failed?*, our party has been under tremendous pressure to either dissolve or change its name.

Such pressure and unsolicited advice has come from both our friends and our enemies. Because of our commitment to socialism and to the principles outlined by Marx and Lenin, we have steadfastly argued for the destruction of apartheid capitalism, and the exposure of parties who propagate it.

But we had not anticipated the coup in the Soviet Union and its aftermath and particularly the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev as party general secretary and his call for the party to disband.

Even before they had carefully studied Gorbachev's speech on Saturday night, our



detractors were already calling for our blood. *The Citizen* went even further and called on the ANC to kick us out of the alliance.

As communists, we cannot deny that we have indeed suffered a set-back - particularly since we may no more point out to the Soviet Union as a motherland.

I personally believe we need to take up the challenge facing us as long as we believe that our path is a correct one. The demagogues who blame all the recent happenings on per-

estroika and glasnost should understand the correctness of this concept: "Socialism cannot survive without democracy."

The lessons for us are enormous. A party that does not understand and fails to represent the aspiration of the masses does not have any reason to exist.

While the Communist Party of the Soviet Union accepted perestroika and glasnost, it never worked out a programme of dynamic mass involvement to ensure success, but relied on Gorbachev's initiative.

When the people were out on a general strike against the coup, the party was silent. It failed to give leadership when the masses needed it most. It dug its own grave and gave populists such as Boris Yeltsin a chance to steal the thunder.

Does the SACP have a reason to exist? The answer is an overwhelming yes. The SACP has, in the main, been in touch with the feeling of not only our membership, but of the entire exploited masses of our country. In a country where capitalist exploitation has reached its peak, the only solution is democratic socialism.

It therefore demands of us to abandon our armchair approach and to go where our people are. In mines, rural areas, farms etc. It is not a new party programme that will usher in socialism in Africa, but the working class.

If we condemn the coup as a set-back for democracy, we should demonstrate our commitment to democratic principles by ensuring that proper mandates are carried out in all our structures. ★

How the world's left reacted to the coup

• **CUBA:** The South African media has claimed that Cuba supported the coup. In fact, a Cuban government statement said that it did not intend to judge the events because of the mutual respect and close ties between the two countries. But the statement added significantly that 'the government and people of Cuba are deeply worried' by the events.

• **USSR:** The Presidium of the USSR GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS stated that although there was a severe crisis in the country its position of principle was that all measures should be 'taken and implemented in a constitutional way, with the maximum respect for democratic norms of a civilised society, for human rights and freedoms gained in the course of perestroika and guaranteed by the Soviet legislation.'

They demanded that Gorbachev should address the nation with a televised message. 'Otherwise we would consider his deposition unconstitutional.'

• **CHINA:** The Chinese government said it regarded the events as 'an internal matter'.

• **ALBANIA:** The president of Albania condemned the coup.

• **ITALY:** The Italian Democratic Party (formerly the Italian Communist Party) condemned the coup.

• **SWEDEN:** The Swedish communist party (the Swedish Left Party) said through its general secretary: 'To merely denounce the coup is not enough. We react with horror.'

• **SPAIN:** The Communist Party of Spain, United Left Coalition condemned the coup.

• **ALGERIA:** In condemning the coup, the general secretary of the Algerian communist party (the Vanguard Party) said that 'Gorbachev had given new credibility to the ideal of socialism'.

• **BRITAIN:** Both the Communist Party of Britain, and the Communist Party of Great Britain condemned the coup.

• **FRANCE:** The French Communist Party condemned the coup.

• **PORTUGAL:** The Portuguese Communist Party, in the course of the coup, issued a statement: 'The initiative arose as an attempt to counter the development of a counter-revolutionary process. We have

always supported Gorbachev's perestroika reforms to correct mistakes but had repeatedly voiced concern that the objectives were not being met.'

After the coup had crumbled the PCP welcomed Gorbachev's return: 'Taking into account the very serious situation in all spheres of life in the Soviet Union and the uncertainty stemming from events over the past few days, the PCP hopes that Gorbachev's reinstatement will contribute to forging the basis of a stabilisation and restructuring process which is urgently needed to pursue the objectives of perestroika.'

• **INDIA:** The CPI (Marxist), formerly a Maoist party, saluted the coup: 'This is a welcome development.' The CPI, historically aligned to Moscow, condemned the coup.

• **PALESTINE:** The Patriotic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) said that Palestinians and Arabs 'had suffered from Gorbachev's negative policies... Because of all this and other reasons we are satisfied by this change.' ★

CURRENT AFFAIRS/MEDIA WATCH

IF THE TRUTH HURTS, JUST BEND IT A BIT

"Never let the facts get in the way of a good story," is a classic dictum beloved of cheap journalism.

The *Sunday Times'* coverage of the Soviet coup demonstrates that, lamentably, it is alive and well and being practised in South Africa.

Happily ignoring the fact that the South African Communist Party's response to the coup was more consistent and critical than many in South Africa - including that of the De Klerk regime - *Sunday Times* assistant editor Brian Pottinger suggests our party criticised the legitimacy of the coup only once it was clear it was faltering.

Offering as fact a jaundiced personal commentary on events of the turbulent week of August 19 to 25, Pottinger wrote that, immediately after the coup: "The SA Communist Party reverted to tradition. It awaited a signal from Moscow, any signal."

He criticised our initial reluctance to comment on what was, clearly, an extremely confused situation in the Soviet Union.

Not a word, though, about the De Klerk administration's first and breathtakingly self-

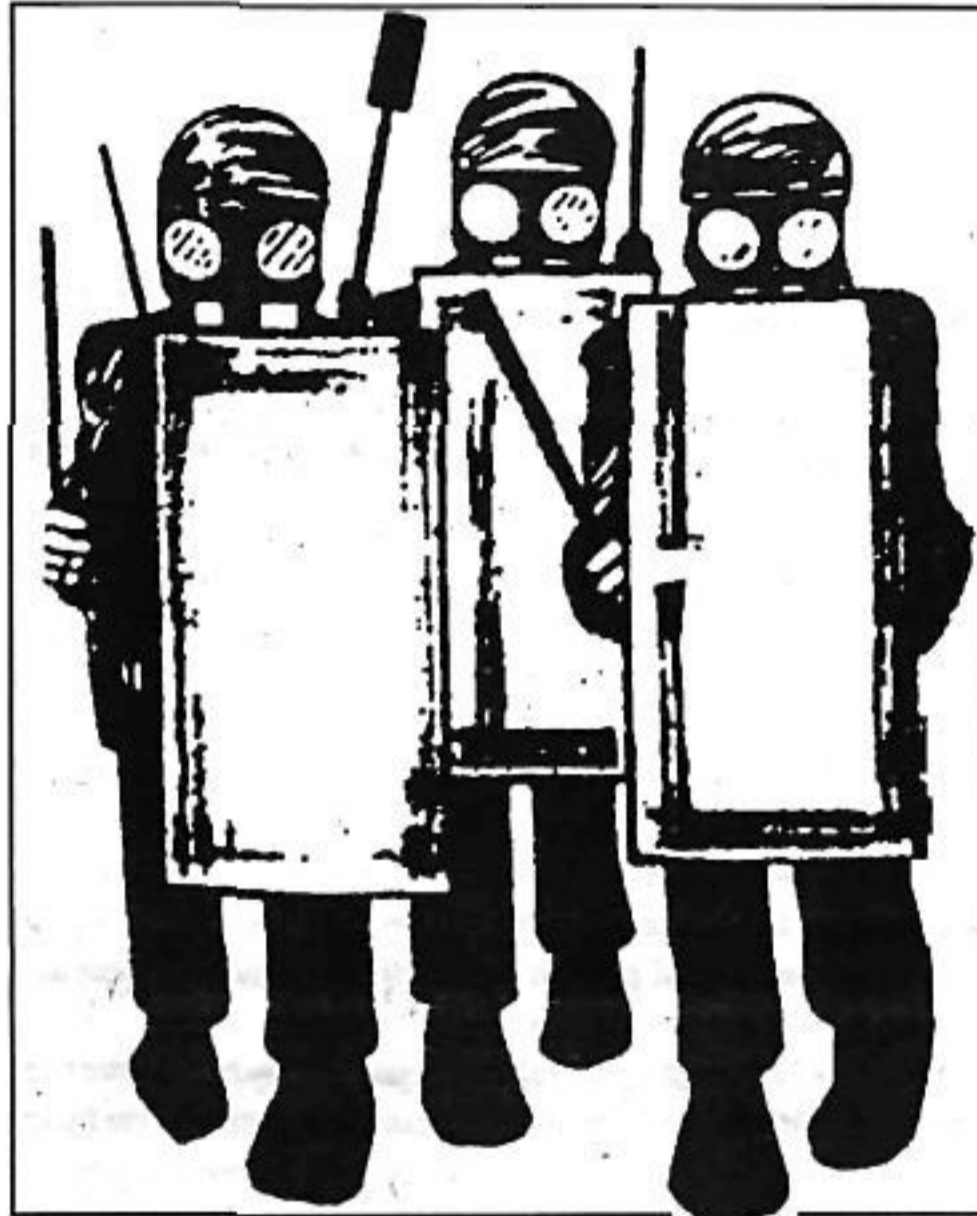
The Media: Black and White and Read All Over
STEVEN WOTWU

Viljoen is a member of a government which could teach Yanayev a great deal about repression

interested response.

South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha said soon after the coup that Pretoria was watching developments with "great concern".

But the "concern", the government's official response soon made clear, was about whether Yanayev's Emergency Committee would interfere with Pretoria's strident efforts to win diplomatic rec-



ognition from Moscow.

No mention then from Pretoria of the Soviet people or of Mikhail Gorbachev's fate. If Yanayev wanted business as usual, what did Pretoria care about Gorbachev?

Gerrit Viljoen later pompously referred to "tanks in the streets" of Moscow, arguing that the ANC should criticise them. Viljoen, it should be noted, did not criticise them

himself. He has not said why not, but is, after all, a veteran member of a government which could teach Yanayev a great deal about repression. Three people died in the three-day Soviet coup — rather less than this country's average daily slaughter.

Pottinger felt none of this worthy of comment.

Instead he wrote: "Wednesday and the coup falters. The SACP is spurred into action."

Wednesday and the coup falters!!!!

On Wednesday morning, while SACP general secretary Joe Slovo was drafting and releasing a statement criticising the coup, *Business Day* reported Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin as saying he "believed he had very little time left", and predicted that foreign journalists in the Soviet Union could soon be prevented from sending out

unhindered reports.

The *Star's* Wednesday afternoon edition, which reported Slovo's criticism, ran a front-page headline, "Demos crushed by tanks in Moscow". In six pages of reports from the major Western news agencies, *The Star* gave no hint that the coup was "faltering".

Pottinger might have known the coup was faltering; reporters in the Soviet Union didn't.

Neither did the European Community, which on that day announced its first sanctions against Yanayev's Emergency Committee - which it clearly would not have done if the coup was faltering.

Facts, for Pottinger, appear to have been less important than the opportunity to attack our party.

Even *Business Day*, published for the country's capitalist class and no friend of the SACP, acknowledged the significance of Slovo's statement: "The credibility of (the SACP's) claims to stand for political democracy has been strengthened."

• Interestingly enough Pottinger did not follow up his criticism of our supposed silence on the Emergency Committee's threat "to suspend opposition parties", when someone went beyond threats and actually suspended a political party - probably because the one who did the banning was Mikhail Gorbachev, and the party was the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

If *Sunday Times* editor Ken Owen does not require his journalists to be accurate ("Wednesday and the coup falters"), then he might at least demand that they be consistent. ★

John Bishop: A correction?

TV's budgie-mouthed John Bishop complained (although not to us) after the last edition of *Umsebenzi* over this column's description of him as an apologist for Ian Smith's illegal Rhodesian regime.

He wanted a correction, he said.

But it's difficult to understand why: by his own admission, when others quit in protest at Smith's transformation of the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation into a slavish propaganda organ for white supremacy, he stayed on for three years, apparently unconcerned at the gross disinformation going on around him.

So, although he hasn't complained to us, in the interests of accuracy we'll soon give you details of his career and let you judge just how 'objective' and 'neutral' he really is.

Watch this space.

• Has anyone else noticed the little digs Bishop keeps making at *Agenda* colleague Freck Robinson? My sources tell me it's part of a life-and-death battle for top billing on the show. It hardly seems worth the effort — does anyone really expect Bishop to survive SABC's transformation from apartheid mouthpiece to national public broadcaster? ★

Ukuvezwa kwezimali ezikhishwa nguhulumeni wobandlululo ziya eNkatheni kuyinto engasimangazi nakancane ngoba kade sasisho ukuthi iNkatha iyithuluzi elisetshenziswa ngamabhunu ekulwiseni izinhlangano ezilwela inkululeko.

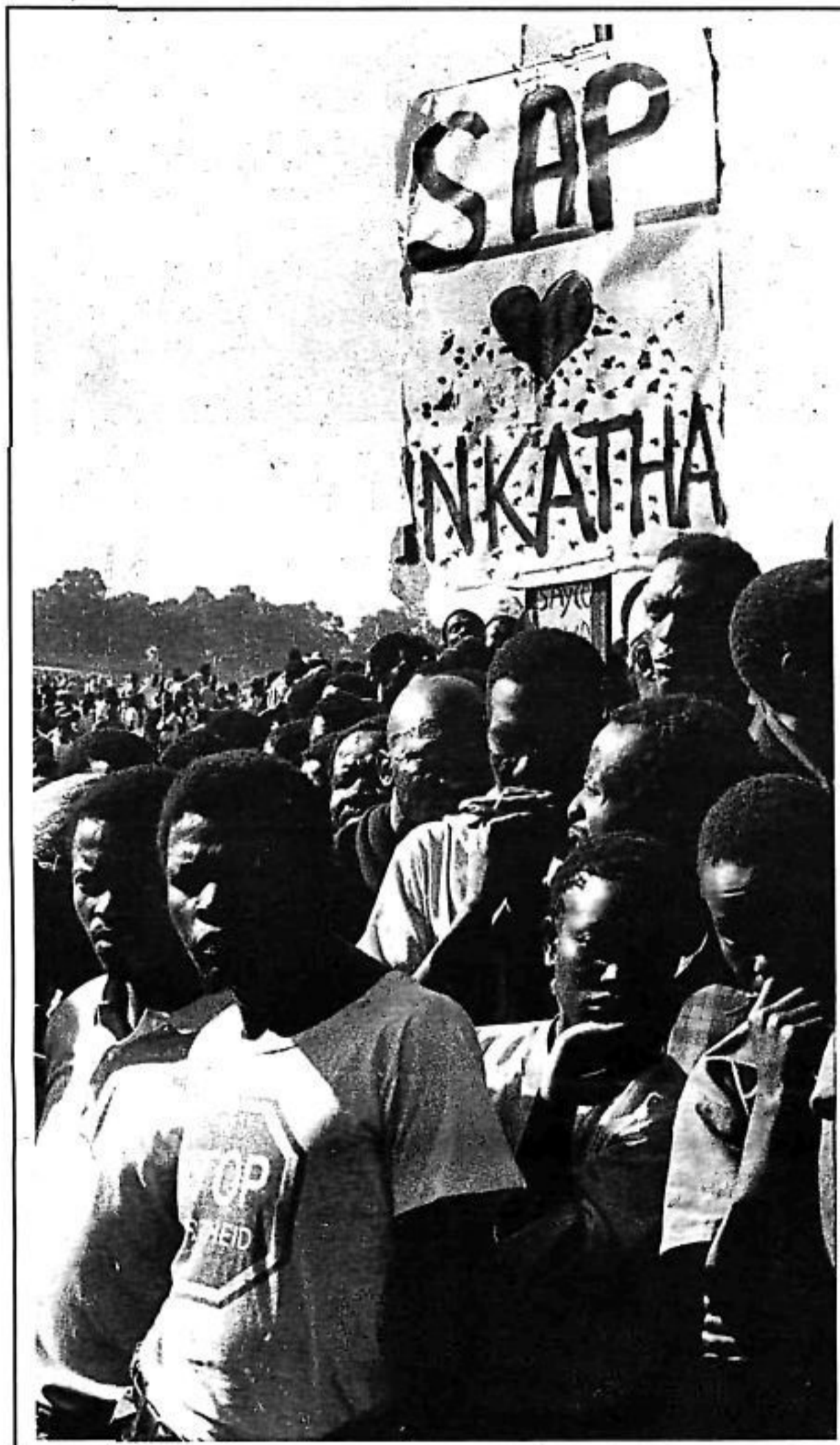
Nokhoke ukungamangali kwethu akusho ukuthi lokhu okuvezwe ngabe phepha i *Weekly Mail* akubalulekile neze. Okwenza ukuthi kubaluleke kakhulu ngokuthi kuvela ngokusobala ukuthi uhulumeni wamabhunu awuzimisele ngezinguquko ezizobuyisela amandla okubusa kubantu. Futhi lokhu kusikhombisa ngokusobala ukuthi iNkatha iyinhlangano esimamiswe ngubandlululo. Ngaphandle kukahulumeni wasePitoli ayikho into eyiNkatha.

Umlando weNkatha

Umlando nje omfushane weNkatha ubalulekile ukuze kuphenduleke umbuzo wokuthi ikwenziswa yini konke lokhu ekwenzayo.

INkatha ngenkathi iqanjwa ngonyaka ka 1975 kwaMzimela ngaseShowe, yazichaza njengenhlango eyingxenyeyezinhlangano ezilwela inkululeko. Eminyakeni emine kuya kwemihlanu iqanjiwe, abantu abaningi babekholelwa kuyo ngenxa yokuthi yayizichaza njengenhlango ehamba ezinyathelweni zikaKhongolose. Okwakugqame kakhulu lapha ngokusebenzisa kwayo imibala kaKhongolose, ngaleyonkathi owayevaliwe.

Nokhoke emva komhlangano owawuseLondon ngo 1979 phakathi kowayenguMongameli Ka ANC ngalesosokhathi u Comrade Oliver Tambo, kanye neqembu leNkatha elaliholwa nguButhelezi, iNkatha yaveza ngokusobala ukuthi seyithatha enye indlela. Kulomhlangano yazelhlukanisa nemigqomo esemgoka eyayilandelwa yimibutho yenkululeko, ikakhulukazi umzabalazo wezikhali, ukunswinya kwezakhiwo zobandlululo. Enye into yesibili eyaveza ngokusobala ukuthi iNkatha ayikho emgudwini wokulwela inkululeko yabantu, kungenkathi iqoqa isigejane samadoda ukuba abhaxabule izingane zesikolo ezazidube ukufunda kwa-Mashu ngo 1980.



Lezizigameko ezimbili ezingenhla zaqala ukuveza ngokusobala indlela eyayisithathwa yiNkatha, futhi nokuyizona zinto nanamuhla lokhu eziyizimpawu eziqinile zokuthi iNkatha inguhloboluni lwenhlangano.

Okokuqala nje iNkatha yabe isisebenzisa izakhiwo zobandlululo ukudlondlobalisa amandla ayo kwezombangazwe. Yonke imizabalazo elwisa ubandlululo, yabe seyifana nokuthi iphuca iNkatha iqatha emlonyeni. Yayisivikela ubandlululo ngisho nangaphezu kwamabhunu imbala. Ukudlondlobala kwemizabalazo yabantu kwase kubukwa yiNkatha

njengento eyingozi kakhulu ku-Buthelezi owayesekholelwa ngokuthi unguyena mholi ozokhulumela abantu abacindezelwe kuleli.

Okwesibili ngokuthi ukudlondlobala kwemizabalazo yabantu, ikakhulukazi emva kokumiselelwa kwe UDF ngo 1983, ngisho naseNatali imbala, kwenza ukuba iNkatha iqale ukusebenzisa kakhulu ukuthi yiyona nhlangano emele wonke amaZulu e South Africa. Ukudlondlobala komzabalazo ngisho naseNatali kwakuyingozi enkulu ngoba yayithatha ngokuthi eNatali ingungqoshishilizi. Abaholi beNkatha, ikakhulukazi

uButhelezi, babethemba ukuthi wonke amaZulu azoba ngaphansi kweNkatha, ngoba amaZulu kuyilona luhlanga oluningi ngaphezu kwazozonke ezinye kulelizwe.

Ukusondelana kweNkatha namabhunu
Ukwehluleka kweNkatha ukuba iqoqe bonke abantu abangamaZulu ngaphansi kwayo, kanye nokuhluleka kwayo ukuba ithole abalandeli ngaphandle kwaseNatali, kwaba nemiphumela emibili ebalulekile.

Okokuqala nje kwaba ngokuthi iNkatha isondele kakhulu kuhulumeni wamabhunu, ukuze isizakale ngokusebenzisa izakhiwo zobandlululo ukushabalalisa amandla ezinhlangano ezilwela inkululeko. Lokhu kubonakale kakhulu ngeminyaka engemuva kuka 1983 lapho iNkatha ibicela khona uhulumeni wamabhunu ukuba asabalalise amandla kahulumeni wakwaZulu ezindaweni eziningi lapha eNatali. Into yesibili eyenzeka emva kokuba iNkatha ibona ukuthi iyahluleka ukuzidlondlobalisa ngokuba iqalise ukuhlasele imiphakathi yaseNatali isendlalelo sayo okwaba ngokubulawa kwabafundi oNgoyengonyaka ka 1983.

Uhulumeni wamabhunu nawo ube ususondela kakhulu eNkatheni ngoba ubona ukuthi nansi inhlangano enomholi amabhunu ayecabanga ukuthi unabalandeli abaningi, kodwa ebe ekhuluma ulimi olungahlukile kulolo lwamabhunu. Lokhu kudalwa ngokuthi iNkatha iyinhlangano emele ukuba lelizwe liqhubekwe njengesizinda songxiwankulu nokuxhashazwa kwabasebenzi. Kungakho uButhelezi esephe-nduke waba yisithandwa esikhulu so George Bush, Margaret Thatcher no John Major.

Usekhonzwe ngongxiwankulu ngendlela efanayo ne Unita noMobutu Sese Seko wase Zaire, kanye ne Renamo. Lokhu kubambisana kweNkatha namabhunu kanye nongxiwankulu sekuyidlondlobalise kakhulu impi yokuhlaselelwa kwabantu bakithi kanye nezinhlangano zabo.

Impi ebhekiswe kubantu

Kuthe uma ngabe uhulumeni ephoqeka ukuba avule izinhlangano zabantu ngo

• Continued on page 10

Inkatha: Ithuluzi lePitoli

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Questions about the National Peace Accord

The SACP has played an important and active role in the preparation of the Draft National Peace Accord. The Accord is due to be signed by the leaders of most major political organisations at the Peace Convention in Johannesburg on September 14.

The Accord includes:

- a code of conduct for political organisations
- a code of conduct for security forces
- an agreement on a series of enforcement mechanisms to curb political violence and uphold the peace accord. These mechanisms include a multi-party National Peace Committee, multi-party regional and local dispute resolution committees, a full-time national peace secretariat with multi-party involvement, ombudsmen to monitor the police, a standing commission of in-

De Klerk was forced to come to the peace conference as just another player

quiry and special criminal courts.

But what is the background to the Draft Accord?

The political violence which flared up in the last quarter of 1990 and the first quarter of this year benefitted Inkatha and the regime, at least for a while. The IFP pushed itself on to the national political stage. The regime, thanks to the SATV



and commercial media, projected itself as a neutral force standing above "tribal" violence between the IFP and the ANC. But the scale of the violence and the regime's obvious complicity became too difficult for even some of its closest allies to swallow.

And so in April this year De Klerk tried to convene his Pretoria Peace Conference. He wanted to remain the referee.

The conference failed, and De Klerk was forced to come to the subsequent church and business sponsored Peace Conference as just another player.

This is one of the great achievements of this Peace Accord. The government has, for the first time, been forced to concede that it cannot retain a monopoly over the supervision of the enforcement of peace.

Does the Peace Accord mean that we are abandoning our demand for an Interim Government?

Absolutely no! The accord is aimed at eliminating political violence. Our demand for an interim government relates to the negotiations process for a new democratic constitution. How can the present regime be both a player and referee in the negotiations and in any eventual democratic elections?

However, the Peace Accord, and especially the enforcement mechanisms agreed upon, could greatly assist a future interim government. The security forces should now be subject to much greater public scrutiny. In principle, this will help an interim government carry out its transitional tasks.

But we have entered into accords with Inkatha and the government in the past, and little if anything has improved. Why should we be optimistic this time?

The question is valid. An accord is, after all, only a piece of paper. We, for our part, will observe its terms scrupulously. We have everything to gain from a normalisation of the political climate. But there are other formations which may

well be tempted to continue using political violence.

There is no water-tight guarantee that this will not happen. But there are some important differences between this accord and earlier ones.

In the first place, this is a multi-lateral accord, that is an agreement between a whole range of different political parties and interest groups. In the past, our accords have been bi-lateral, between two parties, between our side and the government, or our side and IFP. In bi-lateral agreements it is much easier for one side to break the accord but accuse the other side of being the offenders. This time all the formations are locked into the process by a whole range of forces. There are plenty of witnesses. If one party storms out or disregards agreements, it will not just be our word against theirs.

In the second place, the agreement, although it makes difficult reading because of its language and detail, is generally carefully compiled to avoid legal loopholes and vagueness.

Great attention has also been given to enforcement mechanisms. And here, for the first time, bodies in which there will be a multi-party presence are being given real investigative powers, real teeth.

Of course, at the end of the day, the accord will only be successful in practice if we work hard to ensure its fullest implementation. This means making skilled comrades available for the various enforcement bodies and giving them maximum organisational support. Above all, success depends upon general vigilance from everyone. ★

Inkatha: Ithuluzi lePitoli

• Continued from page 9

February 1990, wabe usuhlele kahle ukuthi iNkatha le izoba yithuluzi lawo lokuhlakaza imibutho yenkululeko.

Phela amabhunu ayesebenzisa iNkatha ngoba kuyiyona ndlela elula yokucasha ekutheni yiwo abhebesela lempi.

Kungakhoke amabhunu neNkatha kwathi amanje zivulwa izinhlangano ebezivaliwe impi bayisabalalisela eGoli. Lokhu kwakuyindlela yokuthena amandla u ANC ne SACP neCOSATU. Inkatha ngakolwayo uhlangothi izuze kakhulu kuloludlame ngoba luyenze yabukeka njengenhlangano enamandla kakhulu ezweni lonke.

Ngakhoke okusemqoka ngokuvezwa kwezimali ezinikwa iNkatha ngukuthi uhulumeni akasakwazi nokuqhubeka athi loludlame kubulalana omnyama nomnyama, ngoba sekuvele obala ukuthi akuyona iNkatha

elwa nombimbi oluholwa ngu ANC, futhi akuyona impi phakathi kwamaZulu namaXhosa, kepha ngamabhunu uqobo lwawo ahlasele izinhlangano ezilwela inkululeko. Inkatha iyithuluzi nje kuphela kulamaqhinga obandlululo.

Lokhu okungenhla kucacisa ngokusobala manje ukuthi kungani iNkatha yamukela izimali ngasese kuhulumeni wamabhunu. Futhi kucacisa ngokusobala ukuthi kungani iNkatha ichitha zonke izinto ezishiwo nezenziwa ngu ANC. Ikakhulukazi iNkatha ayiwufuni uhulumeni wesikhashana (Interim Government) ngoba lokho kusho ukuthi ayizukuba nalo ithuba lokuqhubeka nokusebenzisa izakhiwo zobandlululo ekufezeni izinhloso zayo. Njengoba sesike sasho ukuthi iNkatha ayikho ngaphandle kodlame, isabelo saKwa-Zulu, kanye nazozonke izakhiwo zobandlululo, ngisho nemali yamabhunu imbala. ★

THE PEACE ACCORD ALLOWS FOR SELF-PROTECTION. LET'S START ORGANISING...

1. Introduction

Almost every able-bodied person, young and old, can play a role in the protection of our homes, townships and villages.

Our series has dealt with such different tasks as speedy communication, observation of the opposing hostile force and the collection of information. We turn now to the role of first aid workers and consider, also, the many tasks that can be carried out by auxiliary forces in support of defence units.

It is also important to influence those who carry out hostile and aggressive acts against the people. Such individuals are often simply ignorant and confused or frightened of the people. They can be neutralised and even won over to our side. This activity is called 'work with hostile forces'.

2. First Aid

Medical and first aid units must be set up. These should be headed by a doctor.

Efforts should be made to encourage doctors and nurses to join on a strictly voluntary basis. If there are not enough medical personnel in the township then efforts must be made to get assistance from comrades in nearby towns.

The Township Defence Committee (TDC) should investigate whether first aid organisations such as St John's Ambulance and the Red Cross run local classes. If they do, members of the auxiliary forces should attend.

First aid stations must be established in the township. Public places such as clinics, schools and township halls can be used. Medical equipment and supplies must be collected and stored as well as supplies of fresh water.

Classes in first aid should be conducted so that as many people as possible learn the rudiments of dealing with casualties. Auxiliary forces have an important role to play in this area of work.

Stretcher bearers must be organised to evacuate the

Learning to defend yourself

BUILDING SELF-DEFENCE UNITS

Umsebenzi Series — Number 5

• First Aid • Auxiliaries • Work with hostile forces



The right to self-defence

The draft of the National Peace Accord has recognised the right of individuals to defend themselves and their property. This is an important breakthrough.

If the Accord is accepted, the law will formally recognise self-protection units that are community-based. We have been urging our people to set up these units. Violence against law-abiding people continues. We must make use of this historic provision in the National Peace Accord to make our residential areas safe.

wounded to places of safety.

Vehicles must be on hand during periods of danger to rush the seriously injured to hospital. Methods and antidotes for dealing with problems such as teargas, bleeding and shock must be popularised.

3. Auxiliaries

These are the ordinary township residents, young and old, who are mobilised to give voluntary support to the defence units. They should be organised at the street level mainly in support of sections and platoons.

But the various other structures of the defence formation will use auxiliary support as well. There have been numerous references to tasks that

auxiliaries can perform. These include:

- Building fortifications
- Manufacturing home-made weapons
- Acting as observers, look-outs, runners and messengers
- Helping with first aid, stretcher bearing etc.
- Collecting information and performing neighbourhood-watch duties
- Fire-fighting
- As reinforcement and support in street fighting
- As decoy groups against hostile forces
- Collecting and storing water.

Ways will have to be found as how to best structure the auxiliaries.

They must be properly organised into units of their own

which fall under the command and control of a particular section of the defence force. Discipline must prevail and auxiliaries must be given the necessary training.

Everyone in the township has some role to play and the mobilisation of auxiliaries is the way to turn the township into a powerful base for people's self-defence. In fact this is the way to turn the self-defence structures into a real people's militia.

4. Work with hostile forces

The possibility of influencing hostile elements should never be discounted. No effort must be spared in educating, influencing and winning over misguided individuals to the people's side. Very often members of vigilante groups have been forced against their will to participate in attacks against the people. Others have taken up arms out of ignorance and fear and because they have been manipulated by unscrupulous leaders.

Sometimes they have joined in the attacks because they genuinely fear that township people wish to kill them.

An organised and continuous effort must be made to speak to such individuals. They must be shown that they are not despised and that we wish to help them. They are often the most exploited members of society and live in dreadful conditions in the hostels.

Cut off from township life, from their families in distant rural areas, they live a lonely and often miserable existence.

Like all other oppressed sectors, they are victims of the apartheid system. Winning them over is possible and far better than fighting it out with them in the streets. By neutralising them we will be taking one of the most potent weapons from the enemy's arsenal.

In the same way we must concentrate on winning over to our side soldiers and members of the police force.

By patient effort and education they too can be influenced.

Many of them live amongst the people and are sympathetic to the suffering, particularly when they see how this stems from the behaviour of the white security forces.

Most black policemen and soldiers see their jobs as simply a way of earning a living. They suffer from racial discrimination and abuse.

They must be shown that they need not fear the people if they do not abuse their positions.

During the violent onslaught unleashed on the Reef townships in September, 1990, many black policemen came to identify with the people. This was because they saw how blatantly the white police sided with the aggressors and because their own families were victims of the attacks.

It is possible to democratise the township police. This is a vital aspect of turning our residential areas into secure and safe zones.

We have the power to win over black soldiers and police and turn them into friends of the people. Neither must we spare any effort in influencing white soldiers and police. We have seen important changes taking place in white society over recent years that makes this possible. As more and more whites are won over to the cause of democracy, equality and justice so the racist elements become weaker, isolated and exposed.

Powerful forces are growing in our country to force the police to alter their ways. Those soldiers and police who persist with their racist brutality, however, will find that when they strike the people they strike a rock!

It will be the responsibility of the political and civic organisations to carry out the educational tasks of neutralising and winning over hostile forces. The defence units, however, must demonstrate tact and a desire for peace and also be involved in settling disputes and patiently winning over our potential adversaries. ★

READERS' LETTERS

The alliance is on the march

Dear Editor

The recent consumer boycott which was initiated by the tripartite alliance was correctly timed, although other people today argue that it was inopportune.

Our understanding of such calls are of course prompted by the conditions that the present situation dictates to us. We need to take the lessons of this boycott to alliance meetings, where we might be able to formulate stronger actions against the regime.

This consumer boycott was called at a time when the progressive movement had established beyond doubt that the Inkatha Freedom Party was in

actual fact funded by big businesses to carry its systematic attacks against innocent people in the trains and their communities.

People are raising issues that before the unbannings of our liberation movement we were hiding behind repression and did not call them into meetings where boycott decisions were taken. They insinuate that we simply printed pamphlets and imposed our plans upon the masses. I want to challenge this as completely unfounded.

My experience (as someone who stays in town) has been that, whenever you call people into a meeting they will come (but not all of the community)

to participate in the issues that affect them directly. Later you then read their well-written English in newspapers that they were not consulted.

Coming to the issue of defence units, people argue that ANC is not helping them by means of giving weapons for their self defence. I want to remind them that prior to the unbanning our people managed to disarm the enemy, and effectively defended themselves with those weapons. Let us take the Duduza situation where the state decided to call in the army to reinforce the police whose arms were taken from them by the people for their own self defence.

Today we even have a situation where certain elements of the security forces have joined our ranks. Why can't we turn to them for help? These comrades have guns with them. Lets work with them in our defence units. We know that MK has the capacity to defend, but the situation does not allow our trained and tested soldiers at this time to act.

Miscalculated

Our movement together with the party, have miscalculated on the question of peaceful transition. The lesson to be learned from Eastern Europe is that the army together with the police force has been seriously

schooled to respect human life. Such that when the masses are protesting over something they should not use brute force. Hence the mass protests there have swayed the capitalists in their thinking that can also secure our liberation without armed action.

But our experience in South Africa is different in regard to the army and police force. The SA army has been taught to take workers life cheaply because they know that the workers are the ones who are finally charged with the responsibility of governing.

Yours in the struggle —
Johannes Nkosi (Johannesburg Central)

Don't ignore the masses

Dear Editor

The failure of the recent consumer boycott initiated by the tripartite alliance reflected very badly on our formations' understanding of basic organisational principles of the conduct of mass campaigns.

It also taught us not to be enslaved to tradition - rather, to be receptive to the changes that are constantly taking place within the country, and consequently operate on the basis of the dictates of the material conditions.

Like it used to happen prior to the unbanning of the ANC, activists would normally meet somewhere and decide to print pamphlets calling for a consumer boycott or stay-away. They would be distributed, and the residents would be expected to comply. The excuse for this undemocratic behaviour would always be repression - but with the advent of the formation of the street committees, direct physical consultations with the residents yielded the expected results. The rent boycott was effective - and eventually won.

The tripartite alliance, like the pre-unbanning formations, discussed the consumer boycott at various levels — including the PWV region where the ANC is mostly weak — and agreed (irrespective of this weakness), to go ahead with it.

When the consumer boycott was called, the alliance was in a shambles organisationally. Many ANC and civics were either moribund or completely non-functional - while on the other hand, the SACP was struggling to form structures everywhere (although this does not exonerate the party either). Also, some of the demands behind the boycott were contrary to what the people on the ground were expecting. The issue at hand was Inkatha-SAP violence against ordinary township residents - in my opinion, this matter had very little or nothing at all to do with white business in town. Over and above, the white business leaders were behind efforts to bring about peace.

What the residents were actually calling for was to be defended - and, to demonstrate

No amount of diplomacy will stop the forces of counter-revolution from shooting residents

their preparedness to fight back, they formed defence units. In tandem with physical training were efforts to acquire the necessary material to repel the counter-revolutionary violence. In the process those who were involved in physical training reached the highest state of physical fitness without any ammunition in sight - whilst the systematic violence was growing in leaps and bounds and proving too difficult to contain in any respect.

The end result of this situation was a serious drop of morale on the part of the willing residents. Defence units in most parts of the township, particularly in Soweto, disappeared. Residents showed marked reluctance in attending meetings of the ANC and the civic. On the one hand it was a vivid show of no confidence in

these organisations. To a lesser extent, it was fear of being attacked whilst in a meeting.

We grew so sick and tired of condemnations of the regime and Inkatha by the liberation forces - inclusive of the ANC/SACP alliance. However effective it was going to be, the call for a consumer boycott was ill-timed, badly organised logistically, and consequently misdirected. It actually circumvented the real issues. By suspending the armed struggle we also suspended our right to self defence, and I can assure you, Cde Editor, no amount of diplomacy will stop the forces of reaction and counter-revolution from shooting and maiming residents.

It came to our notice that the leadership of the ANC/SACP alliance knew on time about impending attacks against commuters and residents by De Klerk's hit-squads - but all that happened was that De Klerk was phoned and informed of the imminent attack, and he did nothing. Why were units of MK not deployed to the scene to pre-empt the at-

tacks?

The weakness of the ANC was caused largely by negotiations. I am a full supporter of a negotiated settlement but I would like our forces to remember that you cannot win at the negotiation table that which you couldn't win at the battlefield.

Small booklets and pamphlets that cover the process of negotiations are good but often do not answer the many questions that ring in the readers' minds. Furthermore, ordinary people think negotiations mean the end of the struggle when this is not so in practice. Which struggle are you extending by negotiations when most of the important pillars of this struggle have not been strengthened - eg armed struggle, underground, etc?

You cannot expect the masses to go out into the streets and protest when you have not been in regular contact with them - but come only when it becomes impossible to score certain points on the table.

Yours in struggle — Tsepo Sibanyoni (Jabavu)

WRITE TO UMSEBENZI LETTERS PAGE, PO BOX 1027, JOHANNESBURG 2000

UMSEBENZI

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO UMSEBENZI ★ SEPTEMBER 1991

The SACP Draft Manifesto

For discussion, debate and revision,
with a view to adoption at the 8th Party
Congress in Soweto, December 1991



Graphic: COMMUNITY ARTS PROGRAMME

Preamble to the Draft Manifesto

South Africa stands on the threshold of major democratic change. Years of struggle and sacrifice in the face of the most vicious repression have brought our country to this point. It is, above all, the working people of our country who have been in the forefront of struggle.

The South African working class today accords to our Party a most honoured place within the wider ranks of our ANC-led national liberation movement. Here in South Africa the Communist Party has greater support and a larger organised membership than at any time in its 70 year history. Our Party notes this with pride and, above all, with a sense of the duty that it implies.

Our country stands on the threshold of change, but the threshold has still not been crossed.

The working masses of our country have very basic aspirations. They want jobs and food, they want reasonable family housing, they want land, they want the chance to learn and free health care.

Above all, they want the enormous wealth that their labour has produced over the decades to become finally the common property of all South Africans, not something locked away in the rich suburbs, not something squandered by a privileged minority.

But, say the voices of gloom, you are sailing against the tide of the whole present world situation.

To these voices we say: the SACP is both realistic and optimistic. We are realistic

• Continued on page 2

Building workers' power for democratic change

SECTION 1/THE PRESENT WORLD SITUATION

The Present World Situation

The balance of world power has changed very rapidly in the last three years. A balance of forces built around two major power blocs, centred on the United States and the Soviet Union, emerged after the Second World War. This two-bloc world system has now more or less collapsed. The imperialist world, led by the United States, has emerged more powerful and confident.

Generally, these developments are not favourable for progressive forces within our own country and, indeed, internationally.

The main reason for the significant and rapid shift in the world balance of power, of course, is:

The collapse of socialism in eastern Europe and the profound problems besetting the Soviet Union

Any attempt to analyse this crisis needs to base itself, in the first place, on the enormous objective difficulties confronting the socialist project in these countries. Tsarist Russia was the most backward European power at the turn of the century. Socialism in the Soviet Union had to be built in an exceptionally harsh and hostile environment. The new workers' state was compelled to chart a course in



the context of a low productive base, mass illiteracy, imperialist invasion, counter-revolution and famine.

From 1948 the emerging socialist countries in eastern Europe, themselves exceptionally backward societies that had been ravaged by the Second World War, were confronted by an aggressive imperialism. The imperialist powers unleashed the cold war, and spent billions of dollars on destabilisation in an effort to "roll back" socialism.

But the awesome difficulties

cannot in any way justify the criminal violations of social justice, and the stifling bureaucratic, administrative command systems that evolved. Many of the most basic freedoms, such as the freedom of association, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of movement were absent or severely curtailed. The crisis in eastern Europe underlines one important truth: it is not possible to sustain and develop socialism in an authoritarian environment.

In many of these societies the relationship and differences between the ruling party and the state; the party, state and elected representatives of the people; the party, state and trade unions and other social organisations were blurred and collapsed. Civil society was absorbed into the ambit of party and state politics.

But a thriving democratic socialism requires a vibrant civil society. It is only the working masses, organised and mobilised in a wide variety of independent organisations, who can build and sustain a democratic socialist system.

Nevertheless, despite serious weaknesses, positive results were achieved in the socialist countries. In many respects they pioneered the 8-hour working day, free and comprehensive education for all, an affordable public health system, women's equality, full employment and subsidised holidays for workers and their families. It was the Soviet

working people who bore the brunt of the Nazi war, and who, at tremendous cost, turned the tide of that war, saving the whole of humanity from possible domination by fascism.

But the stagnant and increasingly crisis-ridden administrative command economies more and more undermined the major social advances which these countries had begun to pioneer. The economies quite simply failed to deliver.

Whatever the weaknesses of socialism in eastern Europe, the new capitalist dispensation that is rapidly emerging in many of these countries is bringing little joy to the working majority. Millions of east European workers are now unemployed and they face a bleak future. Women are often the worst hit, and with mass retrenchments and the closing down of publicly funded childcare facilities and canteens they are being driven back into the kitchen. The struggle in eastern Europe is far from over. The harsh realities of capitalism will take their toll. Socialism has collapsed in eastern Europe, but socialist forces will reassert themselves.

The advanced capitalist countries

The existence of a powerful world socialist system generally strengthened the struggle for national liberation, peace, democracy and social progress throughout the world. In many ways the world socialist system acted as a buffer against imperialist aggression. With the disintegration of this world socialist system, the imperialist powers, with US imperialism in the forefront, are acting in an ever more brazen and arrogant manner.

At the same time, there are also important shifts occurring within and between the major imperialist powers. There are now three major centres of capitalist accumulation - North America, centred on the US; western Europe, with Germany acting as its economic power-house; and the Pacific Rim, centred on Japan.

In the last decade the relative economic power of these centres has shifted to the disadvantage of the US and in favour of the other two major imperialist centres. The US still

Preamble (continued)

• From page 1

because we recognise the real limits and the real possibilities in the present situation. The SACP is not in favour of untimely leaps into utopias that cannot be sustained or defended. We are not in favour of heroic but unrealistic dispensations that serve, in the long run, only to disorganise and demobilise the working people.

But, at the same time, we believe in advancing with the maximum possible speed, with the maximum of determination and skill towards our ultimate goals.

In the struggle for democratic change we stand for what is possible. That is, we stand for what, at any given moment, is the MAXIMUM possible, and NEVER LESS.

Already significant changes are underway in South Africa. These are

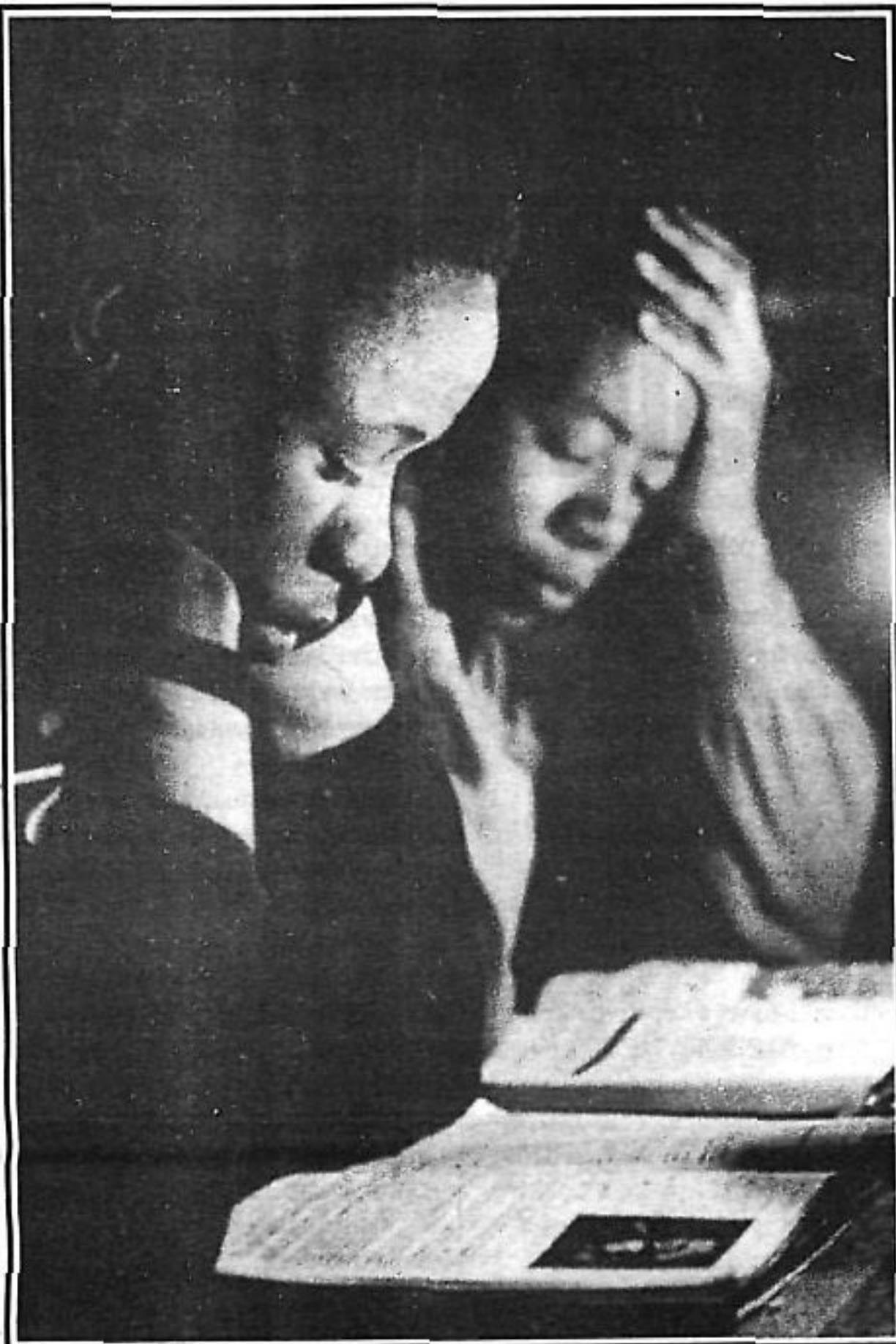
first important victories for our people. As far as the ruling class in our country is concerned, the present process of change, which they hope to direct and control, must be designed to better stabilise their capitalist system. They hope it will preserve as much of existing privilege and power as possible.

So will this happen? Will the impending process of change in South Africa fail the working class?

Not if the working class, the overwhelming majority of our population, itself propels this process!

This is the guiding principle of the SACP as it looks at the days, months and years ahead.

**Let us build working-class power for democratic change!
Forward to democratic socialism!**



It is in the global backyard of imperialism, in the third world, that the failures of capitalism are most obvious

various political and social dispensations. Some openly declare their commitment to capitalism. Others camouflage their capitalism under various names. Still others are genuinely attempting to pursue a path of socialist orientation. But whatever their political orientation, all are the victims of an imperialist world division of power and wealth. Virtually all are under the domination of the transnationals, the International Monetary Fund, and the constant threat of US military and political destabilisation. In the new world order this imperialist domination is increasing.

The gap between the imperialist centres and the third world has not only persisted over the last decade, but for most third world countries it has worsened.

The major reason for the plight of third world countries is the crippling drain of wealth out of these countries to the transnational corporations and banks of the rich capitalist countries. The advanced capitalist countries have manipulated world markets to ensure that the world price of most commodities exported by third world countries has steadily declined. At the same time the prices of commodities which the third world is forced to purchase from the advanced capitalist countries have shot up.

The foreign debt of third world countries has grown dramatically over the last decade. In fact, it has now reached such proportions that it is unpayable. The effect of all of these factors is that the third world, which urgently needs capital, has been a net exporter of capital for the past decade. It is estimated that between \$70 and \$100 billion a year is being sucked out of these poverty ridden countries by the rich imperialist powers. In Africa between 1980 and 1986 \$40 billion was paid to the industrialised world.

Bare statistics can hardly begin to reflect the real devastation that this imperialist world system is wreaking. *Economies are being destroyed.* In the 1980s in Africa, the average income per person fell by one quarter. At present 30 million people on

our continent face starvation. Some 80 million children under the age of five die each year in third world countries of diseases that are not normally fatal in rich countries.

Imperialism's answer to this crisis is to tighten its stranglehold. As a condition for any capital from the imperialist countries, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank impose what they call "structural adjustment programmes". These involve the devaluation of local currencies, the removing of price controls on basic goods, and cuts in government spending. These measures have failed to revive economic growth and they have tended to undo what little development there was in most third world countries.

There are, of course, many differences in levels of development and wealth among third world countries. In some there is virtually no modern industrial infrastructure. In other countries, sometimes called "semi-peripheral" societies, there is a relatively advanced and relatively extensive capitalist infrastructure (including a significant industrial proletariat) combined with many features of typical third world underdevelopment. Societies with these contradictory features include Brazil, South Korea and South Africa.

It is no accident that these countries, occupying a particular and contradictory position within the imperialist world division of labour, have been the sites of some of the most intense mass- and working-class struggles in the 1980s. In some respects, these societies constitute a weak link in the world imperialist chain.

New world challenges — socialism is more relevant than ever

There is no doubt that the changed international balance of power makes this a harsher and more difficult world for the majority of its inhabitants. But there are also some positive features that must be noted.

During the cold war the imperialists and reactionary third world

• Continued on page 4

remains the most powerful capitalist economy. But Japan and Germany, unfettered by the enormous burden of military spending that the US has taken upon itself, have begun to make significant inroads into the previous US economic domination.

The dominant role of US transnational corporations, for instance, has gradually eroded. In 1974 US transnationals still held about one-half of all direct foreign investments, by value. By 1982 their share was cut to about 40 percent, and by 1989 to about 30 percent. However, the US remains unquestionably the leading imperialist military and political power.

Capitalism in the advanced imperialist countries has proved to be more resilient, more capable of weathering the enormous structural crises into which it has periodically plunged in the twentieth century, than most Marxists originally imagined. Nevertheless, neither its resilience, nor the present crisis of socialism, should blind us to the massive failures of

capitalism.

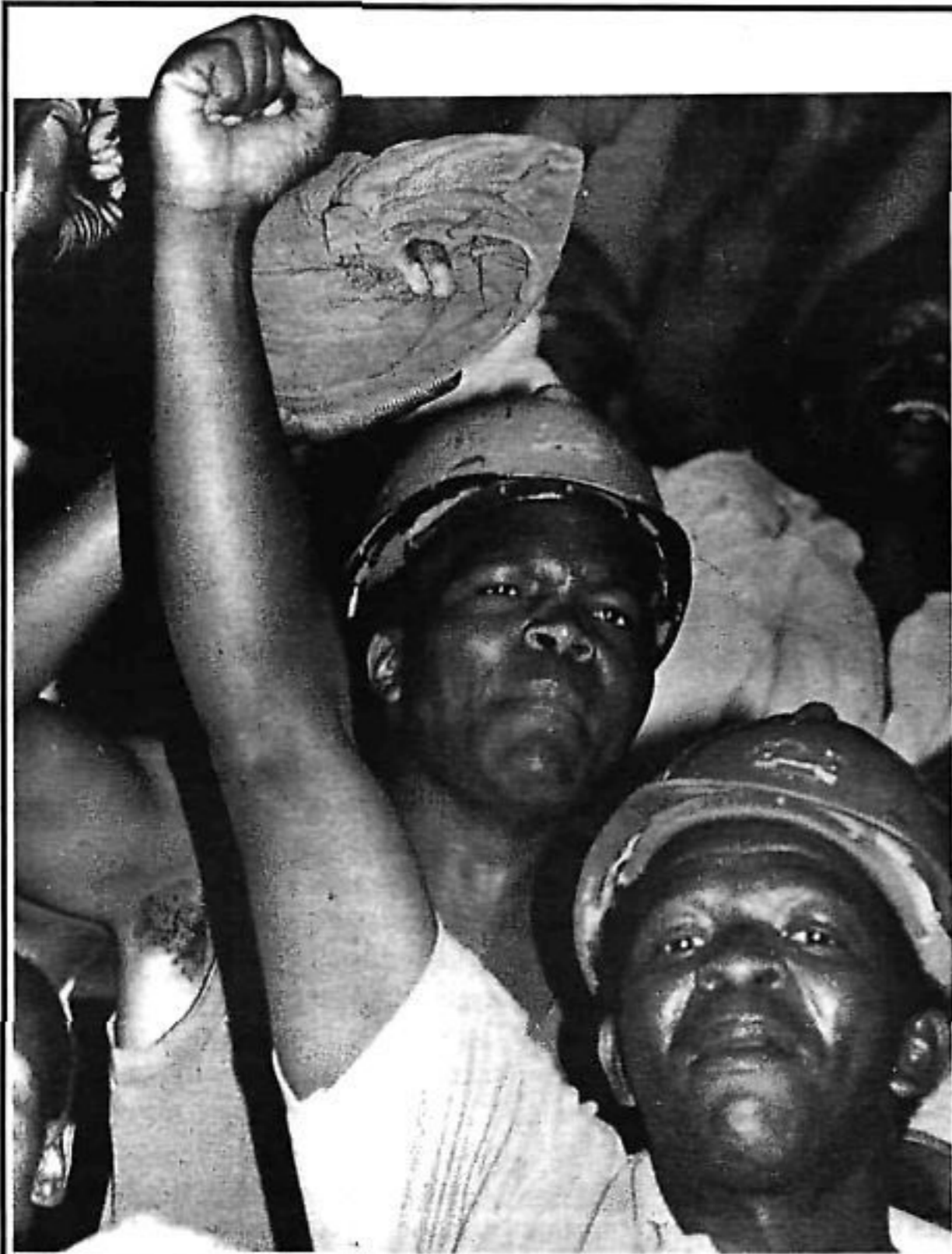
In the advanced capitalist countries 40 million people are unemployed, 100 million live in poverty. In the leading imperialist country, the United States, 3 million people live on the streets, and over 35 million people out of a population of nearly 250 million live in poverty. Wages and social conditions for the US working class have been deteriorating for a period twenty years. Dire poverty strikes unevenly, with black Americans particularly disadvantaged. One quarter of all black US males between the ages of 19 and 30 are now either in jail or are being processed by the criminal justice system.

But it is in the global backyard of imperialism, in the third world, that the failures of capitalism are most obvious.

■ The third world

The countries of the third world, in which the great majority of the world's population lives, have

SECTION 2/SOUTH AFRICA: NEW POLITICAL REALITIES



The only guarantee ... lies in continued pressure on the regime

The Present World Situation (continued)

• From page 3

forces used the anti-communist, anti-Soviet bogey as a justification for their war mongering and anti-democratic actions. As a result of both the consistent peace policies of the Soviet Union and of the crisis in the socialist world, there are diminishing returns for those who trade on cold war rhetoric. This means that the most reactionary, militaristic sections of monopoly capital and reactionary regimes world-wide can be more effectively isolated. The threat of a nuclear holocaust has receded and prospects of a reduction in the arms race are very real. Due to improved relations between the USA and the Soviet Union negotiated settlements of regional and internal conflicts have also become a significant reality.

But there are also new threats to the survival of human civilisation.

The most serious of these is the destruction of our environment. Voracious and uncontrolled capitalist as well as short-sighted bureaucratic socialist exploitation of our natural resources has inflicted major damage to the world's ecological system. Urgent measures, and world-wide international co-operation is imperative.

There are other major international problems - hunger, disease, including the dramatic and deadly spread of the

AIDS virus. These, too, require effective world-wide co-operation and well-funded collective action.

Today our class enemies are crowing over the crisis in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Imperialists, free marketeers, the 'izimbongi' of private profit and class exploitation, are all proclaiming socialism "a thing of the past". *But it is these bosses and their lackeys who belong to the past.* It is they who have no real answers to the real challenges of the 1990s.

Can they please explain to us how the free market, how private capitalists each pursuing their own selfish interests will solve the AIDS crisis, or the threat to our environment? If capitalism is the answer, then why is the most powerful and the most wealthy capitalist country on earth, the United States, so incapable of providing the most basic human needs to all its people? And what answer does imperialism have to the widening gap that it itself is causing between the advanced first world countries and the impoverished third world?

Capitalism has failed humanity. The reins of economic and political power must be placed under the democratic ownership and control of the working people of the world. Until such time, our world will continue to be a world of plenty in the midst of mass hunger, disease and poverty. ☆

South Africa: New Political Realities

The new political situation in our country is the result of major developments and a changed balance of forces internationally, within the southern African region, and inside South Africa itself. These changes are complex and contradictory in character. They contain, in different measure, positive and negative features.

Internationally the deep crisis, in fact, the virtual end of the world socialist system has had, and will continue to have, a negative impact on our own struggle. The imperialist bloc is, as we have noted, now more powerful, confident and aggressive. On the other hand (partly linked to the end of the old two bloc, Cold War, world system) there is now a world-wide tendency to settle regional conflicts through political

negotiation, and to make relatively peaceful transitions towards greater democracy in formerly highly anti-democratic countries. The present process underway in South Africa has many significant international parallels.

Regionally virtually all the independent states of southern Africa are in deep crisis. There are many factors at play in this crisis. In some cases it has been sharpened by premature attempts by a Marxist vanguard to build socialism in countries where the social base for such a transformation has been seriously lacking. These attempts have been characterised by artificial leaps into collectivism, and at times a dogmatic intolerance of religion and ethnic traditions.

But the major factor in the regional crisis, overshadowing everything else, has been the Pretoria-led and imperialist-backed war of destabilisation. However, the apartheid regime has also paid a high price in conducting this war, and its ability to sustain the war was increasingly being eroded. By 1989 a significant change in the military balance of forces started to emerge in southern Angola. In many ways, the opening of the present phase within our country and within our region begins, not on February 2 1990, but in August 1989 when combined Cuban and Angolan forces delivered a major military defeat to the apartheid army at Cuito Cuanavale.

Within South Africa, the rolling wave of popular mass struggles from the mid-1970s and right through the 1980s, produced a sustained growth in the organisation, legitimacy and power of the liberation movement. These struggles also greatly deepened the international isolation and the internal crisis and splits within the white ruling bloc. But by the end of the 1980s, a generally



Negotiations must open up a process of empowerment of the working masses of our country

against the ANC alliance the regime has several options in mind. They are, in descending order of preference from its point of view:

- rendering the ANC more or less irrelevant, and allowing an NP-led bloc of forces to win democratic elections;
- alternately, forcing the ANC into some kind of power-sharing government of national unity with the NP and the IFP;
- or, failing the above, at least ensuring that a future ANC-dominated government is relatively weak and severely hamstrung.

But there is no reason why the regime should succeed in any of these objectives. A militant, well organised, mass based ANC-led alliance, acting with clear strategic purpose can seize and maintain the strategic initiative in the present situation.

Our aim must be to ensure that the process of democratisation is made irreversible. This means that the immediate issue under negotiation - a new democratic constitution and non-racial elections - must open up, not close down, a process of ongoing political, economic and social empowerment of the working masses of our country.

A new democratic constitution and democratic elections will not on their own mark the achievement of national democratic change, let alone socialism. But they can open the door to a more-or-less prolonged phase of national democratic transformation, in which political, social and economic power is increasingly transferred (through ongoing mobilisation, organisation and struggle) to the people of our country.

Only such a process can put an end to the accumulated effects of centuries of colonial dispossession and racial oppression. ☆

more difficult international and regional situation had the effect of limiting the options open to the ANC-led national liberation struggle. These external factors and the continued relative strength of the repressive machinery of the apartheid regime meant that the objective of popular seizure of power remained fairly remote.

It is this combination of contradictory factors which has produced the present political situation within our country. It is a situation in which democratic change through negotiation has become possible.

The apartheid regime now openly concedes that it cannot continue to rule in the same way. This has resulted in significant if partial victories for the national liberation movement:

- the unbanning of the ANC, SACP and other organisations;
- the release of political prisoners;
- the return of exiles;
- the scrapping of cornerstone apartheid laws.

However:

- the process of democratisation is not irreversible - state power remains

in the hands of the white minority: parliament, the judiciary, the bureaucracy, the SABC, and the commanding heights of the army, air force, navy, police and prison services are all monopolised by the white minority. It is this white minority state apparatus that remains the major obstacle to change, and the principal immediate enemy of the national liberation movement. The only real guarantee that the process of transition is not reversed lies in continued organised mass mobilisation, and all-round pressure on the regime.

- the depth and quality of democratic change is also at stake in the present situation. In fact, the struggle over the character and content of the change is the main feature of the present political situation. In many ways it is a struggle for tactical and strategic initiative. Whoever captures the strategic initiative will best be able to steer the process of change.

For its part the regime, backed by the capitalist ruling class, hopes to manage a process of change that will stabilise and lend legitimacy to a South Africa in which existing minority power and privilege are

minimally affected, and, above all, in which the capitalist order is not threatened. In other words, the present ruling bloc hopes that by conceding basic civic rights it will block the advance of the wider national democratic transformation of our country. To accomplish this, the regime needs, for the moment, to negotiate with the ANC-led alliance. But at the same time it seeks to weaken the ANC and the broad mass forces. Amongst the weapons it is deploying in this double agenda are

- violence - both indiscriminate violence to sow terror and confusion, to provoke ethnic rivalries and disorganise the broad masses, as well as targeted violence to eliminate key activists.
- disinformation - to provoke demoralisation in our ranks.
- fostering and projecting black politicians and political formations to counter-balance the ANC - in particular Gatsha Buthelezi and the IFP.
- anti-communism - the immediate target is the SACP, but the main target in this offensive is to transform the ANC itself.

In maintaining its onslaught

SECTION 3/THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS

The South African capitalist economy is grossly skewed and uneven in character. It combines features of a relatively advanced capitalist economy with many of the characteristics of dire third world underdevelopment. This uneven character of the economy has everything to do with the particular South African path of capitalist development pursued over the last 80 years.

It is a path which our Party has conceptualised as colonialism of a special type. This is a variant of bourgeois rule in which the essential features of colonial domination in the imperialist epoch have been maintained and even intensified but within the boundaries of a single country.

Colonial, semi-colonial and neo-colonial rule have all been forms of bourgeois domination exerted across frontiers. Colonialism of a special type is a variant of this general species of bourgeois domination. It is a variant in which an increasingly powerful local capitalist ruling class with its wider white support base on the one hand, and the nationally oppressed black majority on the other, have been located within a single country and within a single economic formation.

Colonialism of a special type has involved the use of political power by a multi-class alliance within the white minority to promote a particular variant of capitalist development and to foster the economic interests of this minority, at the expense of the majority. This has resulted in an economy that suffers from three major, inter-related problems:

1. Extreme poverty and inequality.

In terms of income distribution South Africa has one of the highest levels of inequality in the world. The richest



5% of the population owns 88% of all personal wealth. Over 40% of the potentially economic active population is unemployed. More African people now live in squatter camps than the total white population of our country.

These extremes of inequality are also reflected in the uneven distribution of basic infrastructure. Transport, electricity and water are concentrated on the mining and industrial areas of the country. 60% of the African population of our country are without electricity and without household tap water. 80% of all industrial activity is located in the PWV and Durban-Pinetown regions, while the bantustans are grossly underdeveloped.

2. Stagnation and decline

The steady decline in the growth rate of the economy since the mid-1970s is the second major problem. This decline is directly linked to the special colonial capitalist development path.

This path has involved an import

substitution strategy focussed on the production of luxury goods for a small white market; protectionist policies; and a reliance on cheap labour. This strategy has run into serious difficulties because of: the fact that the production of luxury goods has required the importation of hi-tech machinery at escalating cost; falling foreign earnings; the small domestic market; and a drastic shortage of skilled workers to meet the demands of an industrialising economy.

All of this has resulted in double digit inflation; low productivity of both labour and capital; rising unemployment; and falling levels of industrial growth and productive investment. In the course of the 1980s the South African population grew faster than the economy. Average income per person fell about 1,7% per year.

3. The stranglehold of monopolies

The third feature is also a direct consequence of the particular path of capitalist development pursued in

South Africa. Monopoly concentration of capital is a universal trend within capitalism. But in South Africa, in the context of massive racial disparities in wealth and power, the level of concentration is virtually unprecedented. By the mid-1980s 2,7% of enterprises controlled over 50% of our country's total turnover. The trend to ever greater concentration is increasing each year.

The capitalist system in South Africa has failed our people dismally. Nothing could bear this out more vividly than the huge social problems that afflict our society:

Land

There is enormous land hunger in our country, both for farming and residential purposes. Racial restrictions on the ownership and use of land have finally been removed, at least technically.

But the fact that black people can only acquire land on a "willing buyer-willing seller" basis at commercial rates means that most land will remain white-owned.

For the majority of black people, including the 600 000 victims of forced removals, the abstract legal right to own land will not in any way redress the racial or class inequalities in access to land. These inequalities are the result of over 300 years of colonial conquest and dispossession.

Housing

There are some two-million squatters living in 864 squatter camps outside the bantustans. It is estimated that one in six South Africans live in

The Economic and Social Crisis



The capitalist class in South Africa is incapable of leading a meaningful process of democratisation

informal housing. Only 7 out of 271 black townships outside of the bantustans are fully supplied with electricity.

The provision of housing is still being left to private capital. This means that only those who have the means to enable the private sector to make a profit will have access to housing. For the very poor and the unemployed housing will remain inaccessible.

■ Labour relations

The regime and the bosses have been forced into ongoing reforms by the strength of organised workers. At present there are tripartite talks under way between the regime, business and the unions, considering a range of issues including future economic policies.

The capitalists and the regime are arguing against "unjustifiable wage increases", and they are calling for restraint and a "social accord" as the basis for a better quality of life.

But the income differences between management and workers is immense in our country, with no suggestion that these are set to change.

The ratio of management to worker income in the South African clothing and textile industry, for instance, is 16-1. The comparable ratio in Japan is 4-1.

Retrenchments continue and the unemployment figure is above seven-million.

There are still major sectors of the economy where workers do not have basic trade union rights - these include farm, forestry, domestic and public-sector workers.

■ Public services, health and welfare

Basic public services to the black majority are either grossly inadequate, or simply non-existent. In how many rural settlements do we find libraries, clinics or social workers? In the recent past the regime has attempted to privatise key public services including hospitals and the public transport system. This process is now at an advanced stage. Privatisation is making the situation worse. On top of this, the VAT taxation system will introduce taxes on basic goods, including bread, meat, milk and medicine. In the immediate future, South Africans are looking at less affordable, less efficient public services.

■ Education

There are 3 million African children out of school and poverty forces nearly 660 000 to quit school each year. A quarter of those dropping out are in grade 1. Nearly a quarter of all African adults have no formal education at all. A quarter of all African pupils who start grade 1 never reach matric, compared to 78% of white children who complete high school.

Some 60% of the African population of our country are not able to read or write. This makes South Africa's literacy rate lower than some of its poorest neighbours - like Lesotho and Zambia.

These statistics reflect decades of racially unequal educational spending, miserable educational facilities and massive overcrowding and understaffing. While there is a

partial process of deracialisation of schools occurring, this process is only skimming the surface of the desperate crisis in education in our country.

■ The oppression of women

It is women who have to bear the brunt of the acute social crisis in our country. It is women who constitute the majority of the some 13 million people crammed into the bantustans, living in the most abject poverty. It is women who constitute the majority of the unemployed, and of those who are forced to leave school early. In employment, it is black women who are in the majority of some of the most poorly paid and heavily oppressed sectors - domestic service, the service industry, and farm labour.

■ Criminal violence

Massive social inequalities, squalid living conditions, high unemployment and totally inadequate education facilities for the majority have resulted in huge increases in both petty and violent crime. Cape Town has the highest murder rate of all cities in the world. It is closely followed by Johannesburg.

Both in political and in economic terms the special colonial variant of bourgeois rule in our country is now in irreversible crisis. The crippling damage it has done to our society, now no longer even benefits the ruling class. The capitalist class and its allies hope to reform the character of bourgeois rule in our country, the better to safeguard as much of existing privileges as possible, and, above all, to safeguard the capitalist

system. The old colonialism of a special type is likely to be dismantled. But the effects of this variant of bourgeois rule, the dismal economic and social legacy it is bequeathing to a post-apartheid South Africa will not evaporate because there is a new constitution, or one-person one-vote elections.

The capitalist class in South Africa is, in fact, incapable of leading a meaningful process of democratisation. It is incapable of leading the struggle to overcome the centuries-old legacy of racial oppression.

Given the scale of the social problems, the massive under-development of large parts of our country, the seven million unemployed, and the wider and deep-seated structural crisis of the economy - social democratic pacts between organised labour and capital are destined to fall far short of providing basic remedies.

Such pacts, which redistribute within limits, but leave the capitalist class in the economic and political driving seat might alleviate some problems. Indeed, given the present balance of forces within our country and internationally, such pacts might even be what is most immediately on the agenda. But any strategic perspective which sees such an arrangement as an end in itself will simply stabilise capitalist rule in our country, and leave the process of democratisation incomplete and thoroughly blocked. The aspirations of millions of our people will be betrayed.

It is the working class that needs to propel the broader national democratic transformation, right from the start. And it is the working class that needs, sooner rather than later, to lead our country democratically into socialism. ☆

SECTION 4/THE WAY FORWARD



The Way Forward

Our party's objective of building a democratic socialist South Africa reflecting the aspirations of the working class calls for both an immediate and a longer term perspective.

The immediate perspective: National democratic transformation

The immediate objective of the SACP is to win people's power so that the popular forces of our country can begin the process of building a united, non-racial, democratic and non-sexist South Africa. This immediate objective we share with our allies in the tripartite alliance (the ANC and COSATU), and with an even broader range of democratic forces.

For the SACP the national democratic revolution is not a delaying tactic or a side-track from our longer term socialist objectives. In the first place, real national democratic change will represent a major victory for the people of our country, and above all for the working class.

Secondly, in the concrete conditions of our country, national democratic transformation represents the most direct route to socialism. A thorough-going process of national democratic change, and the broad range of popular forces that are and must continue to be mobilised behind this objective, constitute a major weapon in the struggle to loosen the stranglehold that the capitalist class exerts over our country's entire

destiny.

But from the point of view of the working class it is not enough just to commit ourselves to the general objectives of national democratic change. The depth and quality of these changes are critical.

In the first place, it is crucial that national democratic transformation is not limited within a narrow legalistic and constitutional framework. The scrapping of all racist laws, a new democratic constitution, and the holding of one-person one-vote elections will represent an important victory for the people of our country - not least the working class.

But these important democratic measures will only mark the very first steps in the long and difficult path of national democratic

transformation. The objective of such a transformation must be the overcoming of the accumulated effects of three centuries of colonial conquest and dispossession, and over one century of racist capitalism.

The only class force capable of leading our country in the fulfilment of these tasks is the working class. The SACP and the progressive trade unions, in particular, have a major responsibility to ensure that workers are active, effective and powerfully present on all fronts of struggle. We must guard against other class forces hijacking and curtailing the process of national democratic transformation. We must ensure that working class aspirations do not end up at the bottom of the pile. This is exactly what the capitalist class hopes to

The Communist Party and the progressive trade unions, in particular, have a major responsibility to ensure that workers are active, effective and powerfully present on all fronts of struggle

achieve through a process of limited reforms. Through the organised strength of working class formations we must see to it that the search for a compromise as part of the negotiating process does not lead to a surrender of the workers' cause.

Socialism is not immediately on the agenda. Given the present balance of forces nationally and internationally, in the immediate aftermath of transition there will be a mixed economy in which the capitalist sector continues to occupy a significant place. But a mixed economy in which the private sector has a more-or-less unrestricted power to determine the way in which wealth is appropriated and distributed is a recipe for the continuation of racism and the worst features of capitalism.

The post-apartheid society must not just be a political democracy. It must also see a widening of economic democracy in which there is growing popular control over economic planning, production and distribution.

The character and quality of national democratic change in our country will also be crucially affected by the role of our various multi-class mass organisations. Prime among these is the ANC. The SACP recognises the ANC as the formation best able to lead the entire national democratic revolution. Communists, as in the past, will remain in the forefront of helping to build a strong, mass-based ANC with its roots in the working class.

The task of national democratic transformation will be a difficult and relatively long process. In order to lead this process, our national liberation movement needs to remain broad, welcoming into its ranks all those who accept its objectives. While preparing itself seriously for elections, and for power, the broad national liberation movement needs to guard against any tendency to become a narrow electoral machine, or little more than a future state bureaucracy. The strength and character of our national liberation movement must continue to reside in its mass base.



The SACP, with its allies, will also seek to build a broad patriotic front. Such a front is required both in the immediate phase of transition, as well as in the longer process of national democratic transformation.

The deepening and the defence of national democratic transformation will require that the working masses of our country remain highly mobilised and organised. In addition to a strong and militant ANC, SACP and COSATU, our working people must be empowered through numerous independent mass democratic formations - civics,

village committees, co-operatives, women's, youth, and cultural organisations, consumer bodies and a people's militia. A whole range of independent formations rooted among the working people will help to speed and to defend the process of transformation, and to check, balance and strengthen a future state of national democracy.

Throughout the process of negotiations for a new constitution, in eventual one-person one-vote elections, and in the longer process of national democratic transformation the SACP will work to maintain and

broaden the unity of all democratic forces. At the same time the SACP will act, at all times, to defend the immediate and longer term interests of the working class. The SACP seeks to popularise and defend the cause of socialism. It will at all times seek to link immediate struggles to the need for a longer term transition to democratic socialism.

In South African conditions the process of national democratic transition is the most direct line of advance to socialism. There may be forces today who support national democratic change but who do not support socialism. But, in fact, there is no contradiction between the basic aims and objectives of national liberation and socialism. Indeed, in order to attain the basic goals of national democracy, a transition to socialism will become essential. The SACP will work to convince democratically the great majority of South Africans that this is the case. We are very confident of success in this regard.

The full political empowerment of the people, the unification of our country in the face of massive underdevelopment, the progressive overcoming of the large-scale social, cultural and economic deprivation - none of these basic national democratic goals can be fully realised without socialism. As long as the commanding heights of the economy of our country are monopolised by a small group of powerful capitalists the deepening and defence of democratic gains will be limited and under constant threat.

The longer term perspective - democratic socialism

Socialism is itself a long transitional period between capitalism and full communism. Under socialism the economy remains mixed, with both a public and a private sector. But the public sector will now be dominant, and its dominance and influence will increase with the development of socialism.

What do we mean by DEMOCRATIC socialism?

In the first place, the SACP sees no contradiction, on the contrary, between socialism and basic liberal political freedoms. The democratic socialism for which we stand would involve a multi-party democracy, a justiciable bill of rights, an independent judiciary, basic

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SECTION 4/THE WAY FORWARD

How meaningful is the basic right to vote if you are dying of hunger?

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freedoms of speech, association, worship, press freedom and, in general, full citizenship rights.

We will uphold these basic rights, and we will extend them to include broader social rights. We will work for a situation in which it is possible to guarantee everyone the right to work, the right not to go hungry, the right to housing, to free education and free health care.

The democratic socialism for which the SACP stands will return socialism to its true and original vocation as envisaged by Marx, Engels and many other great socialist pioneers. Socialism was meant to go **beyond** the achievements of the great *bourgeois revolutions* of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, not fall behind them. Socialism was meant to greatly extend the frontiers of freedom, to embody and surpass the classical liberal civil liberties.

In South Africa, the great majority of our people have never enjoyed *even these basic civil liberties*. In winning these liberties we hope to push forward in an uninterrupted process that will give them much fuller content. For instance, how meaningful is the basic right to vote if you are dying of hunger? How meaningful is the freedom of the press, when some 60% of adults are illiterate. How meaningful is the same freedom when four media conglomerates (Argus, Times Media, Perskor and Naspers) control between them almost 90% of all daily and weekly newspapers sold in our country?

Bourgeois political and civil liberties, where they have existed, have always been restricted and warped by the lack of economic freedom for the great majority. The socialism for which the SACP stands aims to open up all spheres of our *society to a thoroughgoing democracy*.

In the second place, the SACP understands DEMOCRATIC socialism to mean the increasing empowerment of the people not just



through representative democracy (a democratic, multi-party parliament, etc.), but also through a series of **participatory** democratic organs. In other words, popular democratic *involvement and control should not* be confined to periodic elections.

Through a series of sectoral and communal organisations, the people of our country should increasingly have a direct say in all aspects of their lives - their work, their education, their recreation, their neighbourhood, their environment. Under socialism, the rudimentary organs of popular power that emerged in struggle in the mid-1980s, should be greatly extended and they should increasingly have an institutionalised right and opportunity to participate in the running of our country. Trade unions, for instance, as the key mass social organisation of the organised working class should participate by right at all levels of economic planning and implementation.

The democratic socialism for which the SACP stands is rooted in the soil of our own popular struggles. In particular we will build on the vast mass democratic experience of our people.

In the third place, and most

important of all, the SACP understands DEMOCRATIC socialism to mean that increasingly the economy is placed under **public** ownership and control. This *ownership and control must be* designed to progressively change the relations of production and distribution with the object of eventually eliminating all economic exploitation.

But we do not see control of the means of production as a mere question of legal ownership. There is no socialism even where all the means of production are owned by a state run by a small circle of bureaucrats, without the democratic participation by the actual producers and consumers at all levels of the economy.

This democratic participation is compatible with various forms of ownership of the means of production. These include state, municipal, collective, co-operative and small-scale, non-exploitative family-owned enterprises. In other words, state ownership (or nationalisation) is neither sufficient, nor is it necessarily always the only or most effective form of socialist ownership.

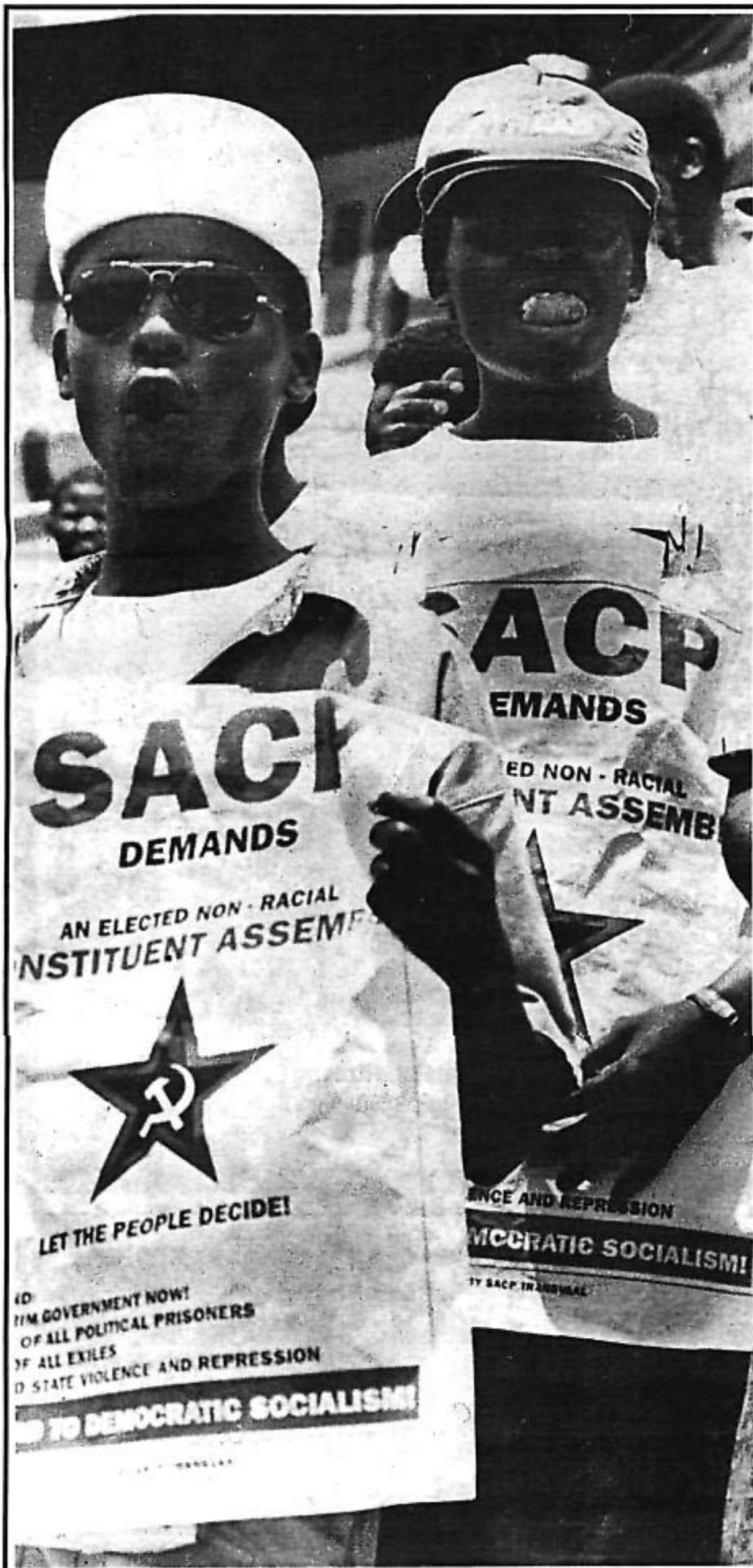
Our enemies like to spread the lie

that the SACP wants to take away people's cars, houses or furniture. Democratic socialism will give every individual the right to own and to dispose all non-exploitative private property.

The model of socialism that we develop in a future South Africa will be our own South African model, evolved from our own conditions. In building on our traditions and within our own conditions, we will, of course, learn from the negative and positive lessons from around the world.

Socialism might not be on the immediate agenda. But everything the SACP does must be designed to bring nearer the day when it is on the agenda. Nothing will dissuade us from our firm conviction that a system based on the needs of the working people will prove to be far superior to the present system based on selfish greed and private profit. Nothing will deter us in our steadfast struggle to abolish, once and for all, the bosses's stranglehold over our country's destiny. We reaffirm our commitment to ending a system where a handful of capitalists live off the sweat and blood of the great working majority. End wage slavery! Forward to democratic socialism! ☆

The Role and Character of the SACP



The SACP's basic role is to be the leading political force of the South African working class. The SACP aims to organise, educate and lead the working class both in the immediate struggle for national liberation, and in the longer term struggle for socialism. The ultimate aim of the party is the building of a communist society, that is, a society of abundance, a society finally free of all class oppression and exploitation.

To fulfill this function in the present situation, the SACP needs to be a relatively large, democratic party with a disciplined and activist membership.

In the process of rebuilding after 40 years of illegality, the SACP needs to be strategically organised, in the first place, among the industrial working class of our country. It is this component of the wider working class that is, generally speaking, the best organised, which has the most revolutionary traditions, and which is most strategically placed to spearhead the struggle for democracy and socialist transformation.

At the same time the party must not neglect to build among the wider sections of our working class, among the rural masses, among our militant youth and students, and among all socialist inclined forces.

In working to organise and empower the working class of our country, the party pays particular attention to the task of working-class cadre development. In branch

education, in regional and national workshops, in open forums, through our party publications, and through the development of night schools, the party seeks to deepen working class consciousness, build all-round political skills, and foster an understanding of scientific socialism. In this way, the party not only builds its own working-class cadreship, but helps to build working-class leadership in all the mass formations of our struggle.

Promoting working-class internationalism is another hallmark of the SACP. The SACP seeks to link the struggles within our own country to working class struggles in our region, in our continent and internationally. The SACP seeks to strengthen working-class and international co-operation and unity between all communist, socialist and broad left forces. The world-wide revitalisation of the socialist project requires open dialogue and comradely criticism between the widest range of forces broadly committed to the socialist vision.

The SACP has always played an important theoretical role in its own right, and in the context of the wider national democratic struggle. The party and all its members should collectively seek to continuously develop and deepen a scientific Marxist outlook, and in particular to develop its application to our own society. Increasingly the party's theoretical work must be elaborated

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The party's theoretical work must be a guide to practice, and specifically, a guide to concrete policy development in the transformation within our country

The party stands or falls on its ability to be an organised campaigning force on the ground

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not just as an analysis of society, but also as a guide to practice, and specifically, as a guide to concrete policy development in the transformation within our country.

The SACP seeks to act as the leading socialist formation within our country.

It does this not by dominating or excluding other left forces, nor by self-proclamation, but by force of example, hard-work and by the general correctness of its theory and practice. The party does not claim to be infallible, but it seeks to correct immediately and effectively any errors.

The SACP encourages open discussion within its own ranks, and between it and all other left and socialist-oriented forces in our country.

The party must at all times be in the forefront of combating in theory and practice backward moral, social, cultural and political practices and views.

The party and its members must take the lead in combating racism, tribalism, regionalism, chauvinism and all forms of narrow nationalism.

As the party of the South African working class the SACP does not lock itself up narrowly within the working class and its immediate concerns.

The party also seeks to project working-class and socialist perspectives into the wider public domain. The SACP and its members must as a matter of duty participate as effectively as possible in all the major public debates and forums.

But, at the end of the day, all the party's many functions stand or fall on its ability to be present, on a day-to-day basis, as an organised, visible, effective and campaigning force on the ground, in the townships and villages, in the factories, mines and farms of our country. ☆

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