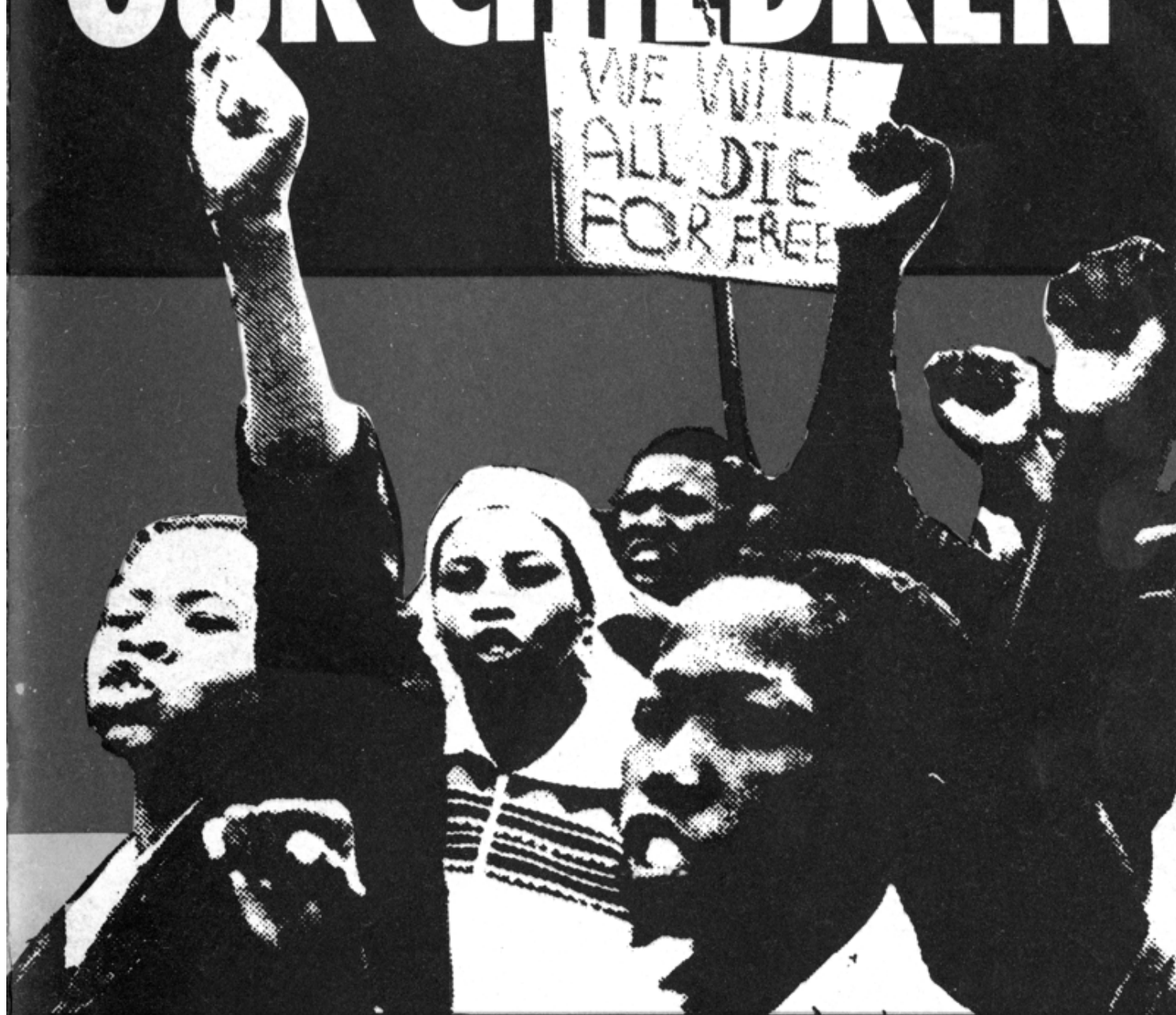


**South Africa is coming back**

# **OUR CHILDREN**



**AFRICAN  
NATIONAL  
CONGRESS  
South Africa**

**INTERNATIONAL  
YEAR  
OF THE CHILD  
1979**

**South Africa is coming back**

**OUR  
CHILDREN**

African National Congress of South Africa  
PO Box 38  
28 Penton Street  
London N1 9PR

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# Foreword

The year 1979 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of the Child. This means that this important decision is focusing the attention of governments, political parties and public mass organisations of the peoples on the vital tasks of devoting special care and attention to this all-important section of the human race – the children – who are the future leaders of our planet.

The world population of children is grouped broadly into the categories that reflect the current politico-economic divisions of our world, namely the socialist world, the capitalist world and what is commonly referred to as the 'third world' which includes those countries where the national liberation revolutions are currently raging.

It is common knowledge that in class-divided capitalist societies and in countries where colonial and racist regimes reign supreme, the children of the 'underdog' are from the very first days of their lives faced with the grim prospect of having to struggle for their survival. This struggle plagues them throughout their lives. These are children of the working masses and poor peasants in the capitalist countries and children whose parents, brothers and sisters are engaged in a life and death struggle for national and social liberation, for freedom from oppression and exploitation and racist domination and arrogance.

In Southern Africa, the life of a child is in constant danger of being abruptly cut short either by disease or the bomb and the bullet of the racist enemy. The incidence of infantile mortality is very high among the oppressed sections of the populations of Southern Africa. The main causes are malnutrition, or kwashiorkor, and a host of other diseases that thrive in poverty-stricken societies.

Then there are the recurrent massacres of innocent civilian populations by the man-hating oppressive regimes of Southern Africa. Refugee camps in Zambia, Mozambique and Angola have constantly come under enemy fire and in all cases children of all age groups have often been among the victims of this unmitigated barbarity. The places where some of the massacres have taken place are today household names throughout the world. These are Kassinga in Angola, Wiriamu and Chimoio in Mozambique and the refugee camps in the immediate vicinity of Lusaka in Zambia where men, women and children who have fled from the terror of the Smith-Muzorewa regime have found temporary refuge. In all these places hundreds of children have perished at one time or the other during the raids by the Rhodesian and South African armies of aggression.

The tragic story of the plight of the black child in South Africa tells of a titanic struggle from the cradle to the grave of an indigenous people who are subjected to vicious forms of oppression and exploitation under the world condemned system of apartheid. Black children in South Africa are born of parents who are subjected to a double-barrelled tragedy – they are subjected to

both national and class oppression.

Black workers in commerce and industry and on the farms are ruthlessly exploited. On their shoulders the burden of the economic crisis sweeping South Africa weighs heaviest. Rents, the cost of foodstuffs, including the diet foods of the African people such as maize, transport and other living costs are constantly rising. In a country that is reputedly rich, it has been reported recently that children in a certain area in Natal have had to survive by chewing pieces of paper.

It is in South Africa where the worst forms of child labour still exist. There are numerous cases when children have been kidnapped by child-hunting white farmers and taken to areas very far from their homes where they are made to give free labour to the white farmers for unspecified periods. It is also in South Africa where African families are separated by special legislation – the pass laws and unflux control regulations – resulting in untold hardship for the affected families.

The world has hardly outlived the shock of the 16 June 1976 massacres in Soweto during which hundreds of children were mowed down by the gunfire of the white racist state. Hundreds of others lay in the streets of Soweto injured, many maimed for life, whilst hundreds of others were arrested and subjected to savage forms of torture. The gruesome story of Soweto was repeated in other black ghettos all over South Africa as thousands of other schoolchildren joined the ranks of the uprisings.

South Africa is the only country in the modern world with a specially legalised form of education designed to keep the 'native in his place'. It is this form of education (Bantu Education) which became the rallying focal point of the uprisings which swept South Africa from 16 June 1976. The massive scale of the demonstrations and matchless heroism of the participants throughout the period of the uprisings in the face of the most brutal reprisals by the white racist enemy are indeed an indication of the depth of the crisis into which the regime of terror is sinking ever more deeply the more it seeks to tighten its stranglehold on the oppressed black population.

The story of the plight of the child under apartheid is narrated in greater detail in the pages that follow and which we commend to the attention of the readers.

What, however, must never escape the attention of the readers is that the repressive regime of apartheid, a system that has been condemned as a crime against humanity, is able to survive thanks to the support it receives from the major capitalist countries of the western world. The ruling circles of these countries, especially in Britain, West Germany, United States of America and Japan, must bear a full measure of responsibility for the genocidal crimes of the apartheid regime of South Africa and its protege in Zimbabwe – the Smith-Muzorewa regime.

The current developments in Southern Africa tell the other side of the story. It is the story of mounting struggles for national and social liberation whose inevitable victorious end will guarantee peace and the blossoming of a full and happy life for all the peoples of the region and Africa as a whole. In this situation, the international community has a moral duty and obligation to accelerate the process of liberation by supporting the revolutionary movements for change in Southern Africa – the African National Congress in South Africa, the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe and SWAPO in Namibia – in the interests of peace and security in Africa and the happiness of its peoples.

This is the clear message sent out to the world by millions of children in Southern Africa who also have a right to a happy childhood leading to a bright future in a world where there shall always be sunshine, free from the overhanging dark clouds of an ever-present threat of a thermonuclear catastrophe.

**Alfred Nzo**  
*Secretary-General*  
*African National Congress (SA)*  
*Lusaka, Zambia*

*13 June 1979*



Life under apartheid – living in a vehicle

# Family life under Apartheid

Hundreds of our children have been mowed down by the trigger-happy racist police in South Africa since June 1976. Thousands more have fled the country and are now continuing the struggle against the racist and exploitative regime in exile, while others are languishing in jails. This is the price they are paying for fighting a racist, oppressive and exploitative regime that sees them only in terms of a future black labour force that can be shunted back and forth from the dumping grounds and concrete ghettos to the industries, mines, farms and homes where they do back-breaking work for starvation wages.

For blacks the reality of a family unit, let alone a stable family relationship, is virtually non-existent. The possibility of a wife and husband living together, bringing up and caring for their children, remains something to be desired. There are many factors contributing to this, the greatest and most evil being the pass laws which result in migratory labour. These pass laws disrupt and destroy the family unit and regard humans as mere tools that can be used to keep the machinery of 'white South African' industries running smoothly and then dispensed of when they no longer provide a service.

The pass laws force all blacks from the age of 16 to carry passes which they have to produce on demand. In addition to identity number and photograph, these documents contain particulars of the ethnic group or tribe, name and address of employer, date of engagement, details of taxes, etc. Failure to produce these passes on demand results in immediate arrest. Between 1948 and 1974, nearly 10,500,000 prosecutions occurred, of which 4,000 were black mothers with babies. It is estimated that in 1978 there was one arrest every 2½ minutes under the pass laws (*VOW*, Special Issue).

Daily, homes are raided, doors banged down as police stampede their way around houses looking for people who are 'illegally' in areas. This type of raid is always carried out during the early hours of the morning to terrify adults and children. In racist South Africa, prosecutions and imprisonment for pass law offences extend to children under the age of 16, although they are not required by law to carry passes. The threat of imprisonment constantly faces the children and people of South Africa. Because the legal system is geared to keeping the racist government in power and maintaining racist laws, people not normally regarded as criminals are prosecuted for any transgression of these laws. They range from pass laws, vagrancy and idleness, immorality laws, to the notorious Terrorism Act, whereby persons can be detained indefinitely without ever being brought to trial. This is not only a threat facing our people, it is the reality of our daily lives.

In December 1978 a boy of 13, who was on his way to school in Crossroads, was confronted by two uniformed men, arrested and held in custody



for five days. He pleaded not guilty to being in a prescribed area, or alternatively to failing to produce permission to be in the area. He told the prosecutor that he was not 16 yet, but this was ignored. His mother was told to keep quiet when she told the court that she was the boy's mother. He was found guilty and fined R30.

In May 1978 four children under the age of 16 were prosecuted in the Langa Bantu Affairs Commissioner's Court for being in the Cape Town area 'illegally'.

Pregnant mothers about to give birth do not escape arrest under the hated pass laws, as was the case when two pregnant women were arrested by board officials in the Nigel district of East Rand. One woman gave birth in the cell, while the other was rushed to hospital.

Families are torn apart by the migrant system which the racist regime so ably makes use of. Mothers with young children, the aged, the sick and the unemployed are dumped in the Bantustans and reserves, such as Dimbaza, where there is no work, no proper medical facilities or any of the most essential requirements like water or food. Here the people are left to starve and waste away, and it is estimated that two black children under the age of five die every 35 minutes.

Conditions in these dumping grounds are appalling. Here the poverty and squalor are a disgrace to observe. Of a country as rich as South Africa, Cosmas Desmond wrote in 1969 when he visited Dimbaza:

'There were the families, tiny one roomed houses, many with ragged hungry looking children or a bent old woman sitting outside. It was not quite true that I could no longer be shocked or disturbed. I was, particularly by the sight of one tiny baby, a virtual skeleton, unable to move or cry and covered in flies. I have been through children's wards in African hospitals throughout the country and over the past ten years have seen thousands of starving, dying children. But I doubt whether I have seen anything worse than this.' (*Sechaba*, 1974)

It is in areas like Dimbaza that children's graves are dug in advance because of the high death rate. Six months after the first batch of people had been dumped in Dimbaza, there were already 90 graves, of which 70 were those of babies.

During the winter months it is extremely cold and people are unable to keep warm. In summer, gastro-enteritis, which is easily treated in white children, becomes a killer disease among black babies, because of the atrocious living conditions.

A young Dimbaza widow with five children was given a maintenance grant but her rations were stopped. When she begged that these rations be resumed, she was told to go and seek work and leave her children in someone else's care. For black mothers, working is not a choice — it is a necessity. How else will they be able to buy food, medicine and clothes for their families? The young children are left in the care of either the older ones or an elderly relative who herself or himself is in need of attention.

Conditions are so bad that a mother who had served a six-year prison sentence said that she preferred prison to a place like Dimbaza, as she was asthmatic and had contracted tuberculosis. She said, 'The food scarcity is depressing. I might have been happier if my children did not have to suffer these hardships with me.' (*VOW*, Special Issue)

The men who work as migrant labourers hardly see their families, and the rearing of children is the responsibility of the women. A migrant worker in Cape Town said:

'Although I am a married man, head of a family, I find myself living in "bachelors quarters", as they call the barracks. I have never enjoyed a proper family life, and my children have to grow up hardly knowing their father. I can visit my home only for about one month each year, and my family has never been allowed to join me in town.' (*Workers' Unity*, November 1978)

Migrant labour breaks up family life, because men who are away from their wives for such long periods form relationships with other women and make a home with them. For the women and children in the dumping grounds, there is the long wait for money that no longer arrives, as it is now being spent on another woman and children. Conditions which are already bad become worse. Many women and children have made the long trek to the towns in search of their men, only to find that he has a new home which he prefers to keep and, more often than not, the 'dumping ground family' is left completely destitute. It is then that the woman sells her body for money to buy food for her hungry children.

One of the inhabitants of the mine dumps said: 'My home is in Natalspruit. I came here to look for my husband who is working here. He earns a salary but does not support me and my child.' While she was speaking, two small children were asleep next to her on the damp grass. 'Some of these people have become drab recluses and have chosen a life of their own because they feel unwanted in society.' (*Sunday Post*, 22 October 1978)

Women who have jobs in urban areas as domestics and nannies, in the homes of white South Africa, are deprived of the right to have their children with them. If they have 'sleep-in' jobs, they are forced to sign a document to the effect that they will not have their children with them. While they give love and attention to the white child, theirs go unattended. The first love and physical closeness that white children get is that of their black nannies. On the other hand, black children have to be farmed out to whoever will have them and their mothers are unable to give them that necessary attention when they return home after a hard day's work.

Many women leave the Bantustans because they want to be with their husbands and come 'illegally' to the towns and cities where they set up squatter camps like Crossroads, Unibell, Werkgenot.

In a statement to the *Voice*, Mr Johnson Ngzabongwana said:

'We wish to state that the residents of Crossroads live where they do because of their intense desire to remain together as families in Cape Town, where their husbands and farmers are employed and where there is demand for their services. We will not be separated from our families by hundreds of miles.'

The men and women of Crossroads have said very clearly that they shall not move to any other place. 'They can do what they like, we have no other bush now,' is what one woman said. In November 1977, 73 per cent of the men at Crossroads and 25 per cent of the women were in full time employment, while 11 per cent of the men and 20 per cent of the women were in casual employ-

ment (*Voice*, 14 October 1978)

There is very little crime at Crossroads as the community is patrolled by the community throughout the day and night. There is evidence of community awareness by the many shops and stalls that have been set up to supply the residents with general needs. Flower and vegetable gardens are carefully tended. This makes nonsense of what Connie Mulder, former Minister of the now defunct and disgraced Department of Information, said on television when asked why South Africa made use of migrant labour: 'We should understand the soul of the black man; he loves migrant labour.'

Scores of people were beaten up and arrested at Crossroads when the police made their midnight raids, in the same way that they are being beaten up in raids on squatter camps like Duncan Village in East London. A woman erected a shack to live in and took in washing and ironing, for which she earned R24 per month. She was arrested in a raid, fined R26 (or 52 days) for being in Duncan Village and lost everything she had worked so hard for, including her pass book. She then had to sleep in the bush and try to find work, since she had children to support. This is only one of numerous cases of its kind.

Although the Chief Commissioner of the Western Cape, F H Booth, warned that those black workers who were in Cape Town legally, but who brought their wives to live there illegally, would lose their jobs, the people are determined to stay. The women said they would campaign to preserve Crossroads because they wanted to live with their husbands. They said: 'We are the reason for the existence of the camp. If Crossroads goes, we stand to lose our families and our husbands.'

The black people have been suffering under the yoke of oppression, exploitation, racism and apartheid in the country of their birth, where various laws have been made to curtail their freedom; where they are grossly exploited while their oppressors and the multinationals of the West make super high profits. They turn a blind eye to the misery, poverty, suffering and deprivation of our men, women and children. But our history teaches us that our people have always been fighting back. They have struggled against oppression, racism, apartheid and exploitation for a South Africa in which there will be national democracy, peace and mutual respect, free from racism and exploitation.

Our struggle over the past few years has gained momentum and has reached a higher level. Our people have witnessed the collapse of Portuguese colonialism right on our borders, when Angola and Mozambique gained their independence. Also, we have seen the myth of the invincibility of the South African army shattered when they had to withdraw from Angola. In Zimbabwe and Namibia the struggle is also gaining momentum and our people, struggling for their freedom, know that the progressive forces are on the side of the liberation movements. This, also, they have witnessed during the war in Angola. All this has encouraged our people to continue with the struggle.

Our youth have answered the call of the liberation struggle when they gallantly faced the guns, teargas, bullets and police who turned on them with all their fascist might during the uprising in 1976. Many of our gallant youth and children were shot at, killed, maimed and imprisoned. Thousands more have fled the country and have sought the African National Congress, the liberation movement that is leading the struggle of the people of South Africa. Thousands have swelled the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, so as to return to South Africa and face the enemy with guns and not with sticks, stones

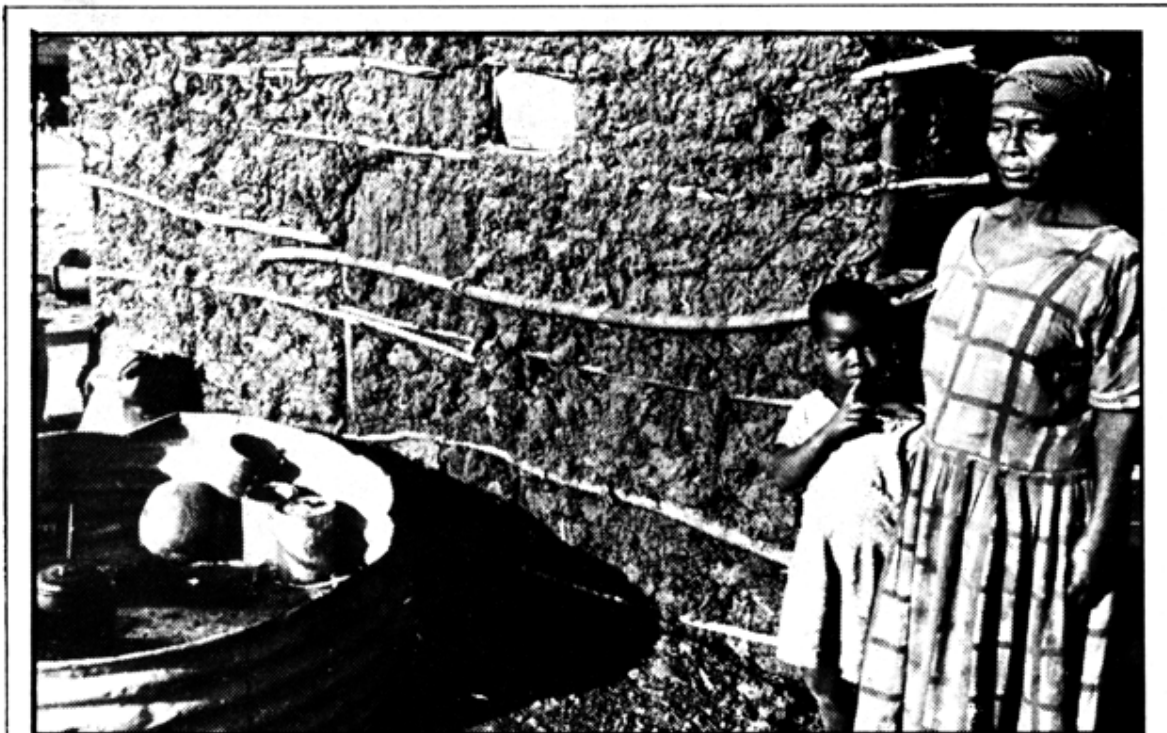
and dustbin lids, as was the case during Soweto.

We know that there can never be a decent life for our children and our people in South Africa until such time as the entire racist and exploitative regime has been dismantled.

Although the racist regime is making more and more stringent laws which it uses against our people, although the police are becoming more and more brutal, our people are determined to destroy that racist regime. Nothing can stop the tide of liberation of our people from racialism, apartheid, oppression and exploitation. The struggle will continue until we have gained power and we can live in a country where there will be peace, genuine equality and where racism and exploitation will find no roots.

We do not see our struggle in isolation from the struggle of those people fighting racism, zionism, imperialism and other forms of oppression. Our united struggle will rid the world of racism, imperialism and all forms of oppression. Our task will become more and more difficult as the struggle in South Africa intensifies, but we must not waver from the path that we have chosen to smash the apartheid state and to restore power to the people of South Africa.

- The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law
- All shall be free to travel without restriction. . .
- Pass Laws, permits and other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished
- All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security
- Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured. . .



Family home – a corrugated drum outside serves as the kitchen



Poverty and want are the lot of our people

# The health of children under Apartheid

In June 1976 the world was outraged by the brutal and cold-blooded murder of hundreds of children in Soweto — children who were peacefully protesting against the system of 'Bantu' Education which was being thrust upon them.

Shocking as this was, there is nevertheless another form of murder of innocent children taking place every day in South Africa. This does not make the headlines of the world's Press because it is of a less dramatic, and more insidious, nature. It is murder by starvation.

In a Kupagani report it was stated that 10 children die daily at Kromkrans town. hip in the Eastern Transvaal. In two hospitals (one in Pondoland and one in Kwazulu) 75 per cent to 80 per cent of children are famished.<sup>1</sup> It has been estimated that 75 children are dying every day from malnutrition.<sup>2</sup>

Malnutrition takes two forms: Kwashiorkor, which has been described as the most severe nutritional disease known to man, is the result of a diet grossly deficient in milk and high protein foods.

The other form is Marasmus, the childhood equivalent of starvation, starting in the first year of life. It is due to severe deficiency of calories, in the presence of some deficiency in protein.

In 1962 Kwashiorkor became a notifiable disease but ceased to be so in 1967. Today there are few, if any, vital statistics pertaining to the health of blacks in South Africa, especially those of the rural population which comprises 60 per cent of the population.

However, one of the criteria used to assess the efficiency of a country's health service, the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), can be estimated by the figures given by the Medical Officers of Health for the main urban areas in their annual reports.

## Blacks in Certain Areas

Johannesburg (1970)	95/1000 (Whites 20/1000)
Durban (1972)	77.39/1000
Cape Town	68/1000
East London (1972)	107/1000
Port Elizabeth (1970)	330/1000

In the district of Sekhukhuniland, it is found that at least 50 per cent of all African children born alive fail to reach their fifth birthday.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, whatever the source of information, one fact remains — the figure is shockingly high. It has been said, in fact, that the health pattern of blacks in

the rural areas is similar to those parts of the world completely devoid of health services.

## CAUSES

The main cause of malnutrition is poverty, in spite of what government propaganda may say to the contrary. The work of Boyd-Orr *et al* has shown this conclusively

The causes of poverty in South Africa are manifold, one of the most important contributory causes being the forced removal (up to three million) of people from their homes to barren areas of the country (euphemistically called 'Homelands') far removed from any means of subsistence. Eighty-seven per cent of the population of South Africa is thus allocated 13 per cent of the land. The land is therefore over-populated and unfertile due to drought and many years of over-farming. Left with no means of subsistence, the men are forced to sell their labour for a mere pittance in the mines, farms and factories of 'white' South Africa. Furthermore, the Influx Control Laws forbid his wife and children from accompanying him to the city, and the result is that while men are placed in hostels in the cities, their families are left behind to eke out an existence on whatever meagre earnings the husbands and fathers can spare.

This disruption of family life leads to not unexpected results: poverty, illegitimacy and untold misery. It has been estimated that 85-91 per cent of households in the Transkei and Ciskei respectively receive incomes below the Poverty Datum Line — 'a line below which health and decency cannot be maintained'.

The weakest and most vulnerable, ie the children, are the first victims of this situation.

## EFFECTS

Malnutrition lowers resistance to infection, the most devastating of these being gastro-enteritis and tuberculosis.

In Dimbaza, it was reported in 1972, that in under two months 52 children died of gastro-enteritis. By May 1972 there were more than 400 children's graves.<sup>4</sup>

A study of the records of King Edward VIII hospital, Durban, revealed that 50 per cent of all deaths of children, from the ages of one month to 10 years, were due to gastro-enteritis. This does not include dysentery and typhoid, which accounted for some 13 per cent of admissions.<sup>5</sup>

In the semi-rural areas about 10 per cent of children were Tuberculin Positive by the age of seven, and urban notifications show a high incidence in infants, many of whom die from its infection or complications.

A doctor at the King George Hospital for TB in Durban stated that of 1,300 children treated in 1977, one quarter died and the rest were physically or mentally handicapped.

A radiological survey of the district of Tsolo revealed more than 20 per cent of babies of six months of age had TB.<sup>6</sup>

## **EFFECTS ON THE BRAIN**

A report by Stock and Smythe in a 15-year study found a definite correlation between severe under-nutrition during infancy and subsequent brain growth. A deficit in intellectual function was the result, and the changes were permanent.<sup>7</sup>

### **Other deficiencies**

Rickets (Vitamin D deficiency) has been reported to be as common as 8-20 per cent in all black infants, and it was found that 70-80 per cent of black children in a school near Pretoria were deficient in Riboflavin.<sup>8</sup>

### **Measles**

Ten per cent of children admitted to King Edward VIII hospital had infectious fevers, mainly measles. It has been stated that more children die from measles in South Africa in three days than in the US in one year, and this in spite of a measles vaccine being available. However, the so-called 'nationwide' campaign did not encompass all races.<sup>9</sup>

### **Rheumatic heart disease**

The incidence of rheumatic heart disease in Soweto is the highest in the world. The disease could be eradicated by improving living standards but, instead, South Africa spends at least R24,000 a week on open heart surgery resulting from rheumatic heart disease.<sup>10</sup>

From the above it is obvious that all these conditions, which are so costly in terms of human lives and suffering, do not require the skills and expertise of highly qualified medical personnel, nor do they require the expensive technology of modern-day medicine. What is required is the establishment of a new social order where there is full employment, a rightful share in the wealth of the country, decent housing, education and a free and readily-available health service. This cannot be achieved under the present regime.

In the International Year of the Child it may be well to remember that, in South Africa, a black child is regarded as just another 'superfluous appendage'. It is a country where children starve, yet one of its major exports is food. That young lives should be nipped in the bud and children sentenced to a life of physical and mental ill health are crimes against humanity. Apartheid is an instrument of systematic genocide, stemming from the fact that blacks are considered merely as a cheap source of labour and therefore dispensable. In a country that boasts of the best health service in Africa, the situation is shocking. It is not only the racist regime of South Africa that is to blame but all those countries who, in their quest for greater profits, maintain large investments in South Africa and by doing so help to prop up and sustain this system. The murder of these children is an indictment against all who are guilty of this collaboration.

The African National Congress, whose Freedom Charter pledges '**Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children**', is in the forefront of the struggle to liberate the people of



South Africa and build a better future for its children.

South Africa has also declared 1979 as 'Health Year'. Considering its record as far as black children are concerned, the irony is obvious.

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Sores on the child's back caused by malnutrition

# Child farm labour

Alfred Langa was 11 years old when he and two friends were kidnapped by a white farmer in Johannesburg one morning in 1972 and taken to work on a Natal farm. Almost six years went by before he managed to escape and return to his family in Soweto. During his six years on the farm, milking cows, he had received no pay. A previous attempt to escape, using a bicycle, failed when the farmer tracked him down and return him to the farm. His parents had lost all hope of finding him alive after he disappeared, and had searched for him at hospitals, police stations and mortuaries in vain.

Alfred's case, reported in the press, is a typical example of life in that submerged area of the apartheid economy – the white-owned farms – where black children work alongside adults in the fields, for little or no pay, under feudal-like conditions.

South Africa's white farmers, nearly all Afrikaners, have traditionally been the staunchest supporters of the apartheid regime. In return, they have been well looked after by that regime. Farm labour is not covered by normal labour laws. Labourers are not protected by minimum wages legislation or social security provisions, nor by any agreement on wages and conditions. The migrant labour system and the pass laws prevent African workers in rural areas from moving to the cities to seek work, forcing them either to accept employment on the farms or to starve.

With an abundant supply of tied labour, farmers have been able to offer rock-bottom wages. In 1976, one researcher reported an average cash wage of R8 a month on farms in the Free State, with payments in kind bringing the total to R36. The Department of Agriculture's Survey revealed an average wage of R14 a month in the North-Western Free State and R16 on the Transvaal Highveld and in the Western Transvaal. Payment in kind brought the figure to about R45 a month.

These wages can be set against the average African wage of about R91 a month in mining, R136 in manufacturing and R115 in construction – themselves below the estimated minimum living wage on which a family of six could maintain life and health, ranging from R110 to R151 a month. Among those farmers paying wages of between R5 and R15 a month was the ex-Speaker of the House of Parliament, Mr Hendrik Klopper, who brought three of his workers to court, charged with stealing three dozen mealie cobs valued at R1.50.

Attempts to organise farm workers by the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in the late 1950s were ruthlessly suppressed by farmers and state alike. The Union's national organiser was harassed under the pass laws and forbidden to remain in any municipal area anywhere in South Africa for longer than 72 hours, which meant that he was continually on the run. Another



Child farm labourers

organiser was gaoled for six weeks on the grounds that he was furthering the aims of an illegal organisation – although SACTU has never been banned. Today, the one and a half million farm workers remain unorganised.

Of the workers, the most vulnerable are the children. The use of child labour is rife, both on private farms and those owned by large companies. A recent television documentary, 'Working for Britain', revealed the extensive use of child labour on some of Natal's massive sugar plantations partly-owned by the British multinational Tate & Lyle.

Boys and girls, some as young as 13, worked a nine-hour day, six days a week, for 50 cents a day. They lived in compounds near the estates and most did not attend school. While some companies provided the workers with 'maheu' – a liquid meal drink – and mealie porridge, during the day, other workers, including women and children, had no food provided.

At a plantation on the Doornkop estate, owned by Illovo Sugar Estates, a 'boss-boy' in charge of a group of workers, which included boys and girls, said the workers started at 6 am and finished at 3 or 4 pm. Most of the workers were paid R6.60 a week and worked a six-day week. He said they got no lunch break but were brought 'maheu' and bread during the day.

Mbekeni Mtshali, aged 13, said he had had no schooling and earned 90 cents a day. He had been working on the plantation for eight months. His friend, Mthazana Makhathini, 14, said he also earned 90 cents and had gone to school as far as Standard Two. Both lived at a compound on the estate with others.

A team from the *Rand Daily Mail* visited the compounds. They found single workers living in large 'stable-like rooms, with no partitions'. No beds were provided and men, women, boys and girls slept on the floor. Some workers had beds made out of logs. Clothes hung on string strung from wall to wall, and cooking utensils were stacked in corners. There were no facilities at the compounds and the children received no schooling.

Both Mbekeni Mtshali and Mthazana Makhathini said they worked a six-day week and started work each day at 6 am and finished at 3 pm. Temba Khonjwayo, 15, and Moses Ncane, 14, said they started work at 6 am and earned R6 a week.

At another plantation along the road, 20 km from Stanger, boys and girls were working among men and women. Some said they were from the Transkei and came on contract. Khumba Mdlela, 13, was the youngest in the gang. She said she lived with her parents at a neighbouring farm. She earned 50 cents a day, worked a six-day week and had never been to school.

The foreman of the gang said the boys and girls and the men and women, most of whom were illiterate, lived in the compound 5 km from the plantation. Women earned R1.10 a day and some men R2 a day. They worked nine hours a day, from 6 am to 3 pm, and did not get a lunch break. At 10 am they were brought mealie porridge and 'maheu'.

Child labour is not confined to the sugar plantations, as other press reports show. At one potato farm in the Eastern Transvaal, starving workers were dressed in rags, beaten by foremen, and hunted down and brought back if they attempted to leave the farm.

'The treatment is terrible. We start work as early as 4 am and stop at 6 pm,' Mr Vezi Mthembu said. He said he had come with other men and young boys on contract from the Transkei. They had been promised R3 a day for work on an egg farm. Instead, they were sent to the potato farm where they were paid 50

cents to R1 a day. Reporters were told that the workers all slept on the cement floors of a big barn, using sacks as blankets.

Other press reports bear witness to the brutality perpetrated by white farmers against African children.

- At a Worcester farm, a 13-year old boy was chained by the neck to a post and made to cut the lawn. At night he was locked, still chained, in a storeroom. (*Cape Times*, 20 April 1978)
- At an Underberg farm, a 14-year old girl, Tsebo Mkwena, died after being shot in the back by the farmer for stealing turnips from his fields. (*Cape Times*, 3 August 1977)
- At a Free State farm at Kestell, a 13-year old boy, Apie Motoela, was horsewhipped to death for allegedly damaging mealie sacks. (*Post*, 25 December 1977)
- At a Cradock farm, a young black girl, Elizabeth Pike, was electrocuted on a fence set up by the farmer 'to protect an orchard and vegetable garden from raids'. (*Rand Daily Mail*, 24 September 1977)

Child labour does not exist in a vacuum. It exists primarily because the racist white regime provides no social security for the impoverished black population, and children are compelled to work or starve. It exists because 87 per cent of the land area of the country is in the hands of the white minority, and the overcrowded, exhausted soil of the bantustans cannot support the families who till it.

In the new South Africa of tomorrow, when racist rule and the power of the monopolies has been destroyed and the wealth of the country is returned to the whole people, the economic and social conditions which make for child labour will be a thing of the past. As the Freedom Charter says: '**Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger. The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole. All other industry and trade shall be compelled to assist the well-being of the people. . . Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.**'

# Education for what?

## The educational provision for black children in South Africa

In Principle 1 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child it is stated:

'The child shall enjoy all the rights . . . without distinction on account of race, colour, sex or language.'

Further, Principle 2 of the same Declaration states:

'The child shall enjoy special protection and shall be given opportunities and facilities by law and by other means to enable him to develop physically, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity.'

### 'BANTU EDUCATION' FOR AFRICANS

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 imposed a separate, inferior type of education on the African children of South Africa. The aim of this kind of restricted education was stated categorically by the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr H F Verwoerd, in the South African Senate on 7 June 1954:

'...There is no place for him (the black) in the European Community (Afrikaners and people from Europe) above the level of *certain forms of labour*. Within his own community all doors are open... Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European Society *in which he was not allowed to graze*.'

A wide belief of universal education contrasts starkly with the view held by Dr H F Verwoerd:

'Education which helps to realise the potential of every individual plays an important part in creating an acceptable society. Such an education serves society by making available to it every person's gifts and labours. . . A further principle is that there should be equality of educational opportunity. This means that every person in society should have equal access to the best education which the state can provide. . . Criteria like colour, race, or creed should be irrelevant in the public educational system.'<sup>1</sup>

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**NB:** When Verwoerd referred to 'the black' he referred not only to separate educational provision for Africans but also for Coloureds and Indians. In this section the word 'black' denotes the other than white populace and in some parts specific reference will be made to 'Coloured' and 'Indian' as these ethnic categories are used by the South African government to show its apartheid measures in educational provision for the different ethnic groups.



Conditions under Bantu education

## DISCRIMINATION IN EXPENDITURE

A comparison of government expenditure on the education of school children from the different ethnic groups shows gross discrimination against those who can least afford to carry the cost of their children's education:

<i>Group</i>	<i>Population figures 1974</i>	<i>Unit cost per pupil (Rands)<sup>2</sup></i>
Whites	4.2 million	645.00 1976/77
Coloureds	2.3 million	157.59
Asians	0.7 million	219.96
Africans	17.7 million	48.55

More revealing is the pattern of government expenditure on education of the different sectors *as a whole*:<sup>3</sup>

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Rands (millions)</i>
The Provinces (white education only)	241.6
Department of National Education (mainly whites)	53.9
Other government departments (mainly whites)	18.6
Department of Coloured Affairs	41.9
Department of Indian Affairs	15.8
Department of Bantu Education	49.9
	<u>421.7</u>

A further anomaly in educational provision can be seen in the following *staff:pupil ratios*

Whites	1:20
Africans	1:60+

The first innovation under the Bantu Education system for African children was the double session, dubbed the 'hot seat' system by African parents. To increase the number of entries into primary schools, *two sessions of three hours each* instead of the former four and a half hours were introduced. Infant classes were raised from 90 to 100, allowing *50 children per teacher per session* instead of the 60+ for four and a half hours a day!

The white pupil/teacher ratio of *20:1 per school day* contrasts sharply.

In 1971 about half the schools ran double sessions. This system applies to 80 per cent of African children in the first two years at school. African infants start school at *7 years*, white infants at *5½ years*. Many school boards are extending the double session system to primary and post-primary schools.

By March 1973, *11,905 teachers* were teaching *995,000 pupils* in double sessions. Coloureds and Indians are also affected by the 'hot seat' system.

Of the six million African children who started school between 1955 and 1968, three million dropped out before reaching standard 3 (3rd-year in English equivalent of Ia for schools) before becoming literate even in their mother tongue. As a result, illiteracy is widespread amongst the African population. This, to a lesser degree, is the case among the Coloured and Indian populace.

South African educationalists, analysing the results of the 1970 census, estimated that *48 per cent of Africans over the age of 15 years were illiterate* in terms of the United Nations criterion for 'functional literacy' of a minimum of *four years' schooling*.



## EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AMONG THE DIFFERENT GROUPS – 1975

(to nearest '000)<sup>4</sup>

	<i>Africans</i>	<i>Coloureds</i>	<i>Asians</i>	<i>Whites</i>
Total school population	15,036	2,021	618	3,727
No with no school standard	8,750	770	179	535
– as proportion of <i>total population</i>	56.9%	38.0%	29.0%	14.4%
No with standard 10 to O-level	40	19	29	851
– as proportion of <i>total population</i>	0.27%	0.94%	3.24%	22.83%

A good measure of the success of Bantu Education in preventing Africans from rising in significant numbers to the levels where they could compete with whites on educational terms is to be found in the fact that between 1951 and 1971, a span of 20 years, African school children enrolled in secondary schools *increased from 3.5 per cent to only 4.7 per cent.*

In 1971, *32.1 per cent* of all *white pupils* were in secondary schools, *12.2 per cent* of *Coloureds*, and *26.4 per cent* of *Indians*.<sup>5</sup>

The inequality in educational provision, as so categorically stated by Verwoerd 25 years ago, is still the practice in South Africa today. The fascist-racist regime does not concern itself with the development of black children in South Africa. It is primarily concerned with having an under-educated, uncritical, inarticulate, subservient black labour force which can be drawn on at will and discarded when it ceases to produce the wealth of the country in its mines, factories and farms. Also, menial jobs in the homes of the whites require acquiescent automatons. Black children are not allowed the opportunity to develop into talented, thinking human beings.

Thus, education is not, and never will be, compulsory or free for black children. Black parents have to contribute from their meagre earnings, if and when they can find work, to the costs of erecting and maintaining schools for their children. They will have to find ways and means to buy basic school equipment like stationery and textbooks for their children, while their white counterparts, who earn eight to ten times more than they do, enjoy the privileges of free schooling for their children. Black children suffer from lack of provision of nursery schools, playgroups, kindergartens and creches, while their mothers act as servants and surrogate mothers to the white, privileged children whose parents enjoy the benefits that come from the wealth produced by black women and men.

### THE INIQUITIES IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SUFFERED BY BLACK CHILDREN

The children themselves do maintenance work and clean the school premises. Schools are badly equipped and may lack even basic amenities such as electricity, and children have to be seated on the floor frequently.

Lack of facilities at school are compounded at home: most children do their homework in cramped conditions, usually by candlelight at a kitchen table shared with the rest of the family. Bedrooms shared with several siblings also make for unsatisfactory studies.

## **THE DROP IN STANDARDS**

As we have seen, the typical child who manages to get to school starts late and drops out early. The untypical child who battles through (with tremendous effort on the part of the family to keep him at school) is confronted with the task of not only learning three languages but also learning *in* three languages. Nowhere in any educational system are children subjected to such a linguistic upheaval. Only the fortunate and determined few reach Form V and matriculation level. In March 1973, when there were 3.3 million African pupils, only 5,736, or 0.17 per cent, of the total were in Form V.

The imposition of Bantu Education had a disastrous effect on secondary school standards: both the number of candidates and the number of passes amongst Africans taking matriculation examinations declined markedly.

Other factors contributing to the decline of standards are the increase in class numbers and the diminishing proportion of qualified teachers.

An article in *The Star* (Johannesburg) on 9 September 1972 pointed out that whereas it had been envisaged that there would be an increase in graduates among African high school teachers from 45 per cent to 100 per cent, the number of graduates had in fact fallen to 22 per cent.

## **FARM SCHOOLS**

Rudimentary education is provided for the children of black labourers on white farms. In 1973 there were 3,579 farm schools representing nearly one-third of all African schools and just over 10 per cent of all African school children.

The white farmer has total powers over the education of the children of his workers: whether there shall be a school, which children shall attend and the appointment and dismissal of teachers.

Of the 334,388 African children attending farm schools in 1973, 88 per cent were in lower primary classes and most of the remaining in higher primary. Secondary education is only obtainable in the 'homelands'.

In the past, many African country children attended schools in the towns, living with relatives during school term. This is no longer allowed except for those who can travel to and fro daily. If there are no suitable schools locally, the rest must board with families or in school hostels in the rural 'Bantu' areas. Few farm labourers can afford this, especially when you consider that a farm labourer earns approximately 29p a day, with overtime and bonus averaging up to 55p a day on the Illovo Sugar Estates, a subsidiary of Tate & Lyle (recently sold to South African concerns).

## **CURRICULA AND COURSES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The child in the primary standards on a farm school is subjected to a curriculum which has the main aim of '...teaching the child to fit him for farm work'. His peers in secondary schools in the townships fare no better when the principles of universal education are considered.

In African schools especially there are gross weaknesses in the teaching of English, mathematics and science subjects, due to unprogressive educational methods of teaching, shortages of equipment and a lack of properly trained teachers.

It is a well-known fact that some children never see an experiment performed,

let alone have a chance to set one up in a laboratory.

There are also serious and basic distortions in the approach to education which fundamentally affect both black and white intellectual development, eg social studies courses throughout schools, both black and white, indoctrinate children and young students into '...blind acceptance of the policy of separate development or apartheid'.

Because of the dogma of State Church Christian National Education fundamentalists, evolution is not included in the Transvaal biology syllabus. A Potchefstroom professor once wrote that he wanted '...all human beings developed out of Adam . . . not evolution as a truth' taught in schools.

Other subjects are taught with a strong State bias, for instance, history is taught from a Nationalist Party ideological basis. The Minister of National (white) Education, replying unequivocally to criticism of history texts used in white schools (South African Parliament, June 1971), said: 'The presentation of the Nationalist's Party policy in the school syllabus is put in perspective as forming part of the development history of our policy relating to peoples.' The ideology of fascism-racism is thus blatantly propounded through the educational policy of the South African regime.

Censorship is severely exercised. Books for school libraries must be approved. Pictures of blacks and whites portrayed as equals are disallowed. The introduction of television was long delayed because of the difficulties of censorship. The Afrikaans press is self-censoring, the English press severely controlled. Newspapers like *The World* (the second largest daily), *Weekend World* (the third largest weekly) and the Christian Institute paper *Pro Veritate* have been banned for publishing articles critical of the fascist-racist regime's apartheid policies. Liberal newspapers such as the *Rand Daily Mail* and *Daily Dispatch* tend to be over-cautious. Earlier in 1978 the *Rand Daily Mail* decided not to publish a list of government actions taken against student leaders of the South African Students Organisation (SASO). These ranged from storming into schools, beating up pupils and students in schools, on the streets, in their homes, arrests without charges, torture during detention, to imprisonment of eight-year olds.

## VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

The South African regime cannot drive the black people (Africans, Coloureds, Asians) out of South Africa because it has to maintain its privileged sector of multinationals and white workers by exploiting black labour.

To continue to have a vast supply of black labour, the South African government is concerned only with minimal standards of education which will enable its labour force to be effective in the various industries and in social services in their own ethnic communities. As it would be too lengthy to deal with the three sections of the black populace, only the African case will be emphasised.

Although Africans comprise 70.4 per cent of the economically active group (overall work force: nine million in 1974), they are grossly ill-prepared to play a proper role in the country's industrial growth.

In early 1970 pressure from the private industrial sector, because of an acute shortage of skilled manpower and not for altruistic reasons, caused the government to spend the meagre sum of R2 million to set up initially only eight special centres integrated with secondary schools in urban industrial centres such as Soweto. By April 1975 there were only 49 centres for Africans in the whole

country with a total enrolment of 5,227 students, the roll of two/three large comprehensive schools in one borough of London.

## UNIVERSITIES

Since 1969 the white universities have been closed to blacks and separate, or 'tribal', colleges opened for the various ethnic groups such as the University of Zululand in Ngoya, the University of the North in Turfloop, the University of the Western Cape in Belville South, the University of Fort Hare in Alice, and the University of Natal, a separated black section for medical students.

By 1974 there were some 11,000 students in South African universities. A list of percentages shows the misproportion of black university students to their white counterparts:

Whites	no less than 85%
Africans	7.0%
Coloureds	2.8%
Indians	4.3%
Chinese	0.3%

## AFRICAN TEACHERS: TRAINING AND SALARY DIFFERENTIALS

In March 1973 there were 58,319 teachers in African schools. Of these, 47 were Coloureds and 839 whites.

The low level of African teachers' education and training is reflected not only in the inadequacies of Bantu Education, but it is also proof of poor facilities in teacher-training colleges. In 1971 there were only 35 teacher-training colleges for all African trainees. The African teachers, products of nearly two decades of Bantu Education, are poorly qualified:

*In March 1973:*

- 1.69% of African teachers held university degrees
- 11.00% of the total had reached matriculation (roughly A-level)
- 46.25% held Junior Certificate (below O-level)

*Courses*

Primary school teachers – entrance qualification: Junior Certificate plus a two-year course

Secondary school teachers – entrance qualification: Matriculation plus a two-year course at a separate ethnic or 'tribal' university

Poor salaries are a major factor in discouraging matriculants and graduates from entering teaching:

*Monthly starting salaries for postgraduate trained teachers:*

	<i>African</i>	<i>Coloured/Indian</i>	<i>White</i>
Male	R132	R235	R322
Female	R123	R212	R288

**The school children's and students' demands for universal free education are an integral part of their parents' struggle for democratic rights.**

Mr Botha and his cohort, the former Prime Minister, know that the demands raised by the black youth in Soweto, Guguletu, Cape Town, to name but a few places, will bring an end to apartheid when met by his government.

## **BLACK RESISTANCE**

The struggle for freedom in South Africa took on new forms after the massive protests by the black youth. The demands had quickly grown from the original calls to abolish the use of Afrikaans in schools to encompass an attack on the whole structure of apartheid. Remarkably, despite the reign of terror imposed by the security forces on the black youth of South Africa (also white students' protest in Cape Town in support), the mass arrests and the fleeing into exile of hundreds of children and students, the campaign in the townships continued through 1977 and 1978.

The children's and students' boycotts of schools have forced the government to close down schools and African teachers to resign. In the face of so much terror the youth of South Africa have shown their resistance to fascist-racist ideology disseminated through an unacceptable educational system that goes against humanity.

The African National Congress of South Africa, in its Freedom Charter, clearly states its opposition to separatist education of a racial bias. Clause 8 of the Freedom Charter states:

**'The Doors of Learning Shall Be Opened**

**'The Government shall discover, develop and encourage the national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;**

**'All cultural treasures of Mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;**

**'The aims of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;**

**'Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;**

**'Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;**

**'Adult illiteracy shall be ended by mass education plan;**

**'The Colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.'**

By its education clause, as by its other clauses of the Freedom Charter, the ANC states clearly and unequivocally that its objectives are to bring about a humane and democratic society in South Africa through its liberation struggles.

## **THE ANC(SA) SCHOOL IN MOROGORO, TANZANIA – SET UP BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TANZANIA**

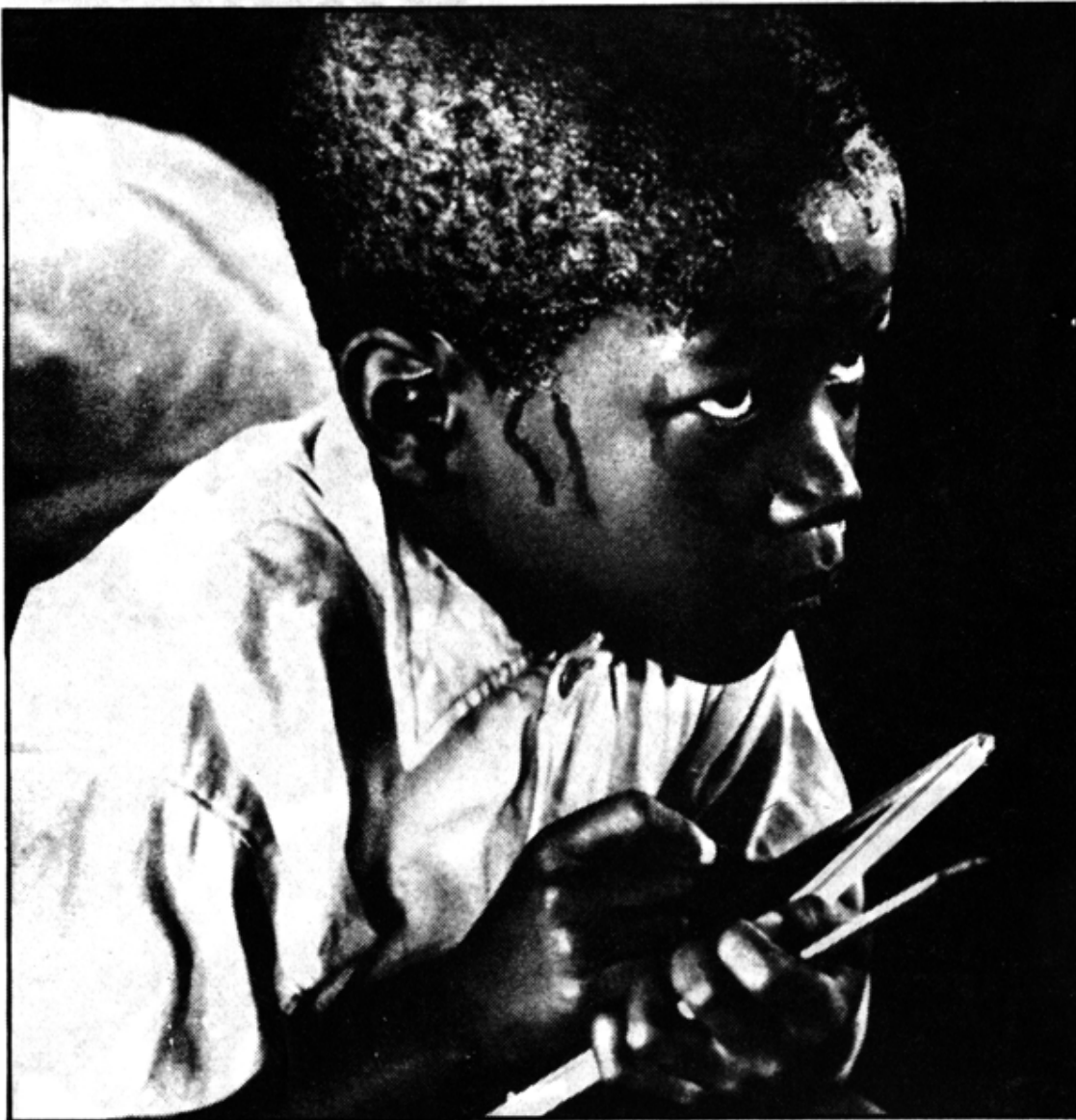
A school and living accommodation are being set up for those hundreds of youth who had to flee the terror of the fascist activities of the security forces of the South African government. The educational programme for this school has been planned by the ANC:

### **General Aims of the ANC Educational Programme**

The entire educational programme, under the direction, guidance and control of

the National Executive of the African National Congress of South Africa will be geared towards the following objectives:

1. To prepare cadres to serve the national liberation struggle of the people of South Africa in the phase of the struggle for seizure of political power and the post-liberation phase of national reconstruction and development.
2. To produce such cadres as will be able to serve society in all spheres, ie political, economic, socio-cultural and scientific. Priorities will be dictated by the needs of the liberatory struggle in the pre- and post-liberation periods.
3. To combine academic mental efforts with practical physical work and promote healthy respect for both.



The future will be theirs



School children demonstrating during Soweto uprisings

# Youth in struggle

The oppressed youth of South Africa have a proud record in our struggle for national and social liberation. Throughout our people's centuries-long resistance against racist domination, the youth have been at the forefront of the battles to build a People's South Africa, free of racism and exploitation.

## **ANC YOUTH LEAGUE**

The Youth League of the African National Congress was formed in 1944 – a period of worldwide struggle against the forces of fascism and of the upsurge of the national liberation movement in Asia and Africa. The Youth League activists declared: 'Our goal is the winning of national freedom for African people, and the inauguration of a people's free society where racial oppression and persecution will be outlawed.'

Responding to the growing militancy of the people as a whole, and the increasing repression of the apartheid regime, the youth played a leading role in transforming our movement into a truly revolutionary organisation – capable of serving and leading the masses in their day-to-day struggles against the fascist state.

This process was reflected in the outstanding mass actions of the fifties, when hundreds of thousands of our people courted imprisonment in their militant defiance of apartheid laws. During these years, too, unity in action by all sections of our oppressed people was forged and consolidated. This found concrete expression in the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 – drawn up and supported by all anti-racist and democratic forces in our country.

Among the founding members of the Youth League, who tirelessly served the masses during this stage of our struggle, were men like Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu – who became outstanding revolutionary leaders and who champion the people's cause to this day.

## **ARMED STRUGGLE**

The banning of the ANC in 1960 posed a tremendous challenge to our youth and people as a whole. They were faced with the need to build a strong underground movement capable of continuing our organisation's historic task of leading the freedom struggle. In all the forms of clandestine organisation, our members risked long terms of imprisonment, torture and death at the hands of the fascist state.

Our youth rallied to the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, when the armed struggle was launched in 1961. They played their part alongside revolutionary



patriots of all ages and backgrounds, in countrywide acts of sabotage against symbols of the racist regime.

Young men and women left South Africa to gain the military and political skills necessary for the struggles ahead. During the historic battles waged in the Wankie operations in Zimbabwe, soldiers of Umkhonto we Sizwe fought alongside their ZAPU comrades-in-arms against the combined forces of the South African and Rhodesian racist regimes. In these campaigns many lost their lives.

## **RESISTANCE TO OPPRESSION**

During these years, black youth and students played a crucial role in organising our people to resist the apartheid system at all levels. In the universities and schools, activists worked to educate the youth on the nature of our enemy and to build and strengthen national assertiveness and unity. Organisations like the South African Students Organisation (SASO), which was formed in 1968, played an important part in this work – fighting and exposing racist education designed to perpetuate servitude and oppression.

The early seventies saw the growth of many youth and community organisations which, despite continuous harassment, detention and imprisonment of leaders and activists, continued to mobilise against the system and expound their philosophy of black consciousness. This upsurge of militancy was also reflected in nationwide strikes by the leading force of our revolution – the black working class.

The victories of our brothers and sisters in Angola and Mozambique, as well as the worldwide advances of the anti-imperialist struggle as a whole, were a profound inspiration to young militants. In Southern Africa the myth of white racist invincibility had been smashed once and for all. SASO and the South African Students Movement (SASM), an organisation of school students, attempted to hold demonstrations in solidarity with FRELIMO, which were met with police brutality, arrests and bannings.

## **1976 UPRISINGS**

On 16 June 1976, racist police opened fire on thousands of unarmed school children demonstrating against the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. The bloody massacre on the streets of Soweto roused international and national indignation. Resistance to 'Bantu Education' was transformed into a nationwide uprising against the apartheid entire system.

Despite the most brutal terror ever unleashed by the regime, in which thousands of our people were murdered, maimed and wounded, our youth heroically sustained their defiant protests, joining with all sections of our oppressed working people in organising nationwide stay-at-homes. All progressive South African youth – Coloured, Indian and democratic white – demonstrated their solidarity with the fallen young heroes of the struggle.

## **NEW STAGE IN THE STRUGGLE**

After 16 June 1976, South Africa would never be the same: our struggle for national and social emancipation had reached a new and higher level. Hundreds of our finest sons and daughters rallied to the call of the ANC and its military

wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, determined to meet the racist terror with revolutionary armed force.

Faced with determined and heightened resistance, the regime clamped down and banned all existing black anti-apartheid organisations in October 1977 and detained hundreds of young activists. During the past two years the repression has mounted steadily, with hundreds of youth and students facing detention, torture and long terms of imprisonment. Since 1976, over ten young activists have been murdered in security police detention – patriots like 20-year old Lungile Tabalaza who plunged to his death from Security Headquarters in Port Elizabeth, becoming the 50th known political detainee to have died at the hands of the Security Police since 1963. More than 200 political prisoners now serving sentences on the notorious Robben Island are of school-going age.

The commitment and strength of our youth have been reflected in many of the trials that have taken place in the recent past. The principled stand of young militants in the Pretoria 12 trial inspired worldwide support and showed clearly the unity in action of the young generation with older, leading cadres of the ANC. The trial of the SASM 11 on charges of 'sedition' has also been an example of the courage and dedication of our students in the face of long terms of detention and torture.

### **SOLOMON MAHLANGU – HERO OF THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE**

Solomon Mahlangu was one of the finest examples of our revolutionary youth. On 6 April 1979, he was executed by the racist regime despite a torrent of international protest and condemnation of the racist murder. Mahlangu left South Africa after witnessing the massacres of 1976 and a year later returned to his country, a member of Umkhonto we Sizwe, determined to serve his people. Solomon was intercepted in the centre of Johannesburg along with his comrades and, in the ensuing clash with racist police, two whites died. He was brutally tortured by security police and his friend and comrade, Mondy Motloun, was declared unfit to stand trial because of the extensive brain damage he received after his arrest. Mahlangu was sentenced to death on 2 March 1977 and, on hearing sentence passed, shouted: 'Amandla!' – 'Power!'

As Mahlangu sat in death row in Pretoria Central Prison, the world's progressive and democratic forces vigorously campaigned for a stop of execution, calling for recognition of our captured freedom fighters as prisoners of war. But the fascist regime ignored the demands of democratic humanity with callous indifference.

Solomon Mahlangu's fearlessness and heroism will be an inspiration to all future generations of young black South Africans. In his final message to his people, he said:

'Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the struggle. My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. A Luta Continua!'

Mahlangu faced his execution like a soldier: he gave the ANC salute and, smiling, walked tall to the gallows.

The youth of South Africa are determined to avenge the death of Solomon Mahlangu and all the martyrs of our revolution – and to fight for the attainment of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. We pledge that 'These freedoms we

will fight for side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty.'  
Our slogan is and will remain:

**VICTORY OR DEATH! AMANDLA NGAWETHU!**



The defiant youth



# **VOW**

**VOICE OF WOMEN**

## ***Urgent appeal***

The ANC (SA) Women's Section urgently appeals to all our readers to obtain subscribers and donations for the production of VOW.

We make this urgent appeal to enable us to keep producing VOW — without subscribers and without donations, we shall be forced to cease publication.

VOW is an important voice of our oppressed and exploited women in the struggle for liberation.

Please help.

**AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (SA)**

**PO BOX 38  
28 PENTON STREET  
LONDON N1 9PR**

# **The ANC School in Tanzania**

The African National Congress believes that the task of educating the young militants is of fundamental political importance. As part of its educational policy, the ANC has established a school on a site made available in Morogoro by the Government of Tanzania.

The purpose of the school will be to equip young South Africans to take their place first in the struggle against apartheid and later in the reconstruction of a liberated South Africa.

To this end the school will provide comprehensive schooling, democratic, progressive and anti-racist in content, for secondary school pupils and vocational training in industrial, agricultural and administrative spheres.

**THE  
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
SOUTH AFRICA**

**Needs YOUR Support Now  
to Build and Equip a School  
for South African  
Students**