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THE IDEAS OF SOCIALISM ARE SPREADING

SACP STATEMENT

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Cover Picture: Eight men, including two school pupils, were charged in connection with the manufacture and display of a South African Communist Party banner at the funeral of four Cradock community leaders murdered by regime death squads in the Eastern Cape last year.

THE IDEAS OF SOCIALISM ARE SPREADING

Following a meeting of its Central Committee, the South African Communist Party has issued the following statement:

The mass offensive for the victory of the national democratic revolution in South Africa has reached new heights. Despite the use by the enemy of methods of extreme repression to defeat the national democratic movement, this movement continues to draw into struggle ever-increasing numbers of people, both black and white, as well as the masses in the countryside. The level of consciousness among the people and their willingness to sacrifice for the transfer of power into their hands, signify that the revolutionary upsurge will not abate, whatever the enemy does.

The revolutionary movement as represented by the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, continues to gain in popularity and in its organisational strength. The demands advanced by this movement find a ready response among the people. Its programmes, strategy and tactics and its leadership are accepted by the masses of the people as their own.

The strategically important campaign to make South Africa ungovernable and apartheid unworkable, resulting in the destruction of the organs of government of the apartheid regime, has become a focal point of struggle. It has gripped the minds of the people as a continuation of their rejection of the apartheid constitution and as an essential part of the struggle for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

An integral part of this mass revolutionary offensive, the black working class, is increasingly assuming its position as the leading social force of the national democratic alliance. Apart from the regional stay-at-homes in November 1984 and March 1985 in the Transvaal and the Eastern Cape respectively, the black workers have successfully used the strike weapon in many towns and cities in furtherance of the demands of the democratic movement. They have also contributed decisively to the success of the consumer boycotts that gripped many parts of our country.

As a result of a growing class consciousness among these workers, who are becoming increasingly aware of the unique interest of their class, the ideas of socialism are spreading among the workers and enjoy rising popularity. The stark and dismal failure of the capitalist system to meet the most basic needs of the working people points exactly to the need to replace this socio-economic formation with another non-exploitative one.

This fact, as well as their increasing access to socialist ideas, is also resulting in greater numbers of the youth being won over to the socialist perspective. This is of great importance, given the reality that the youth form a sizeable portion of the working class and the population in general, as well as the outstanding role they are playing in the revolutionary struggle, in all its formations.

Trade Union Force

The potential of the workers to discharge their political responsibilities is emphasised by the decisive advance that the working class movement has made with the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). This should enable the workers to act nationally, as a united force, dealing not only with economic questions, but also acting to advance the democratic struggle.

The formation of COSATU has also come at the right time. As the economic crisis worsens, the capitalist class will increasingly resort to locking out striking workers, taking advantage of the vast pool of the unemployed and utilising the repressive and punitive possibilities offered by the migrant labour system. The united strength of the workers, organised in COSATU, will have to be brought to bear to defeat the counter-offensive of the employers which has already started.

The special place that the ANC occupies in our country as the head of the liberation front continues to be reinforced by the open adherence of millions of our people to this vanguard movement. This development has forced

many elements that are otherwise hostile to the national-democratic revolution, including sections of the monopoly bourgeoisie inside and outside our country, to seek contact with the ANC and to promote the idea of a negotiated settlement of the South African problem.

It is, however, clear that these forces are seeking a resolution of the struggle in South Africa in favour of the bourgeoisie. They would like to see a bourgeoisie democratic transformation which would leave the capitalist system intact and create the possibility for the rapid emergence of a small and medium African capitalist class which would ally itself with the local monopoly bourgeois and international capital against the masses of the working people of our country.

Accordingly, the representatives of this tendency in South African politics are working for a situation whereby this creeping bourgeois democratic transformation would be presided over by an alliance of the big and petty bourgeoisie and their political representatives. Naturally, they are hostile to the idea of the leading role of the working class in the national democratic revolution and do everything in their power to ensure that the trade union movement concentrates exclusively on economic questions.

At the same time this counter-revolutionary tendency seeks to destroy the positions of the ANC as the head of the national democratic revolution and equate it with other groups on an equal footing. This is accompanied by persistent efforts to break the alliance between the ANC and the SACP, and between the ANC, the Soviet Union and the world progressive movement, as well as determined attempts to rid the ANC of its anti-imperialist content. All this is brought about by the realisation among the forces of reaction that the ANC leads a powerful movement which pursues consistent revolutionary objectives which correspond with the deepest aspirations of the masses of our people.

People's War

Inspired by the positions of this movement and by the certainty that victory is within our grasp, the masses of the people have engaged in struggles which have resulted in the emergence in some areas of the country of what has been described as an insurrectionary situation. These areas have many features of a mass revolutionary base, with the people highly conscious and active, with well-developed mass legal and semi-legal organisations and an acceptance by the broad masses of the leading role of the ANC-led liberation front in the democratic revolution.

In this situation the idea of a people's war has taken root and expresses itself practically in countless actions of revolutionary violence that have taken place and continue to occur in many parts of the country, including the countryside. Reflecting a popular response to the reactionary violence of the enemy, these armed actions are carried out by combat groups with rudimentary weapons in the majority of cases. Nevertheless the revolutionaries who have conducted these actions have themselves attained a high level of political awareness and consciously act as the combat forces of the revolution, subjecting themselves to the programme of the revolutionary movement and its leadership.

They represent the further expansion of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, whose units have also continued to escalate the popular offensive against the apartheid regime. Even the enemy has been forced to admit that in the past year MK has carried out more actions than in any previous year.

The strength and heroism of the struggle inside the country have inspired millions of people throughout the world to join the active ranks of the anti-apartheid movement and step up the campaign for the isolation of the Pretoria regime. Internationally, the strategic position of this regime is weaker today than it was a year ago. Sections among its own allies have lost confidence in its ability to defeat the revolution, while the masses of the working people and other social forces are taking independent action themselves to impose sanctions and extend support to the national liberation movement.

Taken together, these developments at home and abroad have driven the apartheid system deeper and deeper into a general crisis. At the same time the enemy's response to this crisis has only served further to worsen it rather than to alleviate its impact.

Economic Crisis

The economy faces one of the worst crises in its history. The regime was forced to intervene to close the stock and foreign exchange markets to save the capitalist system from collapse.

The rate of chronic unemployment has reached disaster level while retrenchment of workers continues with no end in sight. Despite the persistent reactionary talk about 'monetarist policies', the rate of inflation continues to grow, resulting in the further depression of the living standards of the people. The value of the Rand, having reached its lowest level in the recent past, is set to decline further. At the same time the price of gold has steadied at low levels, with no prospect of any appreciable increase. Business

confidence has also reached 'an all-time low'. The country has an enormous international debt which it cannot pay.

The depth of the economic crisis is evident from the way it is affecting the white population as well. The 'poor white problem' is beginning to emerge once again, with growing numbers of whites jobless, homeless and with nothing to eat. The small and middle bourgeoisie and sections of the middle strata have also been hard hit by this economic crisis. This reflects itself as an unprecedented increase in corporate and personal bankruptcies.

The combination of these interrelated political and economic developments has thrown the apartheid regime into confusion. It can no longer claim to have a policy and certainly lacks both the ideas and the means to extricate the apartheid system from its crisis.

The divisions within the white power bloc have continued to increase. Contradictions between the ruling class, the bourgeoisie and the Botha regime have emerged. Worried by the revolutionary threat to the capitalist system, the bourgeoisie is beginning to indicate a readiness to act on its own and in its interests without waiting for its political representatives to move at a pace which the bourgeoisie considers as unacceptably slow. Sections of this bourgeoisie feel that they cannot be held to ransom by some outdated ideas about 'the historical destiny of the Afrikaner volk.' The decades-old alliance between big capital and petty bourgeois Afrikaner nationalism is beginning to break up.

Simultaneously the petty bourgeoisie is also losing confidence in the ability of the Botha regime to protect its material interests and to guarantee its security and its political future. This is leading to an increase in the rate of white emigration (which is slowed down by the low value of the Rand), some defections from the Nationalist Party to alternative right-wing parties and groups, and increased confusion and indecision among large sections of this petty bourgeoisie. In the meantime the bulk of the white workers continue to hang on the tails of the bourgeois parties of the right, having surrendered their political independence to these parties decades ago.

Yet others, especially the white youth, are trying to find their way towards the democratic movement, moved in good measure by an increasing unwillingness to serve in the racist armed forces and to die in defence of a system that they can see does not guarantee them any future and is in any case breaking up.

All these are contradictions and divisions which the revolutionary movement must exploit and work to widen in the interests of our struggle.

The efforts of the Botha regime to manage this crisis have concentrated on continuing a campaign of extreme repression aimed against the democratic movement. Thus we have seen the mass murder of the people, the

proclamation of the state of emergency, the deployment of the racist army and its formal use as a police force, as well as other measures such as mass arrests, further restrictions of the press, the use of secret murder squads and so on.

Yet this attempt to defend the apartheid system has worsened rather than improved the generally adverse position of the apartheid system. The period that we have just gone through has therefore seen the balance of strength shift continuously in favour of our revolutionary movement, both at home and abroad.

Many features of a revolutionary situation have emerged and are maturing. The general crisis of the apartheid system has thus continued to deepen. This situation imposes many urgent tasks on the ANC and the broad democratic movement in general and the SACP in particular.

Role of the SACP

As part of that broad movement, the Communist Party has to play its role in further deepening the crisis of the apartheid system and helping to shift the balance of forces in favour of the victory of a genuinely democratic people's revolution. In this regard the Party has an historic role to play to assist in the organisation of the workers, to spread further socialist consciousness within the ranks of the working class and to mobilise and activate the workers in the struggle for freedom and socialism.

The rural workers and the working masses require our special attention. They constitute a vital mass reserve of the revolutionary proletariat. Of them it can truly be said that they have nothing to lose but their chains. The importance of this political and organisational work is further emphasised by the fact that these working people are at the mercy of backward, counter-revolutionary elements such as are exemplified by Gatsha Buthelezi. The struggle demands that these rural masses should be won over to the side of the revolution and that they should turn against all those who represent their continued oppression and exploitation, be they black or white. The demand 'land to the tillers' must become a rallying call mobilising the landless masses to seize what is theirs.

The deepening economic and political crisis in our country has also made it both possible and necessary that the Communist Party should step up its work among the white workers, bringing them closer to the democratic and non-racial trade union movement.

The current situation which makes communist ideology attractive to very large numbers of our people also requires that the Party should engage actively in the ideological and political struggle to win over as many people as possible, especially the workers, to the ideas of scientific socialism. Inevitably, during the course of this work, we shall have to combat both right and left tendencies which, among other things, pose the democratic, in opposition to the socialist, revolution; seek to deny the colonial nature of the oppression of especially the African people; work to deny the independent and leading role of the working class; and seek to deny the existence of our Party or in other ways try to liquidate it or dissolve it into the general movement for national liberation.

It is also our vital task continuously to work to strengthen the alliance of revolutionary forces, giving no possibility to the enemy to break the alliance between the ANC and the SACP in particular and the alliance between the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries and the world anti-imperialist movement on the one hand and our revolutionary movement on the other.

At the centre of our efforts lies the task of further strengthening our Party inside the country, extending its links with the workers and the broad masses and drawing into its ranks the best revolutionary representatives of our people. Communists must earn the respect of the people by the example they set in struggle, be it on the trade union front, in mass community struggles, in military combat or elsewhere.

Such a Communist Party, many of whose members have already played their role in the manner described, will make an even bigger contribution in the coming battles which should result in the further maturation of the revolutionary situation and the emergence of the circumstances in which it will be possible to launch a determined general uprising to overthrow the apartheid regime, transfer power to the people and open the road to the victory of the socialist revolution.

To reach that goal, the immediate task that the Communist Party faces during this decisive year, 1986 is to join in the general offensive to build up and activate the mass political and military forces of the revolution, ensuring at every stage that the masses are conscious of the fact that genuine liberation will come when they seize power, relying on their own strength and refusing to succumb to illusions spread by the enemies of our revolution that the Botha regime will, in the near future, be willing to surrender power to the democratic majority.



EDITORIAL NOTES

COLONIALISM OF A SPECIAL TYPE

“We have outgrown the outdated colonial system of paternalism as well as the outdated concept of apartheid”: this was the key sentence in the address with which State President P.W. Botha opened this year’s session of Parliament on January 31. In the same speech Botha complained that there was a malicious international campaign “to belittle each step forward and to brand all government initiatives as merely cosmetic”. But he has only himself to blame, for it is obvious to all that the regime has abandoned neither the colonial system of paternalism nor the outdated concept of apartheid. Furthermore it is hard to find any steps which have been taken by the regime since the opening of the previous session of parliament in January 1985 — cosmetic or otherwise. In fact, this year’s speech is almost a carbon copy of last year’s. Botha’s programme of “reform”, far from being speeded up, has stopped dead.

Let us consider the concept of colonialism. This year Botha says: "We have outgrown the outdated colonial system of paternalism". Last year he claimed that with the introduction of the new tricameral parliament "a new era has dawned in which we have finally broken with the colonialist past that characterised this subcontinent for so many decades and was responsible for so many restrictions on political participation". The fact that in 1986 he had to repeat what he said in 1985 surely indicates that his first announcement was a little premature. Quite apart from the fact that elections to both the Coloured and Indian houses were massively boycotted by the electorate, and that those stooges who are using the system have made no impact on political life apart from registering their total political surrender, Botha's new parliament which is supposed to mark the end of colonialism still excludes the African majority of the population, whose "political participation" is still restricted and who are still obliged to obey laws they have had no hand in framing. If the Africans were ruled under a system of paternalist colonialism in 1984, they were in the same position in 1985 and 1986 and nothing Botha has said gives one reason to believe the situation will change in the foreseeable future.

However, we may perhaps draw some satisfaction from the fact that Botha's analysis of South African society as a form of paternalist colonialism confirms the analysis of the South African Communist Party embodied in its 1962 Programme, *The Road to South African Freedom*, in which we described the South African system as "colonialism of a special type". Maybe it is even significant that the version of Botha's speech published by the Department of Foreign Affairs in January 1985 carried the headline in large type "The Road Ahead". But there all similarity ends. Whereas Botha's programme is designed to perpetuate paternalist colonialism in a new form, the SACP Programme reads:

"The Party declares that the revolutionary people of South Africa cannot merely take over existing State and government institutions designed to maintain colonialism, but must destroy them and create new people's institutions in their place."

Under Botha's new constitution (to paraphrase our 1962 Programme) power has not been transferred into the hands of the masses of people of South Africa but retained in the hands of the White majority. "The evils of colonialism, insofar as the non-White majority was concerned, were perpetuated and reinforced".

Let us consider a few other points from P.W. Botha's 1986 speech.

“I should like today to repeat the Government’s commitment to equal provision of education for all population groups. The process of reform, aimed at achieving this, is in full progress in the education field”.

This is a repeat of what he said in 1985:

“The Government therefore places a high premium on improved provision of education with a view to attaining the ideal of equal educational opportunities for all communities in South Africa”.

And it is equally meaningless. Our education system is already in a shambles because of students’ rejection of inferior segregated education. The schools and colleges have become battlegrounds for freedom. There are separate departments of education with separate ministers for whites, Coloureds and Indians and each of the 10 bantustans. When in 1981 the government’s own De Lange Commission recommended that a single department of education be created with a unified education policy, the regime turned it down. And four days after P.W. Botha’s pledge of “equal education”, the Minister of National Education F.W. De Klerk pledged that there would be no racial integration of South African state schools as long as the present government was in power. Recalling the decision of the United States supreme court in the 1950s that separate educational institutions for black Americans were inherently inferior, one can justifiably dismiss Botha’s talk of educational equality as rubbish.

Citizenship Rights

P.W. Botha in January 1986 promised to restore South African citizenship to Africans who permanently reside in South Africa but who forfeited their citizenship as a result of the “independence” of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei. He had made a similar promise in January 1985 but had done nothing about it. Now, he says: “We accept one citizenship for all South Africans, implying equal treatment and opportunities”. But in a country riddled with discrimination, all talk of equal treatment and opportunities is valueless. In any case, it remains government policy to promote the “independence” of the remaining bantustans, so that “equal citizenship”, whatever that means, will in his view be a temporary phenomenon.

Again in his 1986 speech Botha promised freehold property rights for “members of black communities”, “the involvement of black communities in decision making”, “a uniform identity document for all population groups” and “the drafting of legislation to remove existing influx control measures” — the latter, incidentally, not because they are cruel and unjust, but because “the present system is too costly and has become obsolete”. He

has promised to abolish the pass laws by July 1986, but adds "the government is in favour of measures which will facilitate orderly urbanisation". Pass raids will be replaced by orderly urbanisation raids, and the African population will still be liable to persecution and harassment by police and government officials.

But the front on which the racist regime most clearly reveals the bankruptcy of its policy is that of political rights. In 1985 Botha proposed the establishment of "an informal, non-statutory forum ... to improve communication between the Government and Black communities". This year Botha is more daring, proposing to admit Africans to his advisory President's Council and, in addition,

"to negotiate the establishment of a national statutory council which will meet under my chairmanship. I propose that this council should consist of representatives of the South African Government, representatives of the governments of the self-governing national states, as well as leaders of other black communities and interest groups".

So 40 years after the demise of the Natives Representative Council the government is proposing to create another toy telephone in the hope that it can head off our national democratic revolution. Not surprisingly, almost the only person to have expressed any interest in the crackpot suggestion is Gatsha Buthelezi, clutching desperately at the hope of office for which he has been angling so long.

People's Power

None of the so-called "reforms" announced by President Botha last year or this address the fundamental issue of power — people's power. In his 1986 speech he said: "The peoples of the Republic of South Africa form one nation, but our nation is a nation of minorities ... This of necessity implies participation by all communities in the sharing of power ... without one group dominating another". But what is the reality? The white majority holds all real power in South Africa, and within that white minority the Nationalist Party rules, dominating all other groups in the country as a whole. And even if all Botha's promises are fulfilled to the letter, white minority domination of South Africa, its peoples and resources will continue.

President Botha appeals for support for his policy of "evolutionary reform" because "the alternative is revolutionary chaos". In fact, his speeches both last year and this seem to have been directed towards his foreign friends and allies, who, pursuing their policy of "constructive engagement", have been warning him that unless he speeds up his programme of "reform", South Africa will be plunged into a bloodbath. One might be forgiven for wondering what South Africa is experiencing if it is not a bloodbath. Scarcely a day passes by without

the announcement of deaths and injuries inflicted by the police and their agents on the people, and the official figure of those killed in the last year is well over 1,000. The burial of the victims is frequently the occasion for further police shootings as mourners are ordered to disperse and given no time to do so before tear gas canisters and live bullets are fired into their midst. The savagery of the police and military in the townships has been unbelievable, only partially observed and recorded in the media. But the scars which have been inflicted on the people remain visible and the pain and anguish will not be quickly forgotten. Day by day the officially ordered mayhem continues as the regime attempts to crush the opposition of the people to the hated apartheid policies. The racist ruthlessness, however, is proving futile. In fact it is obvious that the greater the violence shown to them, the greater the determination of the people to fight back and rid themselves once and for all of the rule of terror under which they have suffered so long.

Yet despite the fact that the soil of practically every township in the country is drenched with the blood of our martyrs, this mass murder is not being described as a bloodbath. Why? Because the overwhelming majority of the victims are black, and killing them in large numbers does not count as a bloodbath but only as “the maintenance of law and order” or “the defence of western civilisation” against “terrorism” and “communist imperialism”. The threat of a bloodbath only arises, apparently, when the victims of violence are white. It was when white casualties of “unrest” in South Africa last year rose into double figures — in December — that the tone of the racist media and politicians began to change. Then we were told once again that at its second consultative conference last June the ANC had decided to attack “soft” targets, and was concentrating its fire on white civilians, especially women and children. The fact that the ANC conference took no such decision and that the selection of so-called “soft” targets for attack has never been ANC policy was ignored. Also ignored was the merciless killing and injuring of countless black women and children in the course of attacks by the racist police and military in the townships and elsewhere.

The term “terrorist” is never applied by the racist media and politicians to the security forces and their agents who uphold by force the provisions of the minority white supremacist constitution which denies the franchise to the majority of our population. It was the seizure of our land by the colonisers and the subjection of our people by force which constitute the original act of “terror” from which we have continued to suffer for centuries. The mass revolt of the people which erupted with the adoption of Botha’s new constitution will not be quelled by the repeal of measures like the Mixed

Marriages and Immorality Acts or meaningless proclamations about common citizenship. As President Tambo declared in his January 8 message:

“The Botha regime is confronted with our mass revolt. Botha knows that the masses of our people will not stand by passively while he tries out one apartheid experiment or another. We shall not abandon our forward march, allow ourselves to be diverted from our goal of one person one vote in a united South Africa, or in any way co-operate with the Botha regime in the execution of programmes aimed at the perpetuation of the apartheid system”.

Responsibility for the South African bloodbath rests squarely on the racist Botha regime, which depends on the gun, not on justice, for survival. And propping up the regime are Botha's friends, the imperialist powers, who share in the profits extracted from apartheid exploitation. Reagan and Thatcher call for international action against “terrorism”, yet refuse to take action against the most terroristic regime in the world, which murders defenceless men and women in Cassinga, Maseru, Gaborone and Matola, not to mention Uitenhage, Mamelodi and other centres inside the boundaries of South Africa itself where appalling massacres have been perpetrated.

Black on Black

The Botha regime also seeks to escape blame for what is happening in South Africa by claiming that much of the fighting which is taking place flows from “tribal” conflict, that it is not directed against apartheid, that historically blacks have always fought against blacks, and that white control is essential to “keep the peace”. What this scenario ignores is the fact that the regime's security depends on its ability to “divide and rule”, that apartheid places ethnic differentiation at the very heart of its philosophy, and that the whole bantustan system has been designed as a means of preventing the unification of the African people in the struggle for liberation. If there are disputes over land and water rights, as alleged by the regime, they are deliberately fostered by apartheid and are the consequence of white appropriation of 87% of the land area of South Africa, leaving only 13% of the land for 75% of the population.

But that is not the whole story either. The fact is that the ANC has from its foundation proclaimed and fought for the ideal of African unity. It was precisely the threat of the Land Bill which brought the ANC into existence in 1912, and in its first constitution it declared that its aim was

“To promote mutual help, feeling of fellowship and a spirit of brotherhood among them (the Bantu people).

“To encourage mutual understanding and to bring together into common action as one political people all tribes and clans of various tribes or races and by

means of combined effort and united political organisation to defend their freedom, rights and privileges.

“To discourage and contend against racialism and tribal feuds or to secure the elimination of racialism and tribal feuds, jealousy and petty quarrels by economic combination, education, goodwill and by other means”.

The whole political effort of the ANC has in the ensuing period been directed towards not only breaking down all divisions among the African people but also promoting unity between all the peoples of South Africa. Today as an earnest of its intention to build a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa the ANC has a multi-racial executive. Likewise the Communist Party from its inception incorporated the principle of non-racialism in its constitution. Its predecessor the International Socialist League in 1918 circulated a leaflet in Sesuto and Zulu to African mineworkers throughout the Witwatersrand declaring:

“There is only one way of deliverance for you, Bantu workers. Unite as workers, unite! Forget the things that divide you. Let there be no longer any talk of Basuto, Zulu or Shangaan. You are all labourers. Let Labour be your common bond . . . Deliver yourselves from the chains of the Capitalist. Unity is strength.”

Thus while President Botha admits that the ruling white minority which has exercised power has presided over a form of internal colonialism for decades, the liberation movement has by contrast been preaching and practising the gospel of unity among all South Africans. There can be no doubt as to who enjoys the moral superiority.

Agents and Accomplices

Nor can there be any doubt that when members of Inkatha attack members of the United Democratic Front, it is not a case of “black versus black”, but of agents and accomplices of the regime assaulting and subverting the liberation movement. The battles that rage in the townships are battles between freedom fighters and their enemies, whether or not they have black skins. And the prize at stake is control over the area and its population. The deputy commissioner of the South African Police, Maj. Gen. A.J. Wandrag, speaking at a “national strategy” conference in Johannesburg last November, admitted that the call of the people for the removal of the police and the military from the townships could not be acceded to because it would result in complete loss of control over the townships.

“The objective (of those putting forward the demand) is to create so-called liberated areas in the black townships, from where the terrifying war can spread to the cities and white suburbs to bring about the downfall of the government”.
(*Weekly Mail*, 28.11.1985.)

Precisely. In his January 8 message, President Tambo called for the intensification of the people's war effort:

"We must draw on the resolve of our people in the mass insurrectionary zones to build up this force while working to ensure that these zones multiply in number to cover our country in its entirety. To retain the strategic initiative, apart from confronting the army of occupation in our areas, it is essential that we carry and extend our offensive beyond our township borders into other areas with even greater determination . . . The charge we give to Umkhonto we Sizwe and to the masses of our people is: attack, advance, give the enemy no quarter — an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!

"The fascist Botha-Malan-Coetzee regime must be swept off the surface of the earth and our country transformed into a democratic, non-racial and peaceful entity. Therefore we must fight. We must organise and arm ourselves to fight harder and better for the overthrow of the apartheid regime".

In response to the call to arms issued by the ANC, the tempo of resistance has significantly increased. During 1985 the number of guerrilla attacks launched by Umkhonto we Sizwe increased by nearly 300% compared with the previous year, according to figures issued by Pretoria University's Institute of Strategic Studies. By mid-December 122 guerrilla attacks on regime targets had been recorded for the year, compared with 44 for the whole of 1984 and 56 for 1983. Commenting on the figures, Dr Tom Lodge, of the University of the Witwatersrand's Political Studies Department, said the ANC had shown "a qualitative advance in its ability to conduct guerrilla warfare . . . The attacks have been more extensive and show the ANC's increasing ability to operate from within the country". (*Weekly Mail*, 26.12.1985.)

Increased militancy was also being demonstrated by workers on the industrial front. During the last seven years the number of man-days lost due to strike action rose by 700 per cent, and the figure for 1985 was significantly higher than the previous record registered in 1984. The formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in November 1985, bringing 450,000 workers together in the largest trade union federation ever seen in South Africa, opens up the prospect of ever-increasing pressure being exercised on behalf of the oppressed and exploited masses on the labour front.

The machinery for transforming the political situation in South Africa in favour of the people's cause is steadily being put into place. 1986 has been declared The Year of Umkhonto we Sizwe and should register a significant advance in the liberation struggle on all fronts.

STATE TERRORISM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The overthrow of Leabua Jonathan in Lesotho was brought about in the wake of an economic offensive directed against the kingdom by South Africa. The Lesotho economy was paralysed and the people were starved of food and supplies.

Pretoria was demanding (a) that all ANC "terrorists" be repatriated to South Africa; (b) that Lesotho enter into an Nkomati-type security pact with South Africa; and (c) that Lesotho expel the diplomatic representatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. To his lasting credit, Leabua refused to knuckle under. "I would rather die", he said, than send ANC personnel back to their deaths in South Africa.

As soon as a new government was installed in Maseru, the economic boycott was lifted. How many of Pretoria's demands will be met and what the consequences will be on the political scene in Lesotho remains to be seen.

In his speech to the South African Parliament on January 31 P.W. Botha declaimed hypocritically:

"I once again extend a hand of friendship to our neighbours . . . We reaffirm our continued commitment to peaceful international co-existence through co-operation and negotiation . . . There can be no peace and stability in our region as long as countries knowingly harbour terrorists who plan and execute acts of terror against a neighbouring state".

South Africa does precisely that. It knowingly harbours, trains and equips terrorists who commit acts of murder and destabilisation in all the frontline states and in states even further afield such as the Seychelles. The MNR in Mozambique, the LLN in Lesotho, the UNITA gang in Angola — all are instruments of South African foreign policy. The massacres in Maseru, Matola, Gaborone, Cassinga and many other places are perpetrated by terrorists who come from South Africa. The Captain Wynand du Toit for whose release Botha insultingly appealed in exchange for Nelson Mandela is a South African terrorist who was part of a nine-man commando squad sent from South Africa last May to blow up American Gulf Oil installations in the Cabinda enclave.

Botha talks peace but threatens and actually carries out war. Proposing "a permanent joint mechanism for dealing with matters of security", he said:

"Should this offer by the Republic of South Africa be ignored or rejected, we would have no choice but to take effective measures in self-defence to protect our country and population against threats".

Yes, the bully says that if his "peace" offers are ignored, he will take action. And he has taken action over and over again. The bully says:

“South Africa is a powerful bastion against Communist domination and enslavement. The Republic is also an important supplier of expertise, development aid, technology and necessities of life to Africa”.

The bully doesn't talk about the cost in human and material terms of his own enslavement of the majority of the population of South Africa. Details of the cost to neighbouring states are set out in a memorandum drawn up by the frontline states for submission to the OAU — see “The Cost of South African Aggression” on page 86: of this issue of *The African Communist*. The expertise and technology which South Africa displays to its neighbours and its own population comprises tanks, aircraft, rockets, pistols fitted with silencers, knives, machetes, tear gas, whips and truncheons.

South Africa is aided in its international piracy by the practitioners of “constructive engagement”. In his state of the Union address to Congress on February 4, Reagan pledged support to the terrorists who are fighting against the legitimate governments of Angola, Kampuchea, Nicaragua and Afghanistan. And in the course of discussions with the heads of frontline states in Lusaka last February, British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe opposed the imposition of sanctions against South Africa “just when Pretoria is beginning to move towards reform”. None of the western governments lifted a finger to help Leabua in his hour of need.

Botha, Reagan and Thatcher are amongst the leaders of the “have” nations in the world who are supporting the use of terrorism to preserve the profits and privileges they gain from imperialism and neo-colonialism.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ARMS RACE

The events of the last few months have made it abundantly clear who is responsible for the intensification of the arms race and, in particular, the threat of nuclear war. On August 6, 1985 — the 40th anniversary of the US destruction of Hiroshima — the Soviet government announced a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear testing and invited the United States to follow suit. The United States refused the invitation on the grounds (a) that such a ban would be difficult to verify and (b) that the US had not yet completed its current test programme and that unless it did so the Soviet Union, whose current programme was already complete, would be left in a position of superiority.

There followed the Geneva summit meeting between President Reagan and CPSU general secretary Gorbachov last November. Both sides agreed that nuclear war was impermissible because there could be no victors

from nuclear conflict. Both parties agreed that neither side would seek military superiority. Although it was clear that one summit meeting was not enough to end the cold war, all were inclined to agree with comrade Gorbachov that after Geneva the world was a safer place.

However, it is equally clear that not all, especially in the United States, liked it that way. More and more the United States is speaking with two voices, and one is hard put to it to decide whether the President himself reflects the thinking of his administration, or whether the administration is fully in charge of the military-industrial complex which seems to have the ability to call the tune as well as a vested interest in exacerbating international tension. The suspicion is also aroused that President Reagan has adopted a new tactic of cooing like a dove to satisfy the world-wide peace lobby (whose strength is growing even amongst the masses of the American people) while continuing without any break or hesitation to implement his nuclear war programme.

Following his refusal to follow the Soviet example by abandoning nuclear testing, Reagan insisted at Geneva and afterwards that nothing would deflect him from his Star Wars programme, extending into space his nuclear war preparations. Between August 6 and the end of 1985, the US set off no fewer than 7 nuclear explosions, bringing into question its seriousness in attempting to establish a new relationship of detente with the Soviet Union.

The most striking contrast between US and Soviet behaviour in this field occurred at the turn of the year. On December 28, 1985, the US set off an underground nuclear explosion at its Nevada range. According to reports, what was tested was a nuclear-propelled laser designed for use in space against strategic ballistic missiles, satellites and other targets. This was the 16th US test in 1985.

The holding of this last test was not only a violation of existing treaties between the two sides but also contradicted the spirit of the Geneva summit at which the two powers had undertaken to take steps to make nuclear weapons obsolete and to eliminate them from their arsenals. Apart from words, the US has done nothing to implement Reagan's Geneva promise. By contrast, the Soviet Union announced that its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, which was due to expire on December 31, 1985, would remain in force for a further three months, and would continue even afterwards if the US for its part also stopped nuclear tests. Then in mid-January 1986 general secretary Gorbachov outlined a programme which, if implemented by all the world powers, would rid the world of all nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear war by the end of this century. His plan had three stages:

Stage 1: Within 5 to 8 years the Soviet Union and the US should reduce by

half the nuclear weapons capable of reaching one another's territory. Of the remaining weapons each side would retain no more than 6,000 warheads.

Stage 2: Should start by 1990 and last for 5 to 7 years, during which the other nuclear powers should begin to join in the programme of nuclear disarmament. The US and USSR would carry out further measures to eliminate medium-range nuclear weapons and freeze tactical nuclear systems.

Stage 3: To begin by 1995. All remaining nuclear weapons should be eliminated.

To counter possible US objections, the Soviet Union proposed that verification should be carried out both by national technical means and through on-site inspection, and announced itself ready to reach agreement on any additional verification measures desired by the other side. The Soviet Union also dismissed claims that it was ahead of the US in its nuclear weapons test programme by pointing out that the boot was on the other foot — since 1945 the US has carried out 30% more nuclear weapons test explosions than the Soviet Union, and the gap between the two sides is widening with every US explosion.

The US has learned that it does not win public favour either at home or abroad by summarily dismissing all Soviet disarmament proposals, and so declared it would give "careful consideration" to the Gorbachov plan. But when at the United Nations General Assembly a resolution was adopted calling for the halting and banning of all nuclear weapons tests, three member states voted against it — the US, Britain and France.

These exchanges should end once and for all arguments over who is responsible for the continuation of the arms race. It is a fact that throughout the period since the October Revolution in 1917 the Soviet Union has taken the lead in advancing proposals for disarmament; and it is equally a fact that throughout this period the capitalist countries have found excuses for rejecting them. Assuming that today there is something approaching parity between the great powers in the sphere of nuclear armaments, the question of disarmament involving both nuclear and conventional weapons and including chemical, as well as entirely new weapons systems, may be a complicated process for negotiation between all the powers. But the cessation of all nuclear weapons tests would halt the arms race at a stroke and greatly reduce fear and tension amongst all humanity.

That it is a comparatively simple process to halt such tests has been demonstrated by the adoption on August 5, 1963, of the Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, outer space and under

water — a treaty to which there are now 113 signatories. In 1977 the Soviet Union, US and Britain entered into negotiations, on the Soviet initiative, for the banning of all nuclear tests. The negotiations had almost reached finality when, in the summer of 1980, the US and NATO powers cut short the talks in their concluding stages. In July 1982 the Reagan Administration refused point blank to resume negotiations.

Today, thanks once again to the Soviet initiative, the opportunity has again been created for the ending of all nuclear weapons tests, an essential first step, not only towards lifting from humanity the threat of nuclear war, but also towards complete and universal disarmament, or at least the reduction of armaments to limits not incompatible with the survival of the human race and civilisation as we know it. It is an opportunity that world progressive opinion must not allow to slip. The warmongers must be curbed and peace consolidated. It is high time the weapons were beaten into ploughshares and men and women of all nations enabled to live and work together in peace for the good of all.



“A GIANT IS BORN”

Trade Union Unity Forged at Founding Conference of COSATU

By R. S. Nyameko

“A Giant is Born” — these were the words in Cyril Ramaphosa’s opening address to the Durban conference at which the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was launched on November 30, 1985.¹ His speech was enthusiastically acclaimed by the 900 delegates, representing 450,000 paid-up (nearly 600,000 signed up) members from 36 unions, covering almost every important section of the economy.

COSATU was conceived more than four years ago at the first trade union unity summit held in Langa, Cape Town, in August 1981. Since then negotiations between the progressive unions for the formation of a single trade union centre representing the radical and emerging unions were held in Johannesburg in April and July 1982, in Cape Town in April and July 1983, in Johannesburg in November 1983 and again in March 1984. And there were many more meetings. It has taken four years of talks to bring together independent unions and general unions affiliated to the United Democratic Front (UDF).

The problem has been to reach agreement on structures, constitutions and objectives. All parties agreed with the aim of establishing an all-embracing federation, but differences of interests and ideology had to be reconciled before the negotiating unions could arrive at a consensus.

A big contribution to the formation of COSATU was made by the successful stay-away in the Transvaal of 5-7th November 1984 when trade unions, community organisations, boycotting students and scholars joined forces and paralysed South Africa's industrial heartland for two days with the most effective work stay-away in the country's history.

"This stay-away demonstrated the need for the working class to come together and fight as a people, because you could not say that the struggle in the factory was different from the struggle in the community", explained Chris Dlamini, President of FOSATU (now merged in COSATU).

The formation of COSATU is of great historical importance. It is the largest and most powerful union federation our country has ever seen. Most of the 900 delegates were black, but a number of white trade unionists were present. They had come from all over South Africa to take part in the formation of COSATU which had been hailed as a significant move in the history of our working class.

SACTU Support

Among the messages of support from around the world was one from SACTU:

"South Africa's future lies in the hands of its workers. Only they together with progressive people of all races can liberate us from racial hatred, inequality, class exploitation and national oppression. Our struggle requires a united and strong trade union movement determined to satisfy demands for higher wages, good working conditions, removal of colour bar, equal opportunities and the achievement of complete emancipation."

COSATU will become a very substantial force to be reckoned with. The regime when it introduced the Labour Relations Act of 1981 saw the African workers' role as limited strictly to negotiate pay and conditions at factory level.²

Union leaders see it differently. Cyril Ramaphosa³ General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), told reporters prior to the Conference:

"The labour movement in this country has come of age. If, in fighting against oppression, we have to hit our heads against the government, so be it".⁴

Opening the congress Cyril Ramaphosa said:

“This congress should lead the working class people of this country. The government has clearly demonstrated that it is failing to control this country, we call on PW Botha to resign and give power to the legitimate leaders. We workers should seize power and build a new society. Organisations are growing stronger and are fighting side by side with trade unions against apartheid and capitalism. Lift the state of emergency and withdraw all troops from the townships immediately, unban political organisations and individuals, dismantle the bantustan system and end migrant labour, scrap the pass laws within six months, or face mass defiance.”

State of Emergency

The COSATU conference in Durban was organised in the midst of the state of emergency declared on July 21, 1985. In the areas covered by the emergency and elsewhere the police and military systematically attacked the workers and their families, at their workplaces and in their homes, with sjamboks, tear gas, rubber bullets and rifle fire, in Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Queenstown, East London, Tumahole in the Free State, Duncan Village, Cradock, Mamelodi, Soweto, Cape Town, Durban, in villages and townships, in “independent” Transkei and Ciskei — everywhere. The people resisted, developing new forms of struggle and new organisations. Mass funerals attended by between 30 and 50,000 people were held.

At the time of the Durban conference at least 18 trade union organisers were being held in prison under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act and an unknown larger number had been detained under the emergency regulations. Many homes and union offices had been raided and documents seized. FOSATU stated that three members had been killed, while senior officials, including their President Chris Dlamini, had received death threats. Because workers returning home were being attacked by the police, unions in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape had demanded that managements adjust their shifts.⁵

In addition workers faced the hostility and aggression of armed Inkatha impis in Natal, particularly in Lamontville and Umlazi, where Thabo Mokoena and Toto Dweba, organisers of the National Federation of Workers, were brutally killed, their bodies horribly stabbed and mutilated. A third union organiser Mandla Ndlela was left alive but severely injured.

The trade union movement was also the target of destabilisation attempts by the regime. The Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU) alleges that some of its senior office-bearers and officials have been approached to become informers by men identifying themselves as members of the security police.

“According to MAWU, two senior office-bearers of its national executive committee (NEC) and two administrative officers were visited at their homes and offered substantial monthly payments of between R350 and R500 to provide information”.⁶

To record in detail the vicious terror unleashed by the regime against the South African working class would take a book. The Detainees Parents Support Committee estimates that 5,857 people were detained in the first 15 weeks of the emergency, 2,929 in the Eastern Cape, 2,597 in the Transvaal. Almost 56 detentions took place a day.⁷

More than 50 children under the age of 18 were detained in the Western Cape, the youngest was 11 years old. The Detentions Action Committee estimates that over 60% of persons detained were under the age of 25. As many as 200 detainees at the Diepkloof Prison are said to have gone on a 3-day hunger strike. They demanded immediate release, the withdrawal of the police and army from the townships and the end of the emergency.⁸

Emergency regulations gazetted in the Western Cape at the end of October included a ban on 98 organisations in the Cape Peninsula and 19 in Boland. The list is a valuable survey of the local organisations as well as national that participated in the revolt of recent months.⁹ They cover a wide spectrum of adults and young people, political, social and religious organisations and demonstrate convincingly the strength of the popular resistance to the brutal raids and repression of the regime.¹⁰

The “concerned lawyers of the Western Cape and the Boland” noted that “the draconian powers assumed by the regime have been used to suppress the political, social and economic aspirations of the oppressed people” and that the regime had declared a state of emergency “in order to maintain the status quo.”¹¹

In addition to the burden of repression, the workers have been weighed down by a 20% increase in the cost of living and a rise in the number of unemployed to well over 3 million. But while the workers’ standard of living is declining, the bosses are accumulating greater profits. Rand Mines Ltd., for example, increased its profits by 36% over the previous year. (*Financial Mail* 6.12.1985).

New Self-Confidence

The tasks facing our working class are great, but they are responding to the challenge with great militancy, ingenuity and determination. In his annual report the industrial relations consultant Andrew Levy noted that during the

last seven years the number of man-day lost in South Africa due to strike action rose by 700 per cent, that the figure for 1985 significantly exceeded the record levels of 1984 and that much of the union activity in 1985 had been political, with union and community organisations co-operating to organise protest boycotts and stay-aways.

“Politically the ideology of the black labour movement became clearer and more and more of the attacks were directed at capitalism in general. The development of black trade unions over the past six years has been a revolution in itself. Real reform has taken place in the labour arena and white management paternalism has given way to a respect for the power potential of a largely black industrial labour force, and amongst black workers themselves there is a new sense of self-confidence”.¹³

An analysis of the trade union movement in the *South African Labour Bulletin* notes that not only has there been a massive growth in trade union membership but also greater consolidation of organisation structures, particularly on the factory floor.

“The *SALB* report is based largely on a survey of 23 of the new generation of emerging unions representing about 363,000 workers — about 70% of the total paid-up membership of emerging unions. Fourteen of the unions are affiliated to COSATU, while most of the remainder fall under the umbrella of the Council of Unions of SA (CUSA) or the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU).

“According to the *SALB* survey the 23 unions have a total of 12,462 shop stewards, or a ratio of one to every 29 members. By comparison, a 1983 survey conducted by Professor Edward Webster of Wits University’s Industrial Sociology Department found there were a total of about 6,000 shop stewards in the emerging unions.

“The unions surveyed have 306 paid officials — one per 1,186 members. They have signed 450 recognition agreements and are organised in 3,421 workplaces. A single agreement can apply to scores, or even hundreds of establishments — particularly in the commercial and mining sectors. Webster’s survey indicates there were 756 organised workplaces in 1983.

“The survey also reflects the increasing involvement of unions in political affairs. Only three unions said they had not participated in political or community issues. Thirteen had encouraged members to participate in work stayaways, while 15 had supported consumer boycotts.”¹⁴

The economic position of the black workers in South Africa’s economy is negated by their total lack of political power. Trade union leaders realise that we cannot achieve complete emancipation unless and until we have achieved the right to determine our future as a united people without colour bars and without domination by foreign and domestic capitalists.

COSATU incorporates the FOSATU, general unions, some affiliated to the UDF, some independent industrial unions. The conference held in

Durban elected Elijah Barayi,¹⁵ President of the NUM, the largest and fastest growing union, as President, Chris Dlamini of the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers' Union (SFAWU) and ex-President of FOSATU, as Vice-President; and Jay Naidoo, formerly a student activist at the University of Durban-Westville before becoming General Secretary of SFAWU, as Secretary. His election was an affirmation of COSATU's commitment to non-racialism. Mr Sydney Mufamadi of the General and Allied Workers' Union (GAWU), COSATU's assistant General Secretary, is a well known UDF activist as well as a top official of the GAWU. Second Vice-President is Makhulu Ledweba, President of the 50,000 Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (CCAWUSA). The Treasurer is Maxwell Xulu, Southern Natal Chairman of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU).

On Sunday, December 1, COSATU held a mass rally in Durban to mark the formation of COSATU. Mr Barayi, its President, was carried shoulder high by workers.

In his Presidential address which drew thunderous applause in Xhosa translated into Sotho, English and Afrikaans (many Coloured workers from the Cape are Afrikaans-speaking), he affirmed the workers' demands and aspirations. He demanded the end of the emergency, withdrawal of troops from the townships, the abolition of the passes. "If that does not take place, we will burn the passes of the black man".

He contemptuously dismissed the argument that international sanctions should not be imposed on South Africa because they would be more harmful to blacks than whites. "Blacks have starved since 1652 (when the whites started to settle in South Africa)", he said. "COSATU is therefore in favour of sanctions".

Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, told the rally: "COSATU must contribute to the liberation struggle", but stressed that involvement in wider political issues should not be at the expense of building up support at factory floor level.

In considering COSATU's role in the political arena, the question the conference debated was not whether it should take an active role, but how this should best be achieved.

The emphasis was on working in close co-operation with 'progressive' political organisations. The conference discussed the migrant labour policy and declared support for the workers should the government carry out its threat to repatriate migrant workers from neighbouring states. 'SA will face one of the worst strikes,' said Jay Naidoo, COSATU's General Secretary.

His organisation was committed to strengthening ties with other labour organisations in Southern Africa to enhance the solidarity of workers in the region.¹⁶

Unity is Strength

Unity is the great strength of the working class, the workers' answer to the power, wealth, greed and racial arrogance of the white racist regime, employers and most of the white workers. The regime and employers use the poisonous instrument of racism. Therefore the fight against racism, for unity of black and white workers, for unity between trade unions and the people's organisations is the key to winning the unity of our class and people against the white racist regime and capital. 'United we stand, divided we fall' is a historic trade union slogan.

A broad range of resolutions dealt with the struggle against the present system, abolition of the migrant labour system, and the forging of close links with other unions in Southern Africa as a counter to the strength of multinational companies.

Strikes: All workers must have the right to this democratic form of struggle.

Worker's Education: To combat the present education system, which is undemocratic, divisive and serves the interests of the ruling class, there must be education programmes to politicise, mobilise and organise the working class so that they can lead the transformation towards a society that serves the needs of those now oppressed and exploited.

On unemployment: All workers have a right to work.

Disinvestment: An essential and effective form of pressure on the regime that must be supported.

With its five principles of non-racialism, one union one industry, worker control, representation on the basis of paid-up membership and co-operation between affiliates at national level, the new federation clearly intends to learn from the mistakes of the past and build a strong democratic structure to face the challenge of the future.

Role of Women

COSATU's stand on women workers is more than welcome. It said: "It was against all unequal and discriminatory treatment of women at work, in society and in the federation."

In a resolution released on December 2 COSATU called for equal pay for all work of equal value and for the restructuring of employment so as to

allow women and men the opportunity of qualifying for jobs of equal value. It said it would fight for child care and family facilities to meet workers' needs and make it easier for workers to combine work and family responsibilities, and for full maternity rights including paid maternity and paternity leave.

It called for protection of women and men from all types of work which were harmful to them and resolved to fight "against sexual harassment in whatever form it occurs". Women workers often suffered sexual harassment in recruitment and employment and "most women workers in SA lose their jobs when they become pregnant".¹⁷

Women are rapidly becoming an important factor in the workforce and are entering the trade unions in growing numbers and therefore it is regrettable that the entire COSATU leadership i.e. officials are men, with not a single woman amongst them. There is a great need to fight against the Natal Native Code, to educate men to assist their women to be active in trade union work and not leave all the house work and the caring of children to the women.

As a first step towards equality for all workers, women should be advanced into policy making positions of leadership. The trade union movement will be stronger if women workers are involved in all structures.

The fight of the unemployed for jobs and job security requires COSATU to take the lead in organising the unemployed. Every trade union and every region should have a committee on unemployment. It is in the self-interest of the workers to lead in organising the unemployed and first-time job seekers i.e. school leavers. Laid-off union members should be able to retain their membership at nominal cost. A prime task will also be the organisation of farm and domestic workers, the most exploited sections of the working class.

A major issue confronting COSATU is the need to amalgamate unions which have overlapped or competed in recruitment. The present fragmented state of trade unions poses a serious threat to COSATU's growth and development — sometimes 3 or more unions compete for members in a single industry.

In terms of the proposed constitution COSATU will build broad shop steward councils, industrial unions — one union per industry. These are not easy principles as general workers' unions will have to dismantle and merge with industrial unions organising in the same industries. The conference also resolved that affiliates should negotiate mergers so that ultimately there will be single unions in the following major industries: food and drink; textile, clothing and leather; paper, wood and printing; mining and energy; metal

and motor; chemical and petroleum; commerce; transport, cleaning and security; local and national government services; and domestic workers. These are sectors in which COSATU affiliates already have a sizeable presence. In addition, COSATU is looking towards establishing unions for construction and agricultural workers.

There is no easy way out. Fundamental changes in policy and structure are required to meet today's realities and challenges. The trade union movement makes real progress when it is committed to policies of militant class struggle.

COSATU's leadership's priority task is to bring together at the conference table representatives from industrial unions in a given sector, irrespective of their affiliation. A start to unity in the food industry has been made by three affiliates to COSATU — Food and Canning Workers' Union (FCWU), Sweet, Food and Allied Workers' Union (SFAWU) and Retail and Allied Workers' Union (RAWU). All other groups of food workers who have been organised by the National Federation of Workers (NFW) by GAWU and the Food and Beverages Workers' Union affiliated to CUSA should be brought into one union for the food industry.

Black Consciousness

A great effort should be undertaken in the mining sector, where the powerful National Union of Mineworkers should convene such a meeting. The Transport and General Workers' Union have given a lead in the transport sector, as also have the Municipal Workers' Unions.

A special sub-committee should be charged with the task of lobbying those important sections of the working class organised in the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) and the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU) who still remain outside COSATU. They are black consciousness orientated, but the COSATU leadership has been at pains to emphasise that the door to rapprochement remains open. COSATU, correctly, is not prepared to compromise with racialism, white or black. In the words of one commentator, "knowing that it was talking from a position of strength, COSATU made it patently clear that any future alliance would be on its terms".¹⁸

Another section of the organised working class comprises those unions which have disaffiliated from the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA) — they should be urged to join COSATU. A special appeal should also be made to black unions which are still affiliated to TUCSA to leave TUCSA and join COSATU.

The *Worker's Diary* of 1986 published by Ravan Press forecasts that by the end of 1986 COSATU should have recruited 1 million workers. This is not only possible but must be made a reality. Every trade union member affiliated to COSATU should undertake to recruit two other workers not only in his or her own union but also in Unions proposed for the unorganised workers, as agreed at the Durban conference. A priority is to bring about 100% organisation in the mining, railways, metal and transport sectors including the South African Transport Services (SATS).

Last but not least, teachers, nursing and health employees must be brought into COSATU without delay.

COSATU will be facing some controversial issues, but its leadership aims to create a real unity of purpose among the member unions by maintaining strong opposition to the injustices suffered by black workers and taking a sincere and honest approach to their COSATU work.

COSATU will also be facing the hostility of the racist regime, the big capitalists and their supporters. It is obviously aware of the dangers. A COSATU resolution condemned the bantustan system as well as those who participate in it. This resolution drew fire from Buthelezi who interpreted it as a personal attack on him. Speaking at the annual Central Committee meeting of Inkatha he called on Inkatha to mobilise workers against COSATU and suggested that Inkatha should enter the labour field and establish Inkatha branches in every factory and train special organisers.¹⁹ This attempt to form a tribal union is a violation of the basic trade union principle of workers' unity in the fight against capital, the employing class and apartheid.

All the signs are that COSATU, with its able, dedicated leaders, will be able to mobilise and organise the workers of South Africa and help them to meet the challenges that will confront them. All members of the Communist Party must give of their utmost in support of COSATU. Our oppressed people are conducting a brave and determined struggle against white supremacy, racial tyranny, discrimination, capitalist exploitation and national oppression. COSATU, in unison with the national liberation movement and its allies, is called upon to perform a historic task, to mobilise its members and all organised workers to participate fully in the struggle for liberation, social justice and equality.

Long live COSATU! Long live the unity of the exploited workers and oppressed people!

References

1. Durban was chosen for this historic gathering because of its association with the 1973 strike wave and also because it was the only major centre not under the declared state of emergency.
2. *Financial Mail*, 6.12.1985.
3. Cyril Ramaphosa was born in Johannesburg in November 1952 and went to school in Soweto and the Northern Transvaal. In 1972 he went to study at Turfloop University. He joined the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) and was elected its branch chairman in 1974. When the people of Mozambique and Angola won their independence, SASO planned a big meeting to celebrate. The regime banned the meeting, but the students decided to go ahead and their leaders were detained. About 1,400 students marched to the police station to demand the release of their comrades, one of whom was Cyril Ramaphosa, who was detained for 11 months. On his release Turfloop University refused to take him back. He began to study part time, but in 1976 was again detained. He obtained his law degree in 1981 and went to work for a firm of lawyers. This work did not satisfy him. He wanted to help the people in their struggle for a better life and a new society. He thus went to work for CUSA. In 1982 CUSA decided to start a union for mineworkers and Cyril Ramaphosa was elected general secretary.
4. *Cape Times*, 29.11.1985.
5. *State of the Nation*, October/November 1985.
6. *Financial Mail*, 6.12.1985.
7. *Cape Times*, 11.11.1985.
8. *Cape Times*, 27.11.1985.
9. *Cape Times*, 28.10.1985.
10. *Cape Times*, 27.11.1985.
11. *Cape Times*, 26.11.1985.
12. *Cape Times*, 14.12.1985.
13. *Cape Times*, 14.12.1985.
14. *Financial Times*, 6.12.1985.
15. Elijah Barayi, 55 years old, was born at Cradock in the militant Eastern Cape. He is Vice-President of the National Union of Mineworkers, the largest and fastest-growing union in South Africa. He has worked in the mining industry since 1964 and is employed as a personnel assistant at Rand Mines Blyvooruitzicht Gold Mine near Carletonville. He is second in command of the NUM team which conducts wage negotiations with the Chamber of Mines. Barayi is not a newcomer to the trade union and liberation movement. When the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948, Barayi at the age of 18 became a member of the ANC Youth League where he rubbed shoulders with Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and other leaders. In 1952 during the Defiance Campaign he presented himself to the police for arrest for disobeying the pass laws. In the 1960 state of emergency he was held in detention for 4 months. He says that the turning point for him came in 1979 when the Wiehahn Commission recommended that black trade unions should be recognised by law. "I said to myself — this is my chance to start organising". And so he did. (*Financiaal Mail*, 6.12.1985).
16. *Sunday Mail*, 8.12.1985.
17. *Cape Times*, 3.12.1985.
18. *Financial Mail*, 6.12.1985.
19. *Zambia Daily Mail*, 14.12.1985.

MAY DAY IS 100 YEARS OLD

by John K. Nkadimeng
General Secretary of the S.A. Congress of Trade Unions

This year millions of workers all over the world are celebrating May Day, which unites men and women of labour throughout the world. It is a day on which the workers everywhere can feel proud of the achievements of the working class. It is also a day to remember those who laid the foundations of the modern labour movement, and to honour those who laid down their lives and made the supreme sacrifice in the fight for workers' liberty.

May Day started 100 years ago with the militant struggles in North America and Europe for an 8-hour day, and May 1st remains the day on which the workers express their solidarity with their working brothers and sisters all over the world. Workers at that time worked 12, 14 and 16 hours a day in very bad conditions and for very low wages. Here is how May Day developed:

1 May 1st 1886: Factories all over the United States were silent as 350,000 workers went on strike for an 8-hour working day. Chicago was the centre of the strikes with 40,000 workers marching through the streets. Many employers were compelled to introduce an 8-hour working day.

2 May 3rd 1886: The government hit back at the workers. The police fired at the workers in Chicago and killed six. The next day in a peaceful protest march at Hay Market Square in Chicago, a bomb was thrown at the police. Police used this as an excuse to attack the workers. Leaders were jailed and offices smashed. Four labour leaders were hanged.

3 **1890:** May Day was celebrated internationally for the first time. Meetings were held by workers in Austria, Hungary, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Britain and Poland.

When and how May Day came to South Africa: The first May Day demonstration in South Africa was held as far back as 1895. It was organised by the Johannesburg District Trades Council. The celebration of May Day gradually spread to other centres. In Cape Town it was held for the first time in 1906. From then on, the history of May Day is a record of the labour movement and reflects the many great events that form part of our record and traditions.

In 1910 the May Day demonstration was led by Tom Mann, the British dockers' leader and international labour figure. He marched at the head of the procession with Bill Andrews, one of the greatest labour leaders of our country, spreading the word and meaning of working-class solidarity. Four years later, the government of Botha-Smuts moved into action against the rising tide of working class indignation. The Social Democratic Federation called on the workers to come out on strike in the streets of Cape Town on May 1st to protest against the Riotous Assemblies Bill, the first of many laws the ruling class used to trample the rights of the working people and to crush their organisation.

At that point the First World War broke out. The labour movement in South Africa, as in other countries was split into two factions — anti-war and pro-war. The Social Democratic Federation headed by stalwarts like McManus, Harrison and others, remained true to the principles of working class solidarity. At its May Day celebrations in 1915, the Federation resolved to fight for the unity of all peoples and the abolition of capitalist exploitation, brutality and bloodshed. It was a great event which embraced the workers of our country drawn from all racial groups.

Soviet Power

With the end of the war and the achievement of working class power in Russia, a new spirit of revolt spread to the workers of our country. This was recognised by *The International*, organ of the International Socialist League, which in its special May Day issue of 1919 carried a message expressing the confidence that had been aroused in all true socialists and progressive trade unionists by the victories of the Russian workers and peasants over their exploiters and oppressors.

This victory of the workers and peasants of Russia showed the importance of working class solidarity and pointed the way forward to the

working class movement in general. It brought home the need for all workers in their respective countries to fight their own capitalist bosses, do away with exploitation and oppression and create a society where all shall work for the same goals of eliminating poverty and hunger. The urge to follow the path taken by the Russian workers was reflected in our country by the activities of the mine and municipal workers during and after that period.

Liberation Day

May Day has been written in the history of the national and working class movements. On May Day 1950 African, Indian and Coloured workers observed their Labour Day and brought factories to a standstill in the major cities of our country, especially on the Witwatersrand. In Alexandra Township the police ran amuck, shooting the workers and stabbing them with fixed bayonets. Events in Benoni, Alexandra and Sophiatown on that day are still fresh in the minds of the working class. These events and many others have gone down as an inspiring record of working class solidarity and militant struggle.

Today when the working people all over the world are marking the Centenary of May Day, our people are engaged in fierce struggles for the emancipation of labour. They are demanding with all their strength the right to govern themselves as they have realised more than ever that workers cannot achieve economic security until they have gained political freedom. In this year of the Centenary of May Day, we shall be fighting with determination that May Day shall become a holiday for all who work, in honour of the innumerable comrades who have laid down their lives in the struggle for the right to live a decent human life.

The last few years have witnessed spectacular events in our country, with workers uniting and demonstrating their solidarity around this issue of May Day. In particular, the last year, 1985, saw one of the most inspiring manifestations of working class solidarity taking place on May Day. This year, the labour movement in South Africa, which has advanced by leaps and bounds organisationally, is aiming to making certain that May Day is made a recognised paid holiday.

This year May Day has an added significance. As we prepare for the May Day Centenary as workers, the monopoly mine owners are also celebrating the centenary of the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, the centenary of the foundation of Johannesburg. There are great plans to mark the 100th birthday of Johannesburg — the Golden City or the city with the heart of gold, as they call it. What are the majority of the workers, the black workers,

supposed to do? It is quite true that it is their labour and sweat that has created everything you see in the giant city of Johannesburg, but what have they got out of it? Locked up in compounds and hounded by the pass laws, how can they look with pride at Johannesburg and say: "Yes, here are the fruits of our labour"?

Of course there is nothing in these celebrations for us. Our attitude towards the Gold Centenary is that it is not our Centenary, it has nothing to do with us. It is an occasion for joy only for the rich who have amassed boundless wealth over the years, inflicting poverty, misery and insecurity on the majority of the working people who are pushed from one end of the country to the other in terms of the influx control system and the host of other control laws governing our lives.

We have nothing to do with the Gold Centenary celebrations. But we have everything to do with the May Day Centenary celebrations.

Workers of all lands unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains!

LONG LIVE THE CENTENARY OF MAY DAY!

LONG LIVE WORKING CLASS SOLIDARITY!

LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!

FORWARD TO PEOPLE'S POWER!



NATION AND CLASS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLUTION

by Sisa Majola

We always call for unity and even organisational merging of Blacks and Whites in the democratic organisations for liberation — but what are the grounds for calling for such unity? Further, on what policy should we base our propaganda and agitational work in the mobilisation of the White population for liberation? Is such an exercise worthwhile? Should we appeal to humanitarian sentiments, proceeding from the faith that since the White community is part of the human race as well, they will come to see the “evil” and “inhuman” nature of the apartheid system?

Engels remarked in his polemics against Dühring that all social changes are to be sought not in man’s quest for eternal truths or justice, but in the change of the mode of production. He and Marx insisted in *The German Ideology*:

“This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the production of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce”. (Marx and Engels, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 31-32.)

These then are the premises of the materialist conception of history.

That relations among men are determined first and foremost by the position they occupy in the production process is a proposition that is generally recognised by all Marxists. This conception of history starts from the material production of life itself, since the first historical act of man is the production of the means to satisfy hunger, thirst, the need for shelter, and various other things. This conception further explains how all political structures arise from the material production of life itself. Even “the phantoms formed in the brains of men are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises”. (Ibid., p.36.)

We must therefore discard the abstract humanitarian shell and proceed from what is objective. We must make a concrete historical analysis of the existing class and national relations in South Africa, and from this basis we can examine the attitudes of various classes and strata to the national question. Then our talk about “solidarity action” or “proletarian internationalism” will become comprehensible. It is one thing for the priests, the liberal press, and the rest of moral evangelists to call for racial love, racial justice and the establishment of non-racial unity in South Africa; and quite another for a Marxist revolutionary to agitate for racial unity, educating both the Black and White workers against national chauvinism and in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, eliminating even the slightest national friction “for an accelerated drawing together and fusion of nations that will be completed when the state withers away.” (Lenin, *Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up*.) Those who stand by historical materialism, that is, those who insist on the existence of internal colonialism in our country, know very well that there is a tremendous distance between a national policy based on concrete historical circumstances and one preached by Billy Graham or the Institute of Race Relations.

The Theory of Internal Colonialism

Delivering the Ruth First Memorial Lecture at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, on the 24th August, 1984, Comrade Joe Slovo made the following remarks:

“‘Colonialism of a special type’ or ‘internal colonialism’ is, I think, the closest we can come in our search for an accurate description of the South African reality ... A grasp of the institutionalised national oppression which characterises South Africa is the starting point for elaborating the perspectives of our revolutionary practice, and leads to the conclusion that the main content of the immediate struggle is to achieve complete national liberation for the racially dominated and racially exploited Black communities.”

The contention that South Africa is a colonial type of country, in so far as the political, economic and general social conditions of the Black people are concerned (irrespective of their class affiliation) proceeds from the colonial history of South Africa, which saw the British colonial power changing hands with the settler Boer colonists in the continued political rule over the Black people. From the point of view of the constitutional position of the Blacks (despite the recent Botha constitutional changes), they remain as nationally subjugated as were the Zambians, Angolans or Zimbabweans before the independence of these countries. In historic terms, South African Blacks still live in the pre-independence era of African history; and the main content of our struggle is a reflection of this period of history. This implies the presence, within the South African territory, of a colonised nation (an attribute of the continental history referred to) and the urge by this oppressed nation to form a truly independent and sovereign state — in short, to exercise its right to self-determination.

Of course South Africa, in addition to being a colonial type state, is equally a fully fledged capitalist state; and, as is well known, it is the tendency of capitalism to group the population in all its various classes into a single nation existing in a single territory with a single language for commercial exchange. The national movements that arose in classical European history during the final victory of capitalism over feudalism, clearly manifested this tendency of capitalism to form a single national state. A dogmatic recognition of this tendency, however, has led many a political thinker in South Africa as well as abroad to argue that by virtue of the level of its relations of production South Africa consequently consists of a single nation (albeit with racial inequality and racial oppression).

What these political thinkers fail to grasp in the analysis of South Africa are two factors, namely, that this tendency is only a “norm” of capitalism but not an absolute rule, and secondly that the national formation processes in the colonial conditions during the era of imperialism were determined by a set of circumstances distinct from those of classical Europe. And it is this very peculiarity that is the essence of the matter.

What do these two factors signify? The first one signifies that whereas the national state is the form most suited to satisfy the requirements of modern capitalism (as distinct from the secluded feudal principalities), there have nevertheless existed in real life (even in Europe) exceptions to this “norm”, that is, states of a mixed national composition. In making this point, Lenin often quoted Karl Kautsky who remarked that states of a mixed national composition are “always those whose internal constitution has for some

reason or other remained abnormal or underdeveloped". Needless to say, South Africa has for some reason remained abnormal for capitalism, South Africa is a colony of a special type. Apartheid is not a norm of capitalism; it is a form of backwardness, reflecting some kind of pre-capitalist political and economic relations. Apartheid South Africa's rules of political operation lack conformity with what is best suited to the requirements of capitalist society. Apartheid is a colonial system in which the Black majority in South Africa is subjugated and the White Republic is an internal colonial power.

The second factor (related to the abovementioned) is of the specific features distinguishing one country from the others in different historical epochs. South Africa has never been an extension of Europe. Our national democratic revolution is aimed against imperialism, it is the continuation of the African revolution whose ultimate goal (within the context of the historical limits imposed by the anti-colonial character of the struggle) will be the total liberation of the continent, with the emergence of an independent Republic of Namibia and the democratic Republic of South Africa — and these two states will be members of the Organisation of African Unity.

It is beyond doubt that in order to free the oppressed nation from this internal colonialism, the colonial state of White supremacy must be destroyed and a new one built. Self-determination of nations means precisely this political separation from oppressive national bodies and the assertion of independence. It would be absurd to insist on the word "self-determination" without understanding that the oppressed have a right to set up their own state, one that shall be based on the principles embodied in the Freedom Charter, a perspective of democracy that envisages the creation of a united people in South Africa without national inequality or racial seclusiveness. It is this colonial origin of the problem in South Africa which demarcates the oppressor and oppressed nations within the borders of a single country.

The Twofold Task of the Proletariat

What should be the attitude of the White workers to the struggle of the Black people for self-determination? And what should be the attitude of the Black workers to the workers of the oppressor nation?

Theoretically speaking (and this was demonstrated by Karl Marx with the example of the struggle for the independence of Ireland), the successful struggle against exploitation requires that the working class be free of nationalism. If the working class of any one nation gives the slightest support

to the privileges of its 'own' national bourgeoisie, that will inevitably rouse distrust among the proletariat of another nation; it will weaken the international class solidarity of the workers and divide them, which is exactly what the bourgeoisie want. To have complete trust in White workers, the Black workers must be convinced that the White workers are no longer infested with the national chauvinism of Arrie Paulus or Botha and Malan, and that they place fraternity with the Black workers above the privileges they obtain from the White bourgeoisie.

Karl Marx's position on this question is most clearly expressed in the following extract from a letter he wrote to Engels on December 10, 1869:

"Quite apart from all phrases about 'international' and 'humane' justice for Ireland . . . *it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connexion with Ireland.* And this is my fullest conviction, and for reasons which in part I cannot tell the English workers themselves. For a long time I believed it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working class ascendancy . . . Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* until it has got rid of Ireland . . . The English reaction in England has its roots in the subjugation of Ireland". (Marx's emphasis.)

Marx's policy on the Irish question should now be assessed in the context of the South African revolution. First of all, we have no doubt about the fact that the national question (for the proletariat, at least) is to be subordinated to the social question, to the question of the emancipation of labour from capital. But in so far as there are national contradictions within a capitalist country, moreover ones that, like the cases of Ireland and South Africa, are of colonial origin, the interest of the working class emancipation from capitalist exploitation requires that the workers of the oppressor nation should *support* the struggle of the oppressed nation for self-determination. "In the internationalist education of the workers of the oppressor countries," wrote Lenin in the pamphlet *Discussion on Self-determination Summed-up*, "emphasis must necessarily be laid on their advocating freedom for the oppressed countries and their fighting for it. Without this, there can be no internationalism." Lenin went further to advise that it is our right to treat every Communist of the oppressor nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as a scoundrel and an imperialist. "If we are to be faithful to socialism," he said, "we must even now educate the masses in the spirit of internationalism, which is impossible in oppressor nations without advocating freedom for oppressed nations". (Ibid.)

In advancing this point, that is, this question of the proletarian attitude to the national question, we started by saying: "theoretically speaking".

In practice, and contrary to this Marxist policy, the English working class fell under the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie, they became the appendage to the bourgeois liberals and consequently they adopted not a proletarian but an opportunistic policy to the liberation of Ireland. No wonder Karl Marx lamented: "What a misfortune it is for a nation to have subjugated another."

Similarly, the White working class in South Africa is still infested from head to foot with national chauvinism. We often forget that, in fact, it is White chauvinism, the nationalism of the oppressor nation, that is the principal obstacle to the struggle of the workers for socialism. "Aggressive bourgeois nationalism," wrote Lenin in *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, "which drugs the minds of the workers, stultifies and disunites them in order that the bourgeoisie may lead them by the halter — such is the fundamental fact of the times."

Capital Breaks Down

Secondly, what should be the attitude of the workers of the oppressed nation to the working class of the oppressor nation? Again, proceeding from the principle of internationalism, the proletarian organiser from the oppressed nation emphasizes in his propaganda the "voluntary integration" of Black and White workers. The point is: the development of capitalism in South Africa has already created conditions wherein the workers of all nationalities (despite inequalities) are concentrated in single enterprises engaged in common production. At the point of industrial production, capital breaks down all national barriers, and creates surplus value from the exploitation of workers whether or not they are nationally oppressed. In so far as the capitalist class has to be overthrown, what social force is capable of standing up to the capitalists? That force is none other than the working class.

Lenin reasoned this way:

"Take Russia and the attitude of Great Russians towards the Ukrainians. Naturally, every democrat, not to mention Marxist, will strongly oppose the incredible humiliation of Ukrainians, and demand complete equality for them. But it would be downright betrayal of socialism and a silly policy even from the standpoint of the bourgeois 'national aims' of the Ukrainians to weaken the ties of the alliance between the Ukrainian and Great Russian proletariat . . ."

The question is: should we advocate and support this policy of unity, integration and the creation of a single political entity in South Africa, which the living experience has demonstrated, or should we start our own inventions like keeping the Black workers in a cocoon, which has not yet been

tried out anywhere in the world? The recent critics of our Freedom Charter, the drafters of the 'Manifesto of the Azanian People' (meant to be an alternative document to our Freedom Charter) advocate the keeping of the Black workers in a national cocoon. However, the principle of internationalism is the uncompromising struggle against contamination of the proletariat with bourgeois nationalism. To advocate disunity between Black and White workers would be to attempt to turn back the wheel of economic history, it would be to make conclusions that do not proceed from the conditions prevailing in South Africa.

Our task therefore is to have a national programme from the proletarian standpoint. People who have not studied the national question thoroughly think that there is a contradiction in asserting that a revolutionary of the oppressor nation should insist on the right of the oppressed to self-determination (which is an expression of solidarity), while the revolutionary of the oppressed nation insists on the "freedom to integrate" with the proletariat of the oppressor nation. A deeper study of this question shows that there can be no other road to principled unity in South Africa than from this proletarian standpoint.

Lenin paraphrased this two-fold task of the proletariat with regard to the national question thus:

"If a Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be swayed by his quite legitimate and natural hatred of the Great Russian oppressors to such a degree that he transfers even a particle of this hatred, even if it be only estrangement, to the proletarian culture and proletarian cause of the Great Russian workers, then such a Marxist will get bogged in bourgeois nationalism . . .

"The Great Russian and Ukrainian workers must work together, and, as long as they live in a single state, act in the closest organisational unity and concert towards a common or international culture of the proletarian movement . . . this is the imperative demand of Marxism. All advocacy of the segregation of workers of one nation from those of another, . . . to contrapose one national culture, and so forth, is bourgeois nationalism, against which it is essential to wage a ruthless struggle".
(*Critical Remarks on the National Question.*)

"No National Can Be Free If It Oppresses Other Nations"

There is something of a paradox in this Marxist phrase, reason some people, for how can the oppressor himself be oppressed and therefore not free? Does it mean that Karl Marx, who advanced this aphorism, was utopian? Did Marx put forward a self-contradictory policy on the question of the liberation of the oppressed? How practicable is the advocacy of national unity and the merging of the nations into a single South African political entity?

Further questions. Is the white worker “not just part of the aristocracy of labour which has been corrupted ideologically by some concessions from the ruling class,” but, “in a sense which has no precedent in any other capitalist country a part (albeit subordinated) of the ruling class in its broader meaning”? (Slovo, *No Middle Road*). Are not the economic, political and social interests of the white workers objectives served by the survival rather than destruction of the apartheid system?

This objective characterisation does not necessarily mean that it is impossible for the members of the White community in general and its working class in particular to take part in the revolution in South Africa. Neither does it indicate that the prospects for building a single non-racial community in South Africa are dim. This analysis reflects precisely the social and political roots of the problem of national relations in South Africa. But, without forgetting for a minute that Whites form an oppressor nation in South Africa, or that the South African proletariat has been historically split into two national camps, we equally have not forgotten that the real rulers of South Africa are not the White population in general but its bourgeois class only.

If members of the White community thought that by supporting the ruling class they would then be immune from its fascist and anti-democratic methods of rule, then real South African history is proving them wrong. Yes, let them vote in overwhelming numbers in favour of the new Apartheid constitution, but this shall not obliterate the fact that more and more White draft dodgers are joining the nationwide war resistance movement, that more and more White churches, carrying with them millions of Christians, are declaring that Apartheid is morally indefensible and a heresy, that more and more White students and academics question the rationale of Apartheid oppression, that hundreds of Whites are joining organisations like Jodac and are affiliating to the United Democratic Front (UDF). The crisis within White power has produced not only the type of Treurnicht, but also the type of Helen Joseph and Molly Blackburn. Nowadays it is no longer only the (black) Dorothy Nyembes that leave their children to go to prison for ANC activities, but also the (white) Barbara Hogans.

We would be poor strategists (indeed even poor revolutionaries) if we failed to analyse the economic and political causes of this White power crisis, if we did not take the enemy's slightest disunity and turn it to our advantage, if we did not know how to utilise that section of the White nation that already feels the erosion of 'democracy' by the State Security Council of police and military generals. Whether such Whites are genuine revolutionaries

CULTURE AND THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE

By David Rabkin

This is possibly the last article written by David Rabkin before his death in an accident in Angola on October 11, 1985. The article had been submitted under the pseudonym Langa Mzansi, the byline used on previous articles by him published in *The African Communist*.

The fight for democracy and national liberation has always included cultural struggle as a vital aspect of the efforts of the oppressed to free themselves and win self-determination and a national identity. It is therefore particularly welcome to find the *African Communist* turning to the cultural question, in the article by Gala (AC 100, 1st Quarter, 1985).

Gala looks forward to a time when a liberated South Africa will be made to begin the task of creating a truly national South African culture. He discusses the question mainly in terms of literature and uses culture to mean more or less the same as "the arts". I want to discuss culture in a more general way before looking more closely at the role of the artist in the struggle for national liberation in our country.

“Culture”, in fact, is a very slippery concept. One anthropologist has counted over 200 definitions of the word and even in the Marxist classics we find it used to mean different things at different times. In general, however, we can distinguish three ways of using the word that are more or less consistent and useful. According to these, culture can be defined as: (1) all behaviour that is learnt rather than inherited genetically; (2) customs, traditions and values (eg attitudes towards authority or about changing the world); (3) intellectual and artistic production.

These definitions are inclusive — ie they range from the broadest (1) to the narrowest (3). We can use culture in all these senses, so long as we make it clear which one we are using. In this article I shall be using the word culture in the second and third senses.

There are three important aspects to be noted when we think about culture in relation to the national question. Firstly, culture is not something single or all-of-a-piece, like a statue cut out of a single block of marble. It is something constructed, like a house, out of many different materials — past traditions; values and practices developed in the course of struggle (for instance, freedom songs, or the ideal of comradeship); or the cultural products of artists and writers.

The result is that all cultures are *complex* and *contradictory*. Amilcar Cabral, an African Marxist who thought most deeply about this question, wrote in his article “The role of culture in the liberation struggle”:

“... culture, both as a cause and effect of history, includes essential and secondary elements, strengths and weaknesses, positive and negative factors ... contradictions, conflicts.”

The second aspect to note is that culture is always developing, ie it is a *process*. While a particular culture may remain more or less the same over long periods, so that it is identifiable, it is nevertheless always assimilating new elements while, at the same time, older ones may be falling into disuse.

The third aspect to note — and it is this that makes culture particularly important to the national struggle — is that culture is the basis of a people’s sense of identity. The way people do things, the customs and traditions they share, and the manner in which they think of themselves as a group distinct from others, are all aspects of culture. It is culture that makes a group of people think of themselves as “we” and of other people as “they”.

This sense of identity can cut across classes. Though culture is not unaffected by class, it is a cross-class phenomenon. Cabral put it this way:

“The attitude and behaviour of each social group, class or individual towards the struggle and in development are clearly dictated by economic interests; but they

are also profoundly influenced by culture. It may even be said that differences in cultural level can often explain differences in behaviour among individuals of the same social category towards the liberation movement.”

It is the special connection between culture and identity which makes culture “the very foundation of the liberation movement,” in Cabral’s words. As we know, the nation is an historically constituted community formed on the basis of a common territory, economic life, language and culture (including consciousness and psychology). A common culture is one of the strongest forces binding together in a single nation members of different and even opposed classes.

These characteristics of culture help us to see how the question of a South African culture is inseparably linked to the national liberation struggle in our country. A distinctive South African culture is not something that will come into being only after liberation. It is something that is being constructed even now, in the villages, townships and urban centres of our country.

Funeral Rites

Let us take as an example a township funeral. In the past our peoples had very definite and elaborate rules for conducting the burial of one who had died. These ceremonies were a product of the social life of those times and the material conditions under which the people lived. When people found themselves living in the cities and involved in the capitalist mode of production these ceremonies changed. Some elements remained while new ones were added.

Yet a further change takes place when such a typical township funeral is held for someone who has given his or her life for the liberation struggle. Then the funeral becomes a ceremony of protest in which the ANC flag is raised, the political values for which the deceased gave his or her life are proclaimed and speeches are made about the way forward.

All these are cultural changes. Some are almost unconscious adaptations to changed circumstances while others are deliberate innovations. When a poet such as Ingoapele Madingoane attends such a funeral and proclaims in his recitation that “the time for the rediscovery of africa by the african has now dawned,” we have the process of increasing self-awareness taking its full course and the link with the past being rediscovered.

So culture is the context in which a national identity is created. But, as we noted above, culture is complex and contradictory. And this has importance in the South African situation because it means that the creation of a unified South African culture does not exclude the continued existence of other

distinctive cultures within that unity. It is only bourgeois ideologists who say that there is an absolute choice — either one completely homogeneous culture (which anyway is a fiction) or a “pluralism” of cultures inevitably in conflict with each other

Soviet Experience

Much research has been done on this question by Soviet ethnologists who have studied the emergence and growth of cultures. Most of this work has been done under the auspices of the Institute of Ethnology, under its director, Yuri M Bromley. What his work and that of other Soviet ethnologists such as Arutiunov and Maretin shows is that cultural identity is inclusive, rather than exclusive. Their studies have shown that in the Soviet Union a sense of Soviet identity and the elements of a distinctive Soviet culture are emerging which embrace rather than contradict the various national cultures. This tendency is regarded as a normal historical process and one which it is now Soviet policy to encourage.

It is obvious that these scientific studies are of great importance for South Africa where — as in the Soviet Union — we have a number of distinctive cultural groups, all of which of course have the right to nurture and develop their cultural life. Thus the Freedom Charter promises that national cultures will be respected. The Soviet studies show that the continued existence of such cultures is *not* incompatible with the development of a single, unified South African culture as such.

While it may be true that Soviet culture cannot be called “national” in the strict sense, because the Soviet Union is a multinational state, it is no less true that in South Africa the various national groups cannot in the strict sense be called nations. While we have among the oppressed majority in South Africa different languages and other distinctive cultural traits, we also have to take into account the existence of a single national market in South Africa which, by drawing our people into a common economic life, has led to the emergence, especially in the urban centres, of a distinctive culture that can be called, at least, the embryo of a future South African culture which will be shared by everybody.

But a shared South African culture cannot come into being fully under conditions of oppression where the state sets itself against the emergence of a common identity. In fact, it can come into being only in struggle against such a state. Just how this will happen — indeed, whether it will happen — depends to a large extent on the course taken by the struggle itself. The future will tell.

But one cannot in this context ignore the enormous hatred among our people against any kind of ethnic or territorial division which resembles, even in form, the apartheid structure. Nor can one ignore the historic significance of the overwhelming acceptance by the ANC's recent National Consultative Conference of the decision to open membership at all levels of the movement to all South Africans who have earned a place in its ranks.

This action by the most advanced and militant section of our people will be a potent factor in the emergence of a unified South African consciousness.

What of the Whites?

The decision raises the thorny question of the white cultural groups in our country. To what extent can they be expected to become part of this new South African culture we are building? The question is made more pointed if we consider the more culturally distinctive Afrikaner group. It is here that my point about cultures not being single or all-of-a-piece becomes relevant. There is an "official" Afrikaans culture promoted by the state and put across in the past by organisations such as FAK, SABRA, the ATKV etc, not to mention the Broederbond. This official culture was developed out of a blend of Voortrekker racism, German idealist philosophy and a distorted brand of Calvinism. One of the most important philosophical tenets expressed by this official culture was its exclusiveness — it held that contact and interaction with other cultures would contaminate the Afrikaners, not enrich them.

This is the "version" of Afrikaans culture — the culture of the police station and prison — against which the youth of Soweto rose in 1976.

But there is and always has been another side to Afrikaans culture. This is the culture that found its highest expression in the life of an Afrikaner such as Bram Fischer. It can be found in the work of writers such as Andre Brink and NP van Wyk Louw. This "version" draws its origins from the revolt against the tyranny of the Dutch East India Company, from the identification with the French Revolution of 1789, and from another kind of Calvinism which holds that justice is the highest duty of the state and that revolt against an unjust political system is justified. It is the culture that sustains a man such as Beyers Naude.

Of course there are contradictions, even within this "progressive" version of Afrikaans culture. It is perfectly true that when Afrikaners rose against the tyranny of British imperial rule, it was often in order to have the "freedom" to oppress black people in their own way and without interference. And it is true that the "official" version of Afrikaans culture has for a long time been the

dominant one, ie the one backed by the power of the state and the media. But the other version exists — and even the “official version” is beginning to change, under the impact of our revolutionary struggle, external pressure and profound socio-economic processes. The point is that, as Lenin pointed out, in every culture there are to be found progressive elements which can be harnessed to progressive aims.

It is here that the cultural workers such as writers and other artists can play a big role, because they are working in the area of culture where it is possible consciously to introduce new ways of thinking and perceiving. Because in their work the writers can look at the present day in terms of the past and also show, in the realm of the imagination, a new and different future, they play a vital role in cultural transformation.

This is what is meant when the President of the ANC, Comrade OR Tambo, describes the cultural workers as the “midwives of the future.”

A song or a poem can make us feel how it will be to live in a free South Africa, even before such a thing is a reality. And a writer or artist can show people how to “re-think” their own past, bringing out what is positive and progressive and consigning to the shadows those attitudes and values that are opposed to change, or that stand in the way of a unified cultural identity on the lines indicated in the Freedom Charter.

Let us take three examples from three different cultural traditions. In his Zulu epic *Emperor Shaka the Great* Mazisi Kunene rewrites the story of Shaka to bring out the progressive aspects of that great African ruler. In his novels about the history of the Western Cape, the Afrikaans novelist Jan Rabie reinterprets the relations between the trekkers, their slaves and the Khoi people. And in her novel *Burger's Daughter*, Nadine Gordimer, writing in the English tradition, tries for the first time to take into account the history and contribution to the national life of the liberation movement and the Communist Party.

The relationship between the emergence of a unified culture and the national democratic revolution is, therefore, a two-way process. On the one hand, the national democratic revolution is creating both new cultural traditions and also the conditions for the emergence in the full sense of a democratic South African culture.

On the other hand, the cultural workers and the people themselves can by their cultural activities contribute to the revolution and, as Comrade Tambo puts it, “cultivate the spirit of revolt among the broad masses, (and) enhance the striking power of our movement.”

Or, in the words of Cabral:

“A reciprocal relationship between culture and the struggle develops. Culture, as a foundation and source of inspiration, begins to be influenced by the struggle; and this influence is reflected more or less clearly in the changing behaviour of social categories and individuals, as well as in the development of the struggle itself.”

A TRIBUTE

by Alexander Sibeko

David Rabkin was a communist and a loyal active member of the ANC. His accidental death in Angola last November, aged 38, has robbed our movement of a dedicated and gifted revolutionary.

David had already made a significant contribution to our struggle in the realm of theory as well as practice. The tragedy of his death at a young age and the sense of loss is reinforced by the perception of all who worked with him that he had the potential for a greater contribution yet.

At his funeral in Angola, where his coffin was draped in the flags of the Communist Party and the ANC, Joe Slovo stated: “He was a cadre who was something special”.

With a guard of honour of Umkhonto we Sizwe standing vigil by the coffin, army commissar Chris Hani declared that David “acquired his education for the sole purpose of helping our people” and “set an example — especially to the army.” It was announced that a training centre in Angola would be named after him.

David Rabkin was a perceptive journalist, a distinguished scholar, a writer and political analyst of great promise. He was an activist, too, who made a courageous practical contribution inside South Africa under the nose of the enemy during a most difficult phase of the struggle.

Of course David’s ideas and qualities did not come out of the blue. His outlook in the first place was moulded by his family. He was born in 1948 in Cape Town. The family emigrated to Britain 13 years later, after the Sharpeville massacre, because of their loathing of apartheid.

“I grew up in the 1950’s in a family of enlightened views.” David stated from the dock in the Cape Town Supreme Court in September, 1976, when he and his wife and comrade Sue, and Jeremy Cronin were sentenced for printing and distributing ANC and Communist Party literature.

“I was taught to respect the human dignity of all people of whatever colour,” he added.

David’s education in Britain culminated in a doctorate at Leeds University in 1971 for a study of black South African literature, centred on the *Drum* magazine writers of the ’fifties. His choice of subject matter showed where his heart lay. He had the strong urge to return to the land of his birth.

Worked For Underground

He married his childhood sweetheart Sue in England in 1972, and together they set up house and to work for the underground movement. David made this choice at a time when he could easily have opted for a secure, comfortable life as a well paid academic in England. He turned his back on a possible ivory tower existence to fight apartheid inside South Africa. He despised the idea of being an armchair revolutionary.

David was a modest, unassuming comrade who made his decisions carefully. He was not given to impulsive behaviour nor to romantic notions. When he decided to work for the underground Ahmed Timol had just been murdered. “This could happen to you,” he was told. It made no difference to the decision.

Over a three-year period before their arrest, during which David worked as a reporter and sub-editor for *The Argus* newspaper, they prepared and distributed many leaflets and pamphlets in Cape Town for the liberation movement. At their trial the garage where their equipment was secretly stored was described as a ‘propaganda factory’. Their son Job was born in this period and their daughter Franny just after the trial whilst Sue was in detention. David had begun serving a ten year sentence.

David’s unit raised the banner of the ANC and the Communist Party when the struggle was at its lowest ebb. “If we are where we are today it is because of the likes of Dave,” Joe Slovo declared at the Luanda funeral. “David and Sue were among the precious few who pioneered the real underground.”

There are many young recruits to the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe who were stimulated by those Cape Town leaflets to take part in the struggle.

In prison David continued to develop and study. He made a tremendous impression on his fellow political inmates with whom he developed warm, comradely relationships. He obtained a second B.A. degree and for a while studied Zulu until the authorities stopped this 'because it was a foreign language.'

David was released after serving seven years of his sentence. He was deported to Britain where he stated: "Things are now moving in South Africa. They'll never be able to push the movement back like they did in the 'sixties. It's still a long, hard struggle, but it's an irreversible process."

Not for the first time did David turn his back on possible comfort and security. Within a short time he was in Maputo working as a journalist. But he was keen to be of full-time service to the liberation movement and at the time of his death was due to transfer to work for the movement in Lusaka.

Theory and Practice

In the two brief years after his release from prison the movement benefitted enormously from his ideas, his writing, his unstinting work and self-sacrifice. He was a contributor to *The African Communist* and *Umsebenzi*, his articles demonstrating the originality of his mind, the ability to communicate complex ideas simply but elegantly, and his concern for the practicalities of struggle.

In the short time he was in Angola David made a profound impression on the young army cadres there. "Dave was a distinguished scholar, a man of literature, but we did not think of him as an intellectual," said Chris Hani and added: "He had time for everyone. He was not interested to carve out a position of superiority for himself . . . Dave was a disciplined comrade who never complained, who was always willing to accept hardship."

Memorial meetings were held in London and in South Africa. David's life was tragically short, but rich and significant. As though summing up his life, he wrote a letter to a close friend shortly before his death:

"There are those who skate over the surface of life and there are those who plunge in. They have only the consolation that they leave behind them some turbulence of the waters to show that they have been there."

Dave plunged in. He helped create and let loose the storm. The waves are drowning apartheid.

Hamba Kahle, David — Communist, Freedom Fighter, Revolutionary!

AFRICA NOTES **AND COMMENT**

By Ahmed Azad

ANGOLA: "The Struggle Continues — Victory is Certain"

In December 1985 the people of Angola celebrated 10 years of independence. During this period the people of Angola have not had any respite — not even for a single day — from counter-revolutionary acts of aggression organised, sustained, led and orchestrated by the Pretoria terrorists. It is a decade in which successive US imperialist governments bear some responsibility for the rivers of blood that have watered the soil of Angola. At a time when the Reagan administration has unleashed an avalanche of abuse, hatred and sanctions against Libya, under the pretext that Gaddafi harbours and sustains "terrorists", it is necessary to emphasise that this same flaky President decreed that up to 300 million dollars should be made available to the cut-throats of UNITA. The capital of world terrorism is situated not in Tripoli but in Washington.

In a very short time the Angolan people led by their vanguard Party have already scored some successes in laying the foundations for socialism. Gradually but surely the intolerable legacy of colonialism is being overcome; public health, education and pension schemes have been introduced and above all the economy is being restored and developed on a qualitatively new basis, with the setting up of state industrial plants and agricultural co-operatives. The building of a truly just democratic society is the characteristic feature of the new Angola.

It is therefore with justifiable pride that over 700 delegates from Angola's 18 Provinces representing nearly 35,000 members, met at the 2nd Congress of the MPLA Workers' Party. The Congress, held from 2-9 December 1985,

was characterised by a sober and realistic analysis of the complex revolutionary process unfolding in that country. This was no jamboree. Delegates were elected at three levels. Firstly, from the base to the Municipal, secondly, from the Municipal to the Provincial Conferences and from the latter, delegates were elected to attend Congress.

Each day began with different mass organisations greeting the Congress. They came in their hundreds, singing, dancing and shouting slogans interlaced with much good humour. The highlight of these greetings was the tableau featuring several hundred children from all the corners of Angola. In a vivid account of this in the *Morning Star* David Whitfield wrote:

To the slow beat of African drums, the young children, in white sashes and with bows in their hair, entered the cavernous hall, fists raised carrying flags.

In an hour of dancing with hips twitching, whistles blowing and singing, the children even ran round congress waving balloons and white doves of peace. Laughter and applause filled the hall.

And then in the spirit of the President's latest speech, they demanded the intellectuals leave the capital for the countryside "to ensure our education and cultural heritage."

They demanded books, and a TV set and radio for every village.

The children of Angola are following in their elders' revolutionary footsteps.

Party Building

The Central Committee Report, delivered by Jose Eduardo dos Santos, chairman of the Party and President of the Republic, is singularly lacking in rhetoric, sloganising and high sounding declarations. It covers a wide variety of subjects, such as social and economic development, raising the efficiency of production and management, defence, culture, information and propaganda, party life and internationalism. In this report we shall deal with the latter two questions.

The section on the Party contains a realistic assessment of the advances made, mistakes committed, weaknesses and the way forward. At the First Special Congress in 1981 it was:

"determined that the Party needed to continue to build a class party, fighting uncompromisingly for the MPLA-Workers' Party to assert itself increasingly as the vanguard Party of the Angolan working class, uniting in a solid alliance the workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals and other working people dedicated to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat."

This work had to be conducted in the context of a sharp class struggle in which certain social strata sought to defend class interests which were inimical to the general interests of the workers and peasants. In the

recruitment of new members the masses play an active role. As the report points out:

“The lively participation of the masses of working people at meetings for the admission of new members once again proved the absolute need for the Party to be linked with the masses, so as to guarantee its prestige among them unequivocally.”

The party leadership sought to make a continuous review of inner party life from the cells to the top. In 1982 it was found that most cells

“showed a high degree of internal disorganisation, lack of accountability, incorrect application of regulations and directives for running them and instability and lack of assistance of coordinators, factors which not only affected the better functioning of the Party at the base but, and above all, prevented normal growth.”

Special attention was paid to the class composition of the party and the need to build viable and active party structures in the countryside.

“Party building has not been seen as the mere accumulation of members. It has at all times been necessary to pay attention to the principles that define the MPLA-Workers’ Party as a Marxist-Leninist party, and to the question of knowing who should be a Party member. After the Rectification Movement it was noted that the Party had achieved a significant victory, since 49% of the members admitted were industrial and agricultural workers.”

The Party now has 34,732 members and its current social composition is as follows:

Industrial workers	26.4%
Agricultural workers.....	8.6%
Peasants.....	23.0%
Intellectuals and technicians	6.0%
Employees	12.9%
Officials	21.9%

Over the past decade the Angolans have repeatedly demonstrated their fidelity to the theory and practice of proletarian internationalism. With justifiable pride the report states:

“The struggle for the liberation of the working class has transcended our strictly national boundaries to project itself in the more general struggle of the world proletariat. The Party of Agostinho Neto has known how to be consistent in fulfilling its internationalist duties, unstinting in the lives and material means it has given to support the peoples still subjugated by retrograde forces long condemned by humanity.

“The internationalist help the Angolan people have been given by countries of the socialist community and the blood shed by Angolans and Cubans on the battlefields in defence of socialist revolution in this part of the world, are living testimony of the ideals of Marx, Engels and Lenin on the principle of proletarian internationalism.

“The Soviet Union and Cuba continue to be our main supports in the struggle to preserve our independence, defend our territorial integrity and rebuild our country.”

Angola is living proof, on the one hand of the disinterested international solidarity of the socialist countries, and on the other, the bloody and destructive support given to counter-revolutionaries by the terrorists in Pretoria and Washington.

Southern Africa

Naturally, the situation in Southern Africa received special attention, not only in the deliberations of Congress but also in the messages of fraternal greetings from the foreign guests. The report condemned the racist regime for its destabilisation of the frontline states and illegal occupation of Namibia and pledged continued support to the ANC and SWAPO. For this internationalist support the people of Angola are continuing to pay an extremely heavy price. Racist imperialist aggression has already cost Angola 10 billion dollars. Early this year more than 20,000 racist troops were ranged along Angola's southern borders. Even whilst Chester Crocker, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State and the architect of "constructive engagement", was in Angola, South African troops had penetrated 95 miles into Angolan territory wreaking havoc, death and destruction.

Congress emphasised that the key to finding solutions to present and future problems and ensuring greater victories and successes lay in enhancing the role of the Vanguard Party. To this end important decisions were taken to raise the level of Party discipline, inner party life, and political and ideological work.

The importance of the Congress was emphasised by the attendance of nearly 50 foreign delegations including the ANC and SACP. The delegations were led by prominent personalities including Sasso n'Guesso of the Congo, Samora Machel of Mozambique and Geider Aliyev of the Soviet Union.

S.A.C.P. MESSAGE

In an address to the conference on behalf of the South African Communist Party, Comrade Joe Slovo said:

"The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party warmly greets the leadership of the MPLA-Workers' Party, the delegates assembled here and, through them, the whole Angolan people.

Your Congress has a special significance for many levels of South Africa's embattled people. What you do here is the vital concern of all liberation fighters, supporters and true patriots in our country. Your proceedings will echo through the cells of Robben Island and Pollsmoor Prisons, where communist and liberation leaders have been incarcerated for over 20 years. Your Congress and its results will have a crucial meaning for the thousands of political activists who are at this very moment facing the police torturers in South Africa's detention centres. The organised working people of our country, the fighting youth and militant women regard your Congress as a gathering of comrades-in-arms whose independence and sovereignty is threatened by our common enemy.

Comrades, if our country today stands at the dawn of a major transformation, it is in no small measure also the fruit of Angolan sacrifice and Angolan internationalism.

At your 1977 Congress, Comrade Neto spoke graphically about the terrible ravages of colonialism and the frantic efforts by reaction to destroy you at the very moment of your birth, when you had so little on which to build your future. Yet, you gave comradesly shelter to liberation fighters. You did this with the full knowledge that you were risking further subversion and aggression against your young Republic. And, against these odds, you have continued along this path for every moment of the 10 years since you assumed the burdens of power. That, dear Comrades, is proletarian internationalism of the first rank. And for this we very humbly thank you.

There is yet another reason why your Congress is a special event. It is because you belong to that small band of African revolutionaries who are working to create conditions for the eventual construction of a socialist way of life. You chose to aim for this objective at the founding First Congress of your Workers' Party. There was no simple formula for you to pull out of the archives of Marxist learning. There was no ready-made answer in any communist book for you to apply. The problems of the transition period in conditions such as yours are, as you are aware, filled with enormous complexities. And in your courageous efforts to move towards a socialist path you are adding to the storehouse of Marxism-Leninism.

We say it is a courageous effort because it is your orientation towards socialism which is one of the largest bones in the throats of world reaction and its local gendarme, racist South Africa. These forces have learned to live with a form of independence which merely raises a new flag, sings a new anthem, changes the colour of those who occupy high office, but keeps the masses of the people in bondage to capitalist and neo-colonial exploitation.

This is why Angola has hardly had a day of peace since its hardwon victory ten years ago. As President dos Santos emphasised, mercenaries are hired, collaborators are corrupted, bandit armies are created and kept going with all the necessary weapons, South Africa's racist army attacks and occupies territory, the economy is sabotaged, capital inflow is cut off, communications are destroyed, and then they have the cruel impertinence to say, "You see, socialism is not working!"

Comrades, the overwhelming impression made by the Report of your Central Committee is one of irreversible dedication to your chosen path, without underestimating the obstacles and complexities which still lie ahead. It is no accident that the starting point of the report is the consolidation and strengthening of your Vanguard Party as guide and leader of the revolutionary transformation. In giving such an emphasis you are reiterating the basic and universal Marxist truth that without such a Leninist party there can be no advance towards a socialist future.

Listening to you, Comrade dos Santos, we are left in no doubt that your Party and the people it leads will, in the end, make it. We also know that the speed with which you make it is very much bound up with the speed with which we reach our goals.

The ANC delegate has already referred to the many-sided character of the current actions by the oppressed. In general, it is clear that this latest upsurge, which can be dated from August 1984, is not a passing phenomenon. It undoubtedly holds out promise of some really basic transformation. The interrelated economic and political crisis of South Africa's ruling class is not diminishing; in important areas it daily grows more acute.

The factors which usually combine to set the scene for a revolutionary leap forward are beginning to come together. Firstly, the ruling class has virtually conceded that it can no longer rule in the old way. The divisions within the power block are deepening, as racist politicians and white businessmen thrash about in a desperate search for a way to share power without giving up control. Secondly, the people are no longer prepared to be ruled in the old way. By their actions they have already rendered ungovernable most of the urban levels of administration and the so-called tricameral parliament has sunk into oblivion. And, even more importantly, growing numbers of our workers and youth are showing a readiness to sacrifice even their lives in the struggle for people's power. Thirdly, the ANC and the liberation front which it heads, is regarded by friend and foe alike as the vanguard which occupies

first place in the allegiance of the overwhelming majority of the mass of the oppressed.

But the time of promise which is heralded by the situation is also a time of danger, a time demanding the utmost vigilance.

One sinister tactic being pursued by a section of our ruling class is to concede that there can be no solution which does not include the ANC but that the ANC is merely one of a number of organisations. In addition, we are called upon to recognise that the so-called traditional tribal leaders (all in the pay of Pretoria) have some kind of claim to represent their ethnic constituencies. Comrades, the struggle in South Africa at all levels, legal and illegal, is being fought, and can only be won, under the umbrella of the ANC.

That is why, Comrade President, we welcome your undeviating insistence whenever you are called upon to pronounce on the issue, that the struggle of the South African people is indeed led by the ANC as head of the whole liberation front.

The kind of ANC Botha has offered to talk to is not the ANC as we know it. In order to defeat the class aims of our black working people he and his U.S. allies would like the ANC to abandon its policies of revolutionary nationalism, to give up the armed struggle and, above all, to break its alliance with the South African Communist Party, which President Tambo has described as one of the two fundamental pillars of the liberation front. They would also like to separate the ANC from its warm fraternal relationship with the socialist community and, more especially, the Soviet Union; a relationship forged over many decades of unstinting and unconditional help to our struggling people.

We believe that those who dream of breaking the life-giving alliance between ANC and SACP and those who want us to move away from our true friends will strike a rock.

Comrade President and Comrades, I believe that we are all beginning to sense that the prospect of breaking the back of South Africa's tyranny is no longer the distant dream it used to be; it is beginning to loom on the horizon, at the very least in faint outline. Your successes along your chosen path, your victories over Botha's bandits, your punishment of the racist battalions who invade your land are all part of a common indivisible struggle against a common enemy.

That is why for us your Second Congress extends in importance far outside the borders of your land. And we wish you every success.

THE SPIRIT OF LUMUMBA LIVES ON

On January 20, 1961, Patrice Lumumba was brutally murdered by agents of Belgian and US imperialism. Lumumba, a son of peasants, remains one of the most outstanding leaders produced on our continent. He helped to found the Congolese National Movement (MNC) which was the only organisation in the Belgian Congo to transcend tribal and ethnic divisions. The anti-colonial struggle led by the MNC compelled Belgium to grant independence in 1960. The Belgian government only wanted to transfer the trappings of power to the people, and expected the MNC to be a willing tool of imperialism. But due to their racist attitudes the Belgians could not understand that in Lumumba they were dealing with a genuine revolutionary and patriot. On independence day Lumumba made a blistering attack on colonialism and imperialism which infuriated Belgium and the USA. From then on imperialism stepped up its destabilisation plans, culminating in the murder of Lumumba. As with UNITA, MNR, and other counter-revolutionary groups of the present time, the imperialists created a Tshombe and armed and financed Mobutu's cut-throats in the Force Publique, a force raised and trained by Belgium.

The murder of Lumumba angered millions upon millions of people throughout the world. In South Africa demonstrations were held in support of Lumumba and against neo-colonial and imperialist aggression and treachery. In an editorial *The African Communist* (No 6, July 1961) sharply criticised the role played by the so-called UN Peace-Keeping Force and by the then UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold. The editorial thundered that the UN force had been invited by Lumumba but they sided with his opponents, and that Lumumba was done to death by the "real live monster of colonialism, the actual agents of the imperialist powers, including Hammarskjold himself".

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Lumumba's death. In paying tribute to his memory we note that whilst the name Tshombe has become synonymous with traitor and quisling, the name Lumumba is associated with heroism, courage and anti-imperialism. In the Soviet Union thousands of students from Africa have already graduated from the Patrice Lumumba University. It is unfortunate that Mobutu, a pawn of the imperialists, still remains in power. Zaire is used as a base for aggression against Angola and still has links and ties with racist South Africa and Zionist Israel.

The monstrous murder of Lumumba should always serve as a salutary warning to us. To defeat the conspiracies and aggression of imperialism we must be permanently vigilant and combat-ready. The life and death of

Lumumba are further proof that whilst revolutionary leaders and activists grow in stature, traitors, puppets and sell-outs are reviled and consigned to oblivion.

SOVIET UNION STRENGTHENS TIES WITH AFRICA

To challenge and defeat the aggression, conspiracies and economic strangulation of imperialism and monopoly capital, it is necessary for African countries, especially the progressive ones, to develop and build close links and ties with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. The imperialist powers are working overtime in their efforts to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and Africa. But the growing number of African leaders visiting the Soviet Union shows that the imperialist gambit is not paying off.

Towards the end of last year, Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia and Robert Gabriel Mugabe of Zimbabwe paid official visits to the Soviet Union.

Ethiopia and the Soviet Union hold identical views on the key international issues of the present time. Socialist Ethiopia fully supports the constructive peace initiatives of the Soviet Union. Both sides condemned US imperialism's arbitrary declaration of one or other part of the world as a sphere of its "vital interests", and the use of military force and coercion in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Discussing the situation in The Horn of Africa, the joint communique said:

"The Soviet Union and Socialist Ethiopia confirmed their known stand in favour of creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and good-neighbourliness in that area on the basis of respect by all states of the region for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the principles of the inviolability of frontiers, non-interference in internal affairs and renunciation of territorial claims. The Soviet Union set high store by the persistent efforts of Socialist Ethiopia to defuse tensions in that area, and to establish and promote relations of good-neighbourliness and cooperation between the countries of the region."

The two sides gave close attention to the deteriorating situation in the South of Africa.

"Both sides proclaimed their solidarity with the oppressed people of South Africa waging struggle for the elimination of the man-hating apartheid system and expressed complete support for the African National Congress in its struggle for the creation of a united free and democratic society in the country. Alongside all freedom-loving peoples they demand an end to the barbarous reprisals by the racist regime, to its policy of state terrorism and incessant aggressive actions against Angola, Mozambique and other 'frontline' states."

Criticising the pro-South African stance of the United States and other NATO countries, the communique called for the “complete international isolation of the criminal apartheid regime, for compulsory and comprehensive sanctions to be used against it”.

Auspicious Occasion

Mugabe’s visit was his first to the land of Lenin. By all accounts it was both fruitful and productive. Even before the visit had started the bourgeois press was speculating that the only common interest between the two sides was on the one hand the need for Zimbabwe to obtain military supplies, and the “desire” of the Soviet Union to get a further foothold in Southern Africa for its “nefarious purposes”. But they were to be disappointed. The visit and the talks took place in a friendly atmosphere and there was a great deal of agreement on the major international issues. The rapidly unfolding situation in our region was one of the central issues discussed. Both sides condemned Reagan’s policy of “constructive engagement” which only serves to encourage the racists to intensify their acts of aggression against the people of South Africa and the neighbouring states. They voiced their solidarity with the “fighters for national liberation” in South Africa, and demanded the independence of Namibia.

Mugabe spoke highly of the peace policies pursued by his hosts, and in the joint communique signed by the two sides the Soviet side supported Zimbabwe’s efforts to strengthen the independence and sovereignty of the country, and its policy of non-alignment in international affairs. Both sides condemned imperialist aggression, intrigue and bloody intervention in the affairs of independent countries such as Nicaragua.

The most significant outcome of the visit was the protocol of co-operation signed between the CPSU and the ZANU-PF. In the protocol:

“The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe expressed their resolve to develop and broaden mutually beneficial cooperation in different fields, such as economic cooperation, trade, science and technology, and also in culture, education, health care, sport and the training of national personnel, and in exchanges between public organisations of the two countries.

“With a view to the accomplishment of the goals mentioned above, the sides signed an agreement on economic and technical cooperation between the USSR and the Republic of Zimbabwe.”

The strengthening of ties between these two countries is of significance for our struggle and for the revolutionary process in our continent.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN RULING CLASS: CONTRADICTIONS AND CRISIS

by Denga

“The hurricane of events roared and the sea of humanity swayed. Everyone considered himself commander, and flourishing his pistol directed that the helm be turned now to port and now to starboard. All this was illusion . . . The illusions were born of brief glimpses of the mirage.”

— Alexei Tolstoi: ORDEAL

Alexei Tolstoi was describing a situation far different from ours. How it fits the dynamics of the political movement within the South African ruling class today!

“Reformist” Botha has disappointed his Frankenstein mentors. Those who conferred on him this title do not care to mince their words. After the Rubicon speech he was subjected to attacks on his person which no other leader of the racist state has ever experienced. The question of a successor is no more alluded to in hushed tones — even within the Nationalist Party.

The “radical” sections of monopoly capital, including their political representatives, have openly held meetings with what they would have brushed aside a few years ago as “bloodthirsty terrorists”. Within the

corridors of power in the imperialist world there is increased interest in the “problem of apartheid”. What has happened to the “politics of consensus” and the unity which the ruling class has always boasted about? Where is Carlton and Good Hope?

The answer is to be found in the mass and armed revolt now engulfing South Africa, and the growing international anti-apartheid movement. The seeds of people’s war are starting to germinate. With their fresh buds, the capitalist economy is cracking even further. What had once been paradise for the money-grabbers is becoming a raging inferno.

It has become even more imperative for the revolutionary movement to systematically study the political movement within the ruling class, how it relates to the revolution and what attitude we should adopt to such developments. This article is an attempt to initiate discussion on this question.

Ruling Class Contradictions

It should be emphasised from the very start that contradictions within the ruling class do not occupy the central stage in the system of contradictions within South Africa. The fundamental driving force in the politics of any exploitative society is the antagonistic contradictions between the owners of the means of production and the exploited classes. Within the system of apartheid colonialism, the ruling class and its allies find themselves confronted with a whole array of classes and strata which stand to gain from the democratic revolution. Black workers are at the head of the national democratic revolution — which is, in content, an anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist struggle.

In relation to these antagonisms, ruling class contradictions are mere quarrels within one family. Their common interests override their kitchen cabals. Nevertheless they have a bearing on the development of our struggle. The revolutionary movement, in formulating strategy and tactics, must take into account the strategy and tactics as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy. It has to identify the forces at play within the ruling class and find ways of deepening their contradictions. Lenin wrote:

“To take account of these differences, and to determine the moment when the *inevitable conflicts* between these ‘friends’, which weaken and enfeeble all the ‘friends’ taken together, will have come to a head — that is the concern, the task, of a Communist who wants to be, not merely a class-conscious and convinced propagandist of ideas, but a practical leader of the masses in revolution.”¹

For a revolution to succeed, Lenin said, all the classes must be “arrayed in such a way that all the classes that are hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength . . .”²

It is not a matter of accident that Lenin characterised contradictions within the ruling class as inevitable. Their root cause is the very exploitative system they maintain and the popular resistance to which it gives rise. Even if the ruling class forms a freemasonry against its antagonists, the system of private ownership of the means of production is such that each exploiter competes with the other in the rat race for profit. Monopoly capitalism does not eliminate competition. It only makes it more vicious and more conspiratorial.

The development of the South African economy, like any other capitalist economy, has been the swallowing of weak enterprises (vertical differentiation). Even within the supposedly monolithic Afrikanerdom, big undertakings cashed in at the expense of small enterprises. The apartheid colonial system offers the white small entrepreneurs certain advantages and privileges; but they nevertheless suffer the effects of economic crises and attacks from the all-powerful monopolies.

The history of the shaping of labour policies in our country is the history of the tug-of-war among various sections of monopoly capital (horizontal differentiation). The struggles revolved around such questions as ‘migratory labour’, ‘influx control’ and ‘job reservation’ — and involved mining, manufacture, commerce and farming. This has been thoroughly documented in many works.³ Today, there is virtual unanimity of views among the monopolists on these issues. But differences persist on the pace of reform, its timing, and other questions. And the agricultural landlords are unequivocal in their rejection of Botha’s reforms, let alone his recent actions on the pricing of maize and other farm produce.

We do not need to go into detail on the English/Afrikaner conflict and its effect on the ruling class. What needs emphasis is the fact that, though there is growing unity among the monopolies, the dynamo of the national question is still in full swing. In this instance, the relative independence of social consciousness comes out in bold relief; and with its foundation built on bitter battles, it will take years to grind to a halt. The sentiment of national belonging remains and, to reinforce it, the schools and universities remain apart and so do the churches. Separation is reinforced in many instances by regional and suburban demographic concentrations, culture and traditions,

etc. And prejudices against minorities, for eg Jews, Greeks and Portuguese, are part of the whole racial set-up.

Regional/provincial differences also play a significant role. For instance, Natal demands its own solution; Eastern Cape business has its own approach to the consumer boycott; and the struggle between the Cape and Transvaal provinces has always been an important factor in Nationalist Party politics. Within the regime; departmental and personal schisms have always riven the ruling clique. They have become acute also in the aftermath of the 1975/76 Angolan adventure and the deepening political crisis.

The factors mentioned above influence the alignment of forces within the ruling class and the formation of political parties, movements and their factions.

Ruling Class Crisis

Contradictions within the ruling class do not, on their own, constitute a mature *crisis of the ruling class*. They could reach a peak, but in the absence of historically-independent actions by the working people, they could subside again into insignificance. The contradictions should be the result of, or trigger off, popular revolt. That is why revolutionaries should bring news of such conflicts to the people, explain their causes and urge the masses into action to defeat the enfeebled ruling class.

What then is a crisis of the ruling class? Characterising objective conditions for a revolution (a revolutionary situation) Lenin identified one of the 3 conditions in the following manner:

“ . . . when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the ‘upper classes’, a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for ‘the lower classes not to want’ to live in the old way; it is also necessary that ‘the upper classes should be unable’ to live in the old way.”

Under these conditions, heightened conflict within the ruling class becomes a manifestation of the broader crisis of policy. The bone of contention becomes the question, how to manage the political crisis afflicting the entire system.

Prior to the 1950's, the South African ruling class had to contend with many crises, for example the 1912 “rebellion of the generals”, the 1922 white miners' strike, the 1932 crisis of the gold standard and the fascist rebellion during World War II. These crises led to alignments and realignments

within the ruling class and helped determine the shape of apartheid colonialism. However, they did not assume full maturity because the democratic movement did not yet present a powerful challenge to the status quo. The sharp intra-ruling class conflicts did not shake the system to its very foundation.

By the 1950's the actions and demands of the people had become the single most important factor in South African politics. For the ruling class it was no more just the question of land and labour but also how to cope with the freedom movement and the 'winds of change' on the African continent. This culminated in the 1960-64 crisis which had many elements of a revolutionary situation. Conflicts raged within the ruling class on how to manage the crisis; capital fled the country, etc. But the mass revolt was only emerging from the protest stage — the ruling class could lean back on its monopoly of arms.

Today, apartheid colonialism is experiencing a general crisis. All the factors that are directed against it are converging and thus making it impossible for the system to extricate itself. Since 1976, the ruling class has experienced many tremors within, some of them quite serious, for example in 1976 when the generals planned a coup in protest against Vorster's approach to the political crisis within the country and in relation to Southern Africa. They were advised "to launch a public political offensive" headed by P. W. Botha.⁵ Other conflicts such as the "Information Scandal" and the 1982 split in the Nationalist Party were partly the after-effects of this crisis.

The generals had found a magic wand in Total Strategy — a set of imported theories based on the National Security Doctrine — on how to streamline state and governmental machineries, introduce 'reforms' and intensify repression. Thus the regime would 'win the hearts and minds of the people' and bludgeon the revolutionary movement and the neighbouring states into submission. The "radical" capitalists saw salvation in this approach: a strong army would shield South Africa from the 'externally-based terrorist threat'; a strong and 'reformist' leadership would introduce far-reaching changes to manage and eliminate the crisis, etc. Though they had their doubts, they were reassured in consultations with the ruling clique; and, after all, they were there to urge Botha on. The equation was as simple as it was enticing. One commentator asked:

"Is it therefore a reasonable assumption that Afrikaners: whites more generally will consent to the charting of a new future, particularly if that future is articulated by the leaders to whom they have already given support, in whom they presumably have faith, and for whom they can substitute no others? . . . Strong leadership is not

only needed, but available, and could be exercised. An ordered, leadership-influenced, evolutionary resolution of the [conflict] may not remain possible indefinitely. That is the inescapable message of today's SA."⁶

The "radical" bourgeoisie agreed with the general direction of Botha's reform policies. They were integrated into the state committees and commissions formulating the 'reform policies'. Such was the strength of the tendency of "unity at the top" that "consensus politics" became the ruling-class catch-phrase. Even the PFP predicted a decade of realignment, with "integrationists" (NP, PFP, etc) on the one side, and "separationists" (HNP, the newly-formed Conservative Party, etc) on the other.

Big business also cast its net wide. While they supported "the strong government", they sought to emphasise the sense of urgency with which the issue of "change" had to be addressed. "South Africa: Time is running out", is the ominous title of the report of the US commission sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation (1980). They also emphasised that these "reforms" should be part of a broader scheme to change the constitutional set-up and, in their opinion, remove the reasons for revolution.

Collapse of Total Strategy

And time did run out. Today, Total Strategy has, in the broad sense, collapsed. The historical initiative is shifting into the hands of the people.

The attempt to exercise political and ideological hegemony over the objects of the colonial system has met with an organised and conscious force which is challenging the very legitimacy of the regime. Instead of isolating the revolutionary movement the ruling clique finds itself faced with a people who openly and defiantly identify with the ANC and its allies. Armed struggle has not been eliminated; rather it is assuming the effective form of people's war. In Southern Africa, the liberation of Zimbabwe meant a shift in the balance of forces further in favour of the democratic forces. Though difficulties have been created for us in the region as a result of Nkomati and other such accords and actions, the Frontline States remain united on essential questions.

The apartheid economy is facing its worst crisis in over half a century. Production has been cut in many industries; the rand is at its lowest level ever; unemployment is at its worst. The flight of capital has reached galloping proportions, the consumer boycott has its telling effect. Internationally the regime has never faced such opposition; loans are hard to come by; and even Reagan and Thatcher have been forced to consider the issue of sanctions.

The attempt to streamline the state and governmental machineries has resulted in an even more cumbersome bureaucracy. Differences within the ruling clique have not been eliminated. Panic within the white community is increasing.

By 1984, the same Rotberg who was all praises for the regime (see Reference no. 6) had started to express doubt about Botha's intentions: Botha "does not intend his new military-manned system to transform South Africa. He merely wants the tactical (and not strategic) posture of his administration to be coherent and co-ordinated."⁷

There is in SA today a coincidence of all positive conditions for the rapid development of the revolution. The revolutionary situation is at its embryonic stage, and much more needs to be done in the direction of weakening the apartheid state and paralysing the system of government and the economy. But the "revolutionary situation-in-embryo", if well-nourished, can lead to major strides forward towards the seizure of power.

This is what the ruling class fears most. Botha believes history will repeat itself: repression, as in the early '60's, will quell the revolt and usher in another era of relative peace and prosperity for the ruling class. The monopoly capitalists, however, can sense the direction of the general crisis, and they counsel that the regime should act decisively in order to avert revolution. In its statements today, big business emphasises the issue of a political solution that will include the democratic forces and their vanguard, the ANC. And they are impatient with Botha. Though they dislike being seen as part of the ruling class ('business-is-business' and 'politics-for-the-politicians'), they do not mind stating that they have more to lose than Botha, and are therefore well placed to initiate "change".

Do they really want to end apartheid colonialism as we know it? Oppenheimer has the answer to this question:

"It is quite wrong to suppose as is often suggested that all that is at issue here is whether the same solution is to be reached by peaceful means or by bloodshed. The important point to bear in mind is that any peaceful solution would be an entirely different solution from any solution that is imposed by force."⁸

The content of the "peaceful solution" revolves around three basic premises: a) that the historical initiative lies (or should lie) with the regime. In their appeals to Botha, they harp on the tune: 'negotiate now before you have your back against the wall'. In their book on *Strategies for Sharing Power*, D. Welsh and van Zyl Slabbert urge the government to call a national convention in which the ANC would participate. This would be preceded by the release of political prisoners, amnesty to "exiles", etc. The regime would remain the

guarantor of 'security' for the army and police would not be tampered with — if the convention fails, it will be 'business as usual'. The Rockefeller Foundation Commission, *SA: Time is running out*, calls for negotiations taking one of many forms, including "a formal national convention", "a broadened intergovernmental conference", "a wide range of formal and informal contacts". This would be preceded by "the release of *significant numbers* of political detainees, including key black leaders; revocation of banning orders; . . . amnesty for exiles *not accused of serious crimes of violence*,"⁹ etc.

b) that their business interests should be left untouched. Big business never tires of defending the 'virtues of free enterprise'. Interesting, though, when the argument comes from the few individuals who own big corporations controlling virtually the entire South African economy!

c) that the privileges of the white minority should be protected, and the ethnic divisions fostered by apartheid perpetuated. This is couched in such terminology as would confuse the essential issues: consociationalism, confederalism, etc, etc. Consociation is defined as "1) grand coalition of political leaders of all population groups; 2) mutual veto powers; 3) proportionality in allocation of resources and civil service appointments, based on 4) a high degree of internal autonomy for each segment."¹⁰ The regional approach is their trump card to avoid, in their words, a situation in which "blacks overwhelm whites". The Rockefeller Foundation Commission report goes on to say:

" . . . one formula might work in the province of Natal, where English-speaking whites, Zulus and Indians might reach agreement on universal suffrage, whereas a racially-based solution might serve the Coloured population in the Cape, with all SA's Coloureds exercising their political rights at national level through that sub-unit. The concept of city-states might hold some appeal for places like Soweto while independent homelands could possibly be reintegrated into South Africa as part of a newly-created federal structure . . ."

Elaborating a possible programme for the Convention Alliance, Slabbert says: "It could regionalise alliance activities. The problems in KwaZulu and Natal are of a different order in some respects than those of the Eastern and Western Cape". (*Sunday Times* 8/9/85).

The Buthelezi Commission (which was in fact a commission of the multinationals) was aimed at concretising the so-called "KwaNatal" approach. Its findings are now under sharper focus, and big business is emphatic that their implementation could serve as a decisive step out of the political quagmire.

The "radical" bourgeoisie have therefore entered the political arena more actively in order to safeguard the interests of the entire ruling class and the

privileges of the white minority. Their aim, to paraphrase Lenin, is to strike a deal with the 'monarchy' in order to avert imminent revolution — achieve some modifications to the colonial set-up, neutralise the liberation movement before 'the chips are down', and protect the essentials of the monopoly capitalist system.

“The Big Gamble”

Some of the propositions of big business fit into the thinking of powerful forces within the top echelons of the Nationalist Party.

Some of the basic propositions of the Buthelezi Commission have been accepted by the regime, and negotiations are under way between the Natal Provincial Council and the KwaZulu administration on the one hand, and the regime on the other, on the issue of a so-called “multi-racial government” for Natal. It would be logical to conclude that Gatsha’s vitriolic slander of, and programmes against, the democratic movement, the praises he heaps upon Botha and vice versa are not an accident. He can see himself sinking in the mud, and there is one last straw being dangled in front of him, a carrot that will satisfy his insatiable appetite for power albeit only slightly different from the bantustan system.

Big business can rant and stamp, but this does not alter the fact that it forms part of the advisory bodies and cabinet committees that work out some of the regime’s policies, including military matters.

It should be noted also that within the top hierarchy of the ruling clique, different forces are at loggerheads on how to deal with the crisis. These squabbles are reported in the press as manifestations of old departmental and personality differences. To quote a few examples:

- The press hints that big business was particularly incensed with Botha’s Rubicon speech because it had been promised some far-reaching initiatives. The announcements Botha made later on citizenship and the President’s Council — and other issues — were included in an original draft that was thrown out by “hardliners” in the military, police and the cabinet.

- The response of the military, and Viljoen in particular, to the exposures on collaboration with MNR bandits was thinly veiled in its contempt for the leadership of the Foreign Ministry. The captured MNR diaries themselves expose the tug-of-war for control. We should emphasise that in both cases the differences are not on questions of principle, but on immediate steps that had to be taken to ward off the threat of disinvestments and the embarrassment of the diary exposures, respectively.

On the question of overall direction of policy, the NP leadership and its academics are divided into 3 basic categories. In their book *Ethnic Power Mobilised* Adam and Giliomee write:

“Three *tactics* are advocated: 1) paternalistic consultation: On a basis of seniority, whites should consult with black leaders but black political rights should be restricted to responsibility for their own communal affairs in the homelands or black townships. 2) Indirect rule: the various non-white groups (first Coloureds and Indians and later also ‘urban blacks’) should have a right of say in their own communal and certain common affairs . . . and almost the entire field of common affairs must remain under white control. 3) *Medesegenskap*: . . . a gradual evolution toward power-sharing, most probably in a consociational system in which various ethnic groups will participate and make decisions on the basis of consensus”.¹¹

The second and last categories do not differ much from the positions of the “radical” bourgeoisie.

Big business is therefore involved in a multi-pronged gamble. Their apparent defiance of the regime when they went ahead to meet the ANC in Lusaka was also an attempt to placate South African and world opinion — that they are at last distancing themselves from the ruling clique and are actively working for the abolition of apartheid. Yet it should also be seen as a form of pressure on Botha — rather a delicate nudge — so that he should act in the way they want; or at least an attempt to strengthen the voices of those within the leadership of the NP who share their views.

They interpreted their discussions with the ANC as a first step to create conditions for negotiations with the regime; and they assessed the leadership of the liberation movement highly. But many of their pronouncements after the meeting constitute an attempt to drive a wedge between the ANC and the mass of the people: Tony Bloom says the ANC members outside the country are simply desperate to go home (*Financial Mail* 11/10/85) — he suggests not to fight but in a spirit of compromise. Slabbert says that if the violence in the townships continues, the ANC will find itself too moderate to cope! Reporting on the Commonwealth summit, the bourgeois media wilfully distorted the policy of the ANC, making out that it is prepared to declare a truce in return for some pie in the sky.

To the international community the bourgeoisie acknowledge that some form of action has to be taken to end apartheid. Yet they vehemently oppose sanctions, and ask for time so that the situation can be stabilised.

“During their session [at the UN hearing on sanctions] they argued that they are well placed to facilitate negotiations between the political groups to end apartheid, and that if they had not fulfilled their responsibility within one year, they understood that the international community would have to go ahead with economic pressures.”¹²

Gavin Relly says Botha has in fact been misunderstood internationally! In this gamble they are also placing their bets on the possibility that, if international pressure is lessened, the regime might stabilise the situation and everything would then return to the apartheid "normal".

The difficult balancing game of big business and its political representatives is also an attempt to save the "middle ground" in a situation in which polarisation of forces is becoming clearer even within the white community. The crisis of the "middle ground" is dramatically demonstrated in recent developments in respect of the PFP:

- Faced with Botha's reform rhetoric which has wide appeal within its support base, the PFP found itself tailing behind the regime: demanding 'more' rather than introducing something 'new'. It even entertained the idea of an alliance or even unity with the NP. Its campaign for a No vote in the 1983 referendum (in which it did not have the support of big business) was half-hearted: it acknowledged the "good intentions" of those who supported the constitution but lamented — 'what will blacks say if we all vote YES!'

- The emergence of a strong mass democratic movement — the UDF, JODAC, ECC, etc — resulted in steady demarcation between those who supported 'reform' (who were in general agreement with the NP), and those who called for a fundamental restructuring of society. The PFP was faced with differences among its members and also had to contend with the spectre of losing support to the "right" and to the "left".

- With the mass upsurge and attendant repression since 1984, the PFP argument (borrowed from the regime) about "consensus politics" is falling apart. Botha is killing and maiming people by the thousand; the so-called "apolitical" army is committing mayhem in the townships.

Therefore, the recent initiatives of big business — meeting with the ANC, the Convention Alliance, etc — constitute part of the 'big gamble' in another light: to salvage "moderation" from its disastrous decline by presenting what should still appear as a viable alternative to the ANC and the mass democratic movement.

Conclusion

Greater responsibilities and challenges are going to face us as the struggle intensifies and as our central role becomes acknowledged by all and sundry. The liberation alliance has always striven to isolate the most reactionary forces within the ruling class. We have to closely follow the different trends within this camp, between big business and its political representatives, and

within each segment of the ruling class. Our attention should also be focussed on the mass base of the ruling class — the white community. We also have to take account of the positions of the ruling class in the imperialist camp, their points of agreement and disagreement on the issue of our struggle.

We do not live in an ivory tower but we are, as part of the people, at the centre of the unfolding events in our country. We are therefore duty-bound to put forward our ideas to whomsoever volunteers to listen. We should at the same time guard against related dangers such as misrepresentation of our positions by those who meet us with malicious intentions, distortions by the press, etc.

Such contacts do not constitute negotiations. While the movement cannot rule out negotiations for all time, we believe that if negotiations have to take place they will come about only as a result of decisive all-round struggle by the people — when the regime is forced to acknowledge the actual power of the democratic forces. In such a situation Botha will understand why he has to discuss the mechanism of transfer of power, why he has to release all political prisoners and detainees, unban the ANC and its allies, dismantle the repressive apparatus, etc. He will understand why, if a national convention has to be held, it should be elective, sovereign and truly constituent.

Another question that arises is that of broad alliances. Does the democratic movement envisage alliances that are temporary and even parallel (that is, separate but supportive actions on a common issue) with certain political forces from the “radical” bourgeoisie? How broad can these be? This would require a discussion on its own; but Lenin’s advice on this issue is quite instructive:

“In the struggle for political liberation . . . we have many allies towards whom we must not remain indifferent. But while our allies in the bourgeois-democratic camp, in struggling for liberal reforms, will always glance back and seek to adjust matters so that they will be able, as before, ‘to eat well, sleep peacefully, and live merrily’ at other people’s expense, the proletariat will march forward to the end, without looking back . . . We will not forget however, that if we want to push someone forward, we must continuously keep our hands on that someone’s shoulders. The party of the proletariat must learn to catch every liberal just at the moment when he is prepared to move forward an inch, and make him move forward a yard. If he is obdurate, we will go forward without him and over him.”¹³

References:

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9. *SA* 'Time is running out' pp. 465-66.
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UNITY AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIP: WAYS AND FORMS OF STRUGGLE

Excerpts from an article by **Luis Corvalan**, General Secretary, Communist Party of Chile (CPC)

The powerful popular struggle that swept Chile in September 1985 shook Pinochet's dictatorship to its foundations and generated widespread response throughout the world. The fascist regime is going through a very difficult period. The days of protest helped to create a new situation. Pinochet has now been abandoned by most of his right-wing friends. Differences are surfacing among members of his cabinet and there is quarrelling among the military, who are trying to find a way out of the current impasse.

The coup of September 1973 was staged under the pretext of "saving" Chile from communism and from an economic crisis. In actual fact, it overthrew a democratic government that was building an independent economy, successfully overcoming the difficulties created by imperialism and internal reaction. Twelve years later one can state that the dictatorship has not only failed to destroy the Communist Party but that the party has turned into the most militant force of the opposition, a force whose influence is growing, while the fascist junta is disintegrating before our very eyes. Nor is there any doubt that it is the dictatorship which has plunged our country into

economic crisis by applying the neo-monetarist policy of the Chicago School and submitting to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund. More than 30 per cent of our labour force are unemployed; real purchasing power has diminished drastically and so has production for the domestic market. Trade sales have dropped; the external debt, which was no more than four billion dollars twelve years ago, is now 23 billion. During Pinochet's rule the country has lost some 40 billion dollars merely due to the growing discrepancy between the prices for the products it sells to the United States and other developed capitalist countries and the prices it pays for their goods.

Today, Chile lacks the international independence it enjoyed under Salvador Allende. The structural crisis is more acute than ever and demands many radical transformations, above all an essential change of government. Our party therefore advocates the establishment, on the basis of a broad coalition, of a progressive democratic government capable of putting into effect the necessary anti-imperialist transformations, introducing democracy throughout the government structures, including the armed forces, reviving the economy and boldly tackling the problems that the Chilean people face. This government will lay the foundations for a subsequent transition to socialism.

Step Forward

Should a clearly bourgeois-oriented democracy replace the dictatorship, this will also be a step forward compared to the current fascist regime, although a government of this type will be unable to lead the country out of the crisis, let alone meet the urgent needs of the masses. Nevertheless, the CPC will support an administration of this type in all its moves consonant with the genuine interests of the country and of the people. At the same time, we will continue to fight for more profound transformations and for advanced democracy.

Let us recall that Salvador Allende always distinguished between enemies and opponents. The latter he saw as those who held different but not antagonistic positions. Today, Pinochet and his clique who have been and still are trying to destroy the CPC, to put an end to communism and to physically exterminate the Communists are our enemies. Our opponents — according to Allende's classification — are those whose views both differ from and coincide with ours. They do not share our commitment to socialism, but we are united with them by our common objectives for the immediate future and for the medium-term prospect. These are forces that

are mostly progressive and that fight against the dictatorship. We are acting jointly with many of them to uphold the interests of working people and the nation to secure the soonest possible return to democracy.

Our official relations with some opponents of this type are less favourable. We are holding meetings and discussions with them in a spirit of respect. However they are making impossible demands upon the Communists. They want us to give up our political course and turn into an appendage of the Democratic Alliance (DA)¹ and of its new right-wing allies. Publicly and privately, we are being urged to renounce force in the struggle against the dictatorship, to abandon some forms of our struggle, to use only peaceful methods. There are insistent pleas that instead of pursuing our own policy, we follow the dictates of other parties, above all the Christian Democrats. There are also demands that we keep a low profile because, it is claimed the presence of the Communist Party in the foreground may prejudice the return to democracy.

Chile's Communists believe that a decisive confrontation between the people and the dictatorship is the most likely prospect. As noted in the report of the Political Commission to the latest plenary meeting of the party's Central Committee,

“we believe that it will take the form of a mass uprising involving the entire population, most of the political and social forces and perhaps part of the Armed Forces opposing the dictatorship. We refer to a state of general rebellion which will truly paralyse the country: popular action in the key urban centres with the decisive participation of the industrial proletariat, students, middle strata and peasants. This action must be backed by effective blows to paralyse the dictatorship and help to accelerate the moral and political disintegration of its repressive forces. This process should culminate in the capture by the masses of the main political centres of the country.”²

Nationwide Strike

On the other hand, the mobilisation of social forces launched by the National Headquarters of Chilean Workers is continuing, and the ideas of active non-violence and civil disobedience are making headway in the parties of the Socialist Bloc³ and the DA. There is also broad support among the opposition for the proposal of a nation-wide strike in all spheres of activity, a strike that will make it impossible for Pinochet to control the country.

In the opinion of the CPC, our view about the probability of an uprising, as well as the assessments and ideas quoted above, contains all major elements necessary for the elaboration of an original course that cannot be schematically identified as either “violent” or “non-violent”. In practical

terms, this course can draw close to either option; it can be more or less “violent” or more or less “non-violent”, depending on the scope of the revolutionary movement, on the resolve and militancy of the masses, on the changes that may occur in the behaviour and thinking of the military and on the stand they take at critical moments.

There is no Chinese wall separating peaceful and armed forms of struggle. They are not antithetical or irreconcilable; on the contrary, they are mutually complementary. We are speaking of an uprising and popular action. Others raise the question of civil disobedience and of making the country ungovernable. What is the essential difference here? If there is a difference, it is one of nuances. We see both approaches as expressions of the resolve to fight against the dictatorship from revolutionary positions. To a certain degree, all participants in social processes learn from one another, absorb and master the experience born of practical action by the masses.

The Communist Party believes that the outcome of the present situation will be close to our forecasts, although we must not discount other possibilities either. It is only the possibility of reaching agreement with Pinochet that we fully reject as illusory. At the same time, it would not be impossible to reach such agreement with the armed forces on condition that the tyrant be removed.

The struggle of the masses and concerted action by all opposition forces are now the basic, central and decisive elements. It is this struggle and this action that can put an end to the dictatorship. They are the principal factor behind the aggravation of the profound crisis of the regime. They have been and will continue to be the basis for the correct development of our movement no matter how conditions may change in the immediate future.

Lenin noted that the Russian proletariat could not have been victorious without revolutionary violence. But he was equally, if not more forthright when he added that

“revolutionary violence was a necessary and legitimate weapon of the revolution only at definite stages of its development, only under definite and special conditions, and that a far more profound and permanent feature of this revolution and condition of its victory was, and remains, the organisation of the proletarian masses, the organisation of the working people that constitutes the best stimulant for the revolution, its deepest source of victory.”⁴

We are guided by this principle. In other words, we hold that the movement of the masses is the most important thing, and that the use of violence, and its degree and advisability depend on specific conditions. This means that it is impossible to eliminate tyranny without a struggle which

involves all the people; the national uprising which we consider the biggest probability will actually materialise only when, objectively, there is no other way out, when the people realise this and accept it as inevitable.

The choice facing every Chilean man and woman is not whether to use violent or peaceful methods but whether to fight or not to fight against tyranny.

Violence is inherent in all societies where antagonistic classes exist. The exploiters direct the brutal force of violence against their own people in order to protect their self-serving interests and to resist the liberation movements and the class actions that threaten their profits and privileges. In turn, the peoples are forced, at certain junctures, to resort to violence if they see no other way of throwing off the yoke of oppression. This has always been the case — from the era of Spartacus and his forerunners to this day. Neither the French Revolution, the most important of those led by the bourgeoisie, nor the October Socialist Revolution, the turning point to socialism in human history, was an exception.

Who would deny these facts? Who can defend and support violence that is aimed against the people and criticise the people when they resort to violence in the struggle against a fascist regime? After all, those who do are making it clear that they do not reject or condone violence as such: they decide the matter depending on which class resorts to violence and who it is aimed against.

Notes

1. The DA comprises the Christian Democratic, the Social Democratic and the Radical parties, as well as the right-wing Republicans, part of the former Socialist Party and the Liberal Movement.

2. *Partido Comunista de Chile, Boletín del Exterior, No. 71 (extraordinary)*, 1985, p. 37.

3. The SB includes part of the Socialist Party, the Left Christians, the MAPU-Movement of United Popular Action and part of the MAPU Workers' and Peasants' Party.

4. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 89-90.

THE COST OF SOUTH AFRICAN AGGRESSION

The following memorandum was submitted by the SADCC to the summit meeting of the heads of state of the Organisation of African Unity at Addis Ababa last July:

AN ILLUSTRATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE COST OF DESTABILISATION ON THE MEMBER STATES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION CONFERENCE

1. South African aggression and destabilisation has cost its neighbours in excess of £10 billion in the five years since the founding of SADCC. This is more than:

All the foreign aid received by the SADCC States during this five year period:

or

One-third of all SADCC exports in the past five years.

2. It must, however, be remembered that even before 1980 the countries of the region incurred massive costs as a result of South African and Rhodesian

aggression. The following calculations do not, for instance, include the costs of South African aggression against Angola during 1975-79; nor the costs to Mozambique and Zambia of imposing internationally agreed sanctions against Rhodesia. These earlier costs are at least comparable to those dealt with in this analysis.

3. This paper attempts to quantify some of the costs to the independent States of Southern Africa (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) of South Africa's campaign of military and economic destabilisation against them in the five years since the founding of SADCC in 1980. It is estimated that the approximate costs, in millions of US Dollars, of South African destabilisation during this period are:

Direct war damage	1610
Extra defence expenditure	3060
Higher transport and energy costs	970
Lost exports and tourism	230
Smuggling	190
Refugees	660
Reduced production	800
Lost economic growth	2000
Boycotts and embargoes	260
Trading arrangements	340
TOTAL	10120

These items are discussed in the following paragraphs. More detailed calculations are available from the SADCC Secretariat.

THE COST OF DESTABILISATION

4. Direct War Damage

The most obvious impact of destabilisation relates to the direct consequences of South African military actions — its invasions of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique and Lesotho; its clandestine commando raids on bridges and oil terminals; and its support for puppet anti-government groups.

Direct war damage includes major attacks, like those which caused \$80 mn damages to the Thornhill air base in Zimbabwe; \$24 mn to the oil refinery in Luanda; and, \$20 mn to the oil storage depot in Beira. In reality, however, most of the damage is not from single large explosions, but to the

hundreds of houses, schools, lorries, and so on which have been destroyed. Of particular significance is the enormous damage which has been done to the region's transport system: railway lines sabotaged, bridges destroyed, locomotives and wagons damaged, etc. The estimated total cost of such direct war damage is \$1610 mn, most of which relates to Angola and Mozambique.

5. Extra Military Expenditure

Stepped up South African aggression, particularly since 1980, has forced the SADCC States into ever higher military budgets for larger and better equipped armies as well as expanded people's militias. These armies must be fed, clothed, housed and transported — all of which use up resources, which are desperately needed for the development of the countries concerned. It is impossible to know what "normal" defence budgets would have been if there were no threat from South Africa, but SADCC estimates that destabilisation has forced its member States to spend an extra \$3060 mn on defence.

6. Higher Transport and Energy Costs

The region's railway network has been a particular target especially for the puppet rebel groups. This is because South Africa understands that Angola and Mozambique have the natural ports for most SADCC cargo, and thus the only way to keep cargo flowing through its ports is by disrupting competing railways. Thus landlocked States, particularly Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, have had to pay higher transport costs, while Angola and Mozambique have lost revenue. Finally, sabotage of power lines and oil installations by puppet groups and South African commandos has forced Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe to use more expensive fuel or pay extra to have it transported. The combined amount for higher transport and energy costs and lost transport revenue is \$970 mn.

7. Lost Exports and Tourism

Several SADCC States have lost vital foreign exchange earnings, particularly because the breakdown of transport links disrupted the export flows of coal, iron and steel, sugar, etc. The raid on the Luanda oil refinery meant lost oil exports for Angola. Raids have prevented the production of crops and cement for export in Mozambique. Tourism, an important foreign exchange earner, has been adversely affected by destabilisation. The total prejudice to SADCC States in lost exports and tourism to date is at least £230 mn.

8. Smuggling

Perhaps surprisingly, smuggling by bandit groups has cost Angola and Mozambique \$192 mn. Diamonds, semi-precious stones, ivory from more

than 10,000 elephants, and timber are smuggled and sold through South African firms.

9. Refugees

The war has created tens of thousands of refugees. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between drought and war refugees but in some areas South African and bandit group activities have effectively cut off relief to drought victims, thus creating a famine. So drought victims became war refugees. The cost is difficult to estimate accurately but SADCC put the figure at \$660 mn.

10. Reduced Production

Destabilisation has undermined SADCC economies, most seriously the economies of Mozambique and Angola. In addition to lost exports, there has been a serious fall in agricultural and industrial production for local consumption. Numerous development projects have been delayed. Based purely on what could reasonably be expected to have been produced without the war, SADCC estimates the value of lost production at \$800 mn.

11. Lost Economic Growth

Money spent on higher military budgets and repairing damage should have been more productively employed on development projects. Unquestionably, factories have not been built and capital goods not purchased due to the conflicts. This lack of investment has significantly slowed growth in what are still very poor countries. If the money referred to in paragraphs 4. and 5. above had been productively invested, it is conservatively estimated that it would have increased domestic production in the region by more than \$2000 mn during this five year period alone. Clearly this loss continues into the future.

A POLICY OF ECONOMIC AGGRESSION

12. South Africa not only attacks its neighbours militarily — it also destabilises them economically. A key reason for the founding of SADCC was to reduce the region's dependence on South Africa. For its part, the apartheid State is wielding its economic power to keep its neighbours weak and dependent, while at the same time trying to strengthen its economic hold.

13. Boycotts and Embargoes

Because of frequent disruption caused to the railways in Angola and Mozambique by South African proxies most SADCC cargo still passes through South Africa. Pretoria can, therefore, cut the flow of goods at any time it wishes to apply additional pressure on its neighbours. It has done this

to all the neighbouring States. Conversely, Maputo is the natural port for the South African Transvaal, but with the founding of SADCC the apartheid State boycotted Maputo (at extra expense to itself; but costing Mozambique considerable revenue). The cost of such boycotts and embargoes has been estimated at \$260 mn.

14. Trading Arrangements

A number of member States have special trading arrangements with South Africa. Although the countries concerned gain substantial revenue from such arrangements they do so at a high cost due to, for instance, higher prices of fuel and at a loss of industry. It has been estimated that, on balance, such arrangements have cost at least US\$340 mn during the past five years. Furthermore, South Africa is increasingly using such arrangements for political purposes, particularly to force member States to recognise the bantustans. It is further feared that withdrawal from such arrangements could bring blockades and increased destabilisation.

15. South African Penetration of the Region

There is a wide range of other effects of economic destabilisation which simply cannot be quantified. South African companies in the neighbouring States engage in transfer pricing and other improper practices to take goods and money from the SADCC States. They also block the development of independent SADCC industry and trade routes. For example, South African domination of forwarding has kept cargo flowing through South Africa even after the line of Beira was reopened. South African boards of directors have blocked the expansion plans of local managers in subsidiary companies operating in SADCC States.

16. Undermining Investment in the SADCC Region

One of the objectives of South African destabilisation has been to undermine confidence in the ability of the SADCC member States to manage their own affairs effectively. South Africa points to the situation in neighbouring States as evidence that they are incompetent. A massive programme of disinformation has been mounted by the South African Government both in the region and internationally to foment unrest and to distort people's perception of what is happening in Southern Africa. Too often multinational companies believe the South African interpretation of events; and even when they do not, the South African induced disruption makes them reluctant to invest or to expand their activities. It is, however, impossible to quantify the damaging effect that such psychological factors have on the development of the region. Clearly, however, South African

action makes the SADCC region seem a less attractive and less stable environment for investment.

SADCC COOPERATION

17. Towards Reduced Dependence

Many of SADCC's programmes are specifically designed to reduce the region's dependence on South Africa and, as far as is practicable, to insulate its member States from the repercussions of South African instability. A Southern African Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC) has been established in Maputo to coordinate the rehabilitation and efficient operation of the region's transport network so that the natural trade routes can be used thus avoiding excessive and expensive dependence on South African Railways and Ports. Telecommunications infrastructure is rapidly being upgraded so that SADCC member States can communicate with each other more efficiently and without going through South Africa. In respect of energy, national electricity grids are to be interconnected so that power can flow between countries. Furthermore, a detailed feasibility study is in hand to determine how best the region might become self-sufficient in the supply of oil products. Programmes are being developed in Mining and Industry to reduce dependence. Work is also underway to establish a food security system which will increase regional self-reliance.

Thus the SADCC States are working closely together both to meet the challenge of destabilisation and to enhance regional economic development in spite of the adverse conditions obtaining in Southern Africa.

18. A Task to be Shared

Although many of SADCC's strategically important projects are under implementation many others are still at the level of studies. SADCC requires a massive inflow of technical, managerial and financial resources if its programmes are to be implemented expeditiously. The region looks to the rest of Africa, and to the international community as a whole, to express clearly their solidarity with and support for SADCC in its efforts to reduce dependence and to mobilise the additional resources urgently needed if the region's objectives are to be met.

CONCLUSION

19. South Africa's aggressive activities constitute a growing threat to peace which cannot be confined to this region or even this continent; it is an international problem. South Africa has, however, been recognised for decades as a problem of particular concern for African States, but in recent

years the international debate has concentrated on the issues of South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and her domestic racist policies. Without detracting from the importance of these issues, this paper seeks to draw attention to the heavy cost being borne by OAU member States neighbouring South Africa and to suggest that this aspect of the struggle should be given equal prominence in international debates. There should be a continuing effort to expose the irrationality and hypocrisy of western financial and technical resources being used to shore up a regime which is substantially engaged in destroying economies which these same western interests are helping to develop.

20. The demand for sanctions must be viewed in the context both of destabilisation and of western support for the apartheid regime. Those opposed to sanctions argue that they will hurt the neighbouring States. Undoubtedly this is true. But if it accelerated the ending of apartheid, it would be well worth the additional cost. And those who are concerned about the negative effects of sanctions on the neighbouring States should provide assistance to those States to minimise that impact.

More important, however, destabilisation is directly linked to sanctions. The very existence of SADCC threatens South Africa's economic stranglehold on the region. If SADCC States were free to use the most convenient and cheapest ports and railways, and free to buy fuel and other goods on the world market, their dependence on South Africa would be sharply reduced. Then sanctions would not hurt the neighbouring states so much. So South Africa destabilises its neighbours to keep them dependent so that they will be harmed by sanctions. South Africa's capacity to sustain its destabilisation is buttressed by support from the same western states who point to the harm sanctions would do.

21. SADCC's figures can only be estimates at best — the organisation does not keep a score card of destruction. But in making its estimates, SADCC has erred on the side of caution, listing only those things which can be sensibly quantified. Thus \$10,000 mn — an astronomical sum for a region of nine developing countries some of which are least developed and land-locked — is surely an underestimate. And SADCC has only costed bricks and mortar, steel and machinery. There is no price for blood, no cost that can be assigned to the thousands who have died as a result of actions instigated and supported by apartheid.

BOOK REVIEWS

CLASS AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

Revolutionary Democracy in Africa, by Nikolai Kosukhin. (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1985)

Over the past two decades a number of African countries, in conditions of extreme backwardness and difficulty, have become trail-blazers in seeking and finding the road to a society free from national oppression and class exploitation. This accumulated experience — positive and negative — needs to be analysed.

In the book under review the author has endeavoured to do this. An experienced and highly qualified Soviet scientist, Kosukhin deals with the many problems confronting the revolutionary democrats and the Marxist-Leninists of our continent. He emphasises that the path of transition to socialism is an exceptionally difficult process during which reverses, even serious ones, do occur. He also tries to shed light on those ruling parties which have adopted the science of Marxism-Leninism. As the foreword in the book points out:

“The emergence of the ruling parties which have armed themselves with Marxist-Leninist ideology is a complicated and contradictory process, largely promoted by the development and consolidation of all-round ties with the revolutionary forces of the national liberation movement, with the countries of the socialist community, and with the world working-class and communist movement.” (p.7).

This readable book, shorn of the usual academic jargon characteristic of books written by bourgeois scientists, has an interesting chapter on the

social basis of African revolutionary democracy. The formation and development of classes takes place in concrete historic circumstances. In Africa including the countries of socialist orientation,

“The traditional clan-tribal society is declining intensively, and socio-ethnic communities, peoples and nations are taking shape. But, the clan-tribal relations, the traditional vestiges, are simultaneously continuing to have a resounding impact on the social, economic and especially on the ideological situation in all the African countries.” (p.18).

The book under review shows that already the working class is an “active fighter for democratic transformation on that continent”. He classifies the bourgeoisie into three main sections, national, bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie, defining them as:

“The national bourgeoisie is as a rule represented by the trade and industrial strata, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie is formed among the state and party apparatus, making money and exploiting their official position. The comprador bourgeoisie is taking shape from the representatives of both the national as well as the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. A characteristic feature of it is its close ties with foreign monopoly capital” (p.29).

In this section he touches on the vexed question of nationalism. Whilst correctly pointing out that African nationalism has a dual character he seems to imply that in general, nationalism serves the interests of the bourgeoisie. It seems to the reviewer that while the African bourgeoisie like any bourgeoisie would exploit nationalism for reactionary purposes, revolutionary nationalism has a vital role to play in the struggle against imperialism. Moreover, the main content of the African revolutionary process is anti-imperialism. Unfortunately, Kosukhin also utilises the term “black racism” to describe an element of reactionary nationalism. This term is not only very ambiguous but tends to blur the real meaning of racism.

Kosukhin shows that the concept of “African socialism” which at one time played a progressive role, is now mainly used to for negative, anti-communist purposes. He criticises those who spread illusions about pre-colonial African societies offering a base for socialism, as well as those who nurture the ideas of some third road of development. He points out that the Socialist International is upping the ideological stakes and seeking to export their brand of socialism to Africa. The agency for this is the African Socialist International which includes parties from Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal and Mauritius. Before Numeiry was overthrown his political instrument the Sudanese Socialist Union was also a member. As the author points out:

“In opposing the dissemination of the ideas of scientific socialism, the Socialist International and its African followers are attempting to discredit

the countries of socialist orientation, the revolutionary-democratic concepts of socialism and the internationalist policy of the socialist community in Africa.”(p.61.)

While there is no doubt that capitalism offers no solutions to the pressing problems confronting the African continent, it is also clear that those countries that have chosen the socialist option must be prepared for a long period of transition to a new society. Experience demonstrates that it is not rhetoric, declarations, proclamations, fine speeches and resolutions which bring results, but hard, disciplined, unrelenting work in implementing realistic programmes. Kosukhin touches upon, in a comradely and constructive manner, the weaknesses still manifested in African revolutionary democracy. He argues:

“The main criterion in gauging the revolutionary nature and democratism of the ideological doctrines examined is their correlation to social practice, the degree to which the interests of the working masses are reflected in them, primarily those of workers and peasants, and the degree of involvement of working people in the government of the state and society. The need for the masses to participate in active socio-political life, the importance of the rapid reorganisation of the state and party apparatus on genuinely democratic principles have been recognised” but “decisive steps in this direction have still to be taken in a number of countries of socialist orientation.” (pp.86-87.)

In discussing the crucial role that has to be played by the vanguard party, Kosukhin gives information on Frelimo, MPLA, the Congolese Party of Labour and the Workers’ Party of Ethiopia. All of these parties have in their documents noted the difficulties in building a party of the new type. As the author correctly states:

“The might of the vanguard parties will consist in their close connection with the broad popular masses, in their ability to organise and guide the working people, to work in the very midst of the people. The parties are called upon to instil socialist ideology in the non-proletarian strata, and to combine their spontaneous attraction to social justice with scientific socialism.

“Some African revolutionaries still lack experience in political and economic work, and are still subject to the influence of traditional and tribal relations. Among some of the revolutionary democrats the level of theoretical schooling is not yet sufficiently high. Therefore the Marxist-Leninist principles proclaimed in the programme documents are not always applied sufficiently skilfully in everyday activities in the complex conditions obtaining . . . in Africa today. Frequently, subjective appraisals of the situation are an impediment to the creative acceptance of Marxism, the understanding of the general regularities of the non-capitalist path of development and of the universal nature of the theory of socialism.” (p.130.)

It seems to this reviewer that Kosukhin does not sufficiently stress the essential difference between revolutionary democratic and the Marxist-

Leninist Parties. A number of ruling Parties in Africa should no longer be classified as revolutionary democrats, but as Marxist-Leninists. The changing composition of their membership, organisational structures, and fidelity to the Marxist-Leninist world outlook, contrast sharply with those adhering to the positions of revolutionary democracy. It is also significant that a number of the ruling Marxist-Leninist parties now participate in the conferences of the *World Marxist Review*, which constitute a very important forum and meeting point of the world communist movement.

It is a pity that in this book the author ignores the role played by the Pretoria terrorists in destabilising Angola and Mozambique. There can be no doubt that both countries would have made even greater strides forward, and be able to implement their policies more effectively if they were not faced with the murderous aggression perpetrated by the South African fascist political machine. In that context the overthrow of the racist regime is of paramount significance for the further deepening of the revolutionary process in Africa.

A.A.

HOW THE SPARK WAS EXTINGUISHED

The Spark: From Kwame Nkrumah to Limann, by Kofi Batsa (Rex Collings, London, 1985) 137 pages, price £5.25 U.K. only.

Kofi Batsa was the editor of *The Spark* founded in 1962 by President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana who looked to it to propagate his views about African unity against imperialism, whether in its colonial or neo-colonialist forms, against racism and economic under-development. In spite of various backroom struggles and plenty of ideological confusion, the journal moved steadily to the left trying to apply Marxism to African and especially Ghanaian conditions. It also aimed to develop support for those still struggling for their political independence, it tried to popularise the ideas of anti-imperialist solidarity and socialism and develop links with the international working class movement and the socialist countries. The journal and its editor were widely known and respected even outside the African continent.

After the military coup of February 1966 *The Spark* was extinguished, its offices looted, copies publicly burned. Kofi Batsa along with many other comrades who had supported Kwame Nkrumah's government was imprisoned, held in the death cells but remained defiant.

In the 20 years since then Ghana has been subjected to a series of military coups overthrowing short-lived civilian governments. The economy is in crisis, social problems accumulate. Serious students of African politics have long looked for a thorough analysis of why the Nkrumah regime turned out to be so fragile and why no progressive movement has been able to take its place. With his inside knowledge of Ghanaian politics for more than 35 years Kofi Batsa should have been able to offer that analysis.

It is not to be found in this book. The book is partly a repudiation of charges of corruption levelled against him by the regime of Flight Lieutenant Gerry Rawlings, partly an account of his relations with President Limann and others who supported him. In addition he offers a brief explanation of his early political views and development, how he came to be active in support of Nkrumah, the period when he was in disgrace with him, how he became a journalist and eventually editor of *The Spark*. There he pays tribute to early associates in the international student movement, including Ruth First, and he shows how he was indebted also to the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Sadly one of the other aims of this book will provoke a parting of the ways between him and those whom he acknowledges as former comrades. The aim is no less than to announce his present political views which represent a decisive move away from anti-imperialism and socialism. It seems they are irrelevant to Ghana. His main point is that Ghana needs stability and that circumstances change. The kind of stability he envisages is one which he believes will be produced by a working alliance of the existing professional educated elite and a thriving business community which needs to be encouraged. The members of these two groups could combine to lead political life and staff Government.

There is no systematic discussion or argument set out to justify this belief; he ignores any Marxist ideas on the role of the national bourgeoisie in colonial and former colonial countries. The only glance at Marxism indeed is the unfortunately undeniable reference to disunity and splits within some Communist Parties, but that is scarcely justification for a headlong rush into the arms of capitalism. Kofi Batsa might have thought back to Kwame Nkrumah's analysis of neo-colonialism and recalled that there it is argued that it is precisely imperialism now operating through sections of local capitalists who induce instability, who interfere in the country's internal

politics, its social, cultural and ideological life. It may be true as he claims that the then U.S. Ambassador had no hand in the overthrow of Nkrumah; that doesn't exonerate the United States as he seems to think.

Since the coup which overthrew Nkrumah in 1966 political tragedy has hit Ghana time after time; it has meant personal tragedy for many individuals, for Kofi Batsa prison, insecurity and now exile. His greatest tragedy however is none of these but his decision that he can no longer be committed to that independent, democratic and ultimately socialist Ghana which will be won.

Joan Bellamy

THE SUN SETS ON THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Cecil Rhodes and his Times, by A. B. Davidson, published by Mysl (Thought), Moscow.

Apollon Davidson is a noted Soviet Africanist who has written a number of books on the history of colonialism in Southern Africa and the struggle for independence. Of great interest to South Africans is his monograph: *South Africa: The Birth of Protest 1870-1924*. In a sense, *Cecil Rhodes and His Times* is a logical sequel to his earlier works.

The scope and range of this fascinating work are enormous. It starts with Rhodes' first 'Testament,' written when he was 20, and ends with a postscript describing the seminar on decolonisation in Vienna called by the United Nations in 1984.

Rhodes is shown as on the one hand a most powerful agent of imperialism and on the other as a bearer of its ideals. What makes the book not only informative but also most absorbing reading is the skill with which Davidson weaves together the variegated strands of this great tapestry. This is a meticulously researched account of the historic, economic and political processes of the development of imperialism, particularly British imperialism, in Southern Africa. It is also an imaginative and wide-ranging account of the ideology of colonialism. It shows the interaction of these

aspects in the life and work of Cecil Rhodes. In the Testament, mentioned before, he outlines his ideals, chauvinistic, racist and aggressive. It speaks of the British as 'the best people on earth . . . the greater the part of the world settled by us, the better for mankind.'

Kipling and Haggard

Davidson uses numerous and apt quotations from Kipling's poetry, from the novels of Rider Haggard and some lesser-known writers, which passionately proclaim such ideas and which greatly influenced Cecil Rhodes. He analyses the historical conditions which gave rise to the spread of colonialism in Africa. In great detail, using a wide range of material including articles in radical and social-democratic publications, reminiscences of Rhodes 'pioneers,' as well as newspaper reports, reminiscences of diplomats and politicians, he presents the story of the birth of gold and diamond monopolies, the capture of the land of African tribes and their extermination. He tells of the machinations and deceptions, the links between Rhodes and his associates and the British ruling class. He also gives a vivid picture of the violent and vicious life on the early gold and diamond fields.

Davidson writes with great sympathy and understanding of the Ndebele and Shona peoples. Typical of his approach is his frequently expressed regret about the paucity of first-hand information and the use of his imagination and knowledge of other cultures to present Lobengula and his reaction to the treacherous whites. England's offensive aimed at the subjugation of the Ndebele, Lobengula's efforts to protect his people by sending emissaries to the white queen and the ruthless and bloody wars against the Ndebele and later the Shona peoples are recreated with great precision and clarity.

After these campaigns it is estimated that Rhodes had added 290,000 square miles to the British Empire. It is interesting to note that at this time Rhodes was voicing his opinions not only about the need to "spread civilisation", not only about trade following the flag and "being secure only in those countries over which it flies," but also about the need for conquering new lands for settlement and markets in order to prevent domestic unrest." If you don't want civil war you must become imperialists."

Boer War

A considerable section of the book is devoted to the Boer War. Much of what appears is already known (though of course not from traditional English, South African or Rhodesian text-books). There are interesting details, not

BEHIND REAGAN'S MASK

In Whose Interest? — A Guide to U.S.-South Africa Relations by Kevin Danaher, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington D.C. 1984. (Price \$11.95)

Kevin Danaher (who now works for the Institute for Food and Development Policy in San Francisco) wrote his Ph.D dissertation at the University of California in 1982 on: 'The Political Economy of U.S. Policy towards South Africa'. *In Whose Interest* is presumably a development from his dissertation. Of the book's 379 pages, 77 are a detailed chronology of major events in southern Africa between 1974 and October 1984, including the U.S. response to those events. The chronology is an extremely useful aspect of the book, forming a ready historical reminder to anti-apartheid workers. A further 60 pages are devoted to an extensive, annotated bibliography of 343 cited works, and is a useful guide to additional reading.

The remainder of the book is divided into four chapters. The first of these discusses "Reform in South Africa" under a variety of headings. Danaher makes no bones about debunking these "reforms". He points out that, while trade union membership increased tenfold after 1970 (partly as a result of the Wiehahn reforms), control over registered unions was increased substantially, more than making up for the "reform" of allowing black trade unions to bargain with employers. The Riekert reforms may have lessened some restrictions on black-owned businesses (p16), but their overall effect was to tighten influx control, leave the pass laws intact, and encourage the creation of a small middle class with a stake in apartheid.

In the area of education, on the one hand the absolute amount of money spent on blacks has increased; but on the other hand most of this extra money has gone to urban black schools, where only one-third of black school children are located; and of course white education still receives an inordinate amount of government money, and the inferior bantu education system remains.

Constitutional reform is dismissed as white minority rule in a different guise, with whites dominating every aspect of the tricameral parliament. Danaher suggests that the new constitution gives Botha more room to make decisions outside parliament, and this is certainly borne out by the wide powers of the State Security Council which operates as an "alternative

cabinet". Under the catch-all phrase of "Hidden Reforms", Danaher mentions the "total strategy" policy of the Botha government, and the tenfold increase in the military budget since Botha came to power.

In the second chapter, the concept of U.S. and other investment as a "Progressive Force" is assailed. Danaher points out that U.S. investment tends to be mainly in high technology industries (electronics, machinery etc) which increase, rather than decrease, unemployment. Indeed, he quotes figures showing that real wages for miners between 1905 and 1969 did not improve by even \$1 per month. Introduction of the Sullivan Codes had little effect on making U.S. investment "progressive": more than a third of U.S. businesses in South Africa do not file reports, and of those who do, about a third "fail" the rather weak criteria used under the Codes.

Chapter 3 looks at the U.S. policy of insisting on "peaceful change" and shows just how two-faced it is. The U.S. prides itself on its own War of Independence which enabled it to break away from British colonialism, and boasts of its support for its own black population in the Civil War against slavery. The U.S. also finds it acceptable to fund wars against the governments of Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Kampuchea and many others, yet thinks it somehow inappropriate for South Africans to resort to guerrilla war to liberate themselves from apartheid oppression. But hypocrisy turns to lies when the U.S. claims to adhere to the mandatory arms embargo, yet sent \$28 million worth of goods on the Munitions List in the first three years of Reagan's reign, which is more than sent in the previous 30 years, according to Danaher.

Chapter 4 deals with the "Communist Threat" which successive U.S. governments have used as an excuse for their action (or inaction) in Southern Africa. Danaher points out that the Soviet Union has no military bases in Africa, in contrast to the U.S., and that several U.S. strategists admit that the Soviet Union poses no threat to South Africa.

Also in Chapter 4, the ANC-SACP Alliance is discussed. Danaher states that the "ANC has a stronger strain of nationalism than Marxism", and that the "SACP is not powerful enough to dominate the ANC". He is attempting to show that the threat of a communist takeover in South Africa by forces internal to our country is also remote. What he does not say is that it is no business of his or the U.S. Government, what kind of government results from the freedom struggle in South Africa. That is for our people to decide. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that the SACP wants to dominate the ANC. The alliance has always been one of mutual respect

A FRONTLINE STATE UNDER SOUTH AFRICAN DOMINATION

The Kingdom of Swaziland — A Profile, by R.H. Davies, D. O'Meara, S. Dlamini. (Zed Press, London 1985. Price £4.95.)

This profile — 75 pages — analyses the history, politics and sociology of Swaziland as distinct from Lesotho and Botswana. The authors place great emphasis on the fact that in Swaziland there emerged a “significant locally based capitalist sector.” The monarchy played a significant role in the history and politics of Swaziland:

“The British did not recognise the Swazi monarch as a King (which in tradition he was), but termed him instead Paramount Chief. This meant that the struggle of the monarch to assert his real status as a King had certain anti-colonial overtones; it could be represented as a struggle for the legitimacy of national institutions against colonialism ... This assertion of his status against British belittlement certainly won some popular support and was an important factor in consolidating the political position of the King among the masses in the Swazi Nation areas.” (p 5).

Surely this was an aspect of the national question in Swaziland which, together with other forms of struggle such as strikes, party political agitation etc., led to the independence of Swaziland in 1968. And yet the authors state boldly that:

“Swaziland’s independence in 1968 was not fundamentally the result of pressures from the relatively modest internal anti-colonial struggles. Rather, it stemmed from the strategic decision of the major colonial powers, confronted with intense anti-colonial struggles elsewhere, to abandon formal control over all their African colonies.” (p.6.)

It is true the authors qualify this statement, but this qualification does not remove the theoretical-political problems it raises, not only for the future of Swaziland’s struggle, but for African historiography in general. It is a very controversial statement.

These and other issues are dealt with in a simple and easy-to-understand manner by the authors. The political in-fighting since the death of King Sobhuza II makes interesting reading. There are other problems caused by natural catastrophes such as droughts and cyclones, as well as social problems such as migrant labour to South Africa and the “high level of corruption”, fraud, political intrigues and “prostitution to satisfy the demands of (white) South Africans for sexual services banned in the apartheid state” (p 39). Surely Swaziland is a contradiction-ridden kingdom.

Some of the concepts and terms used in the book need clarification and more precision: “ideology of traditionalism” (p 5); “official ideology of royalism” (p 42); “comprador royalist bourgeoisie” (p 42); “traditional ruling bloc” (p 42); “dualistic models” (p 24) and “ethnic Swazis” (p 16).

Of particular interest to this reviewer were those parts of the book dealing with Swaziland/ANC relations — a delicate matter which has been made more complex by the recent developments in Lesotho. We are reminded that apartheid is a problem facing not only the South African people but the whole region.

The real problem facing Swaziland is that as a landlocked country — the rail link with Maputo is constantly disrupted by the bandits of the MNR — “Swaziland is virtually totally dependent on South Africa for its external trade” (p 14) and that the “ultimate dominant class in Swaziland is in fact not Swazi ... the country is subject to South African economic, and less directly, political, domination — while British monopoly capital also controls significant sectors of the economy. Such foreign monopoly capitalists constitute the real dominant class in Swaziland.” (p 44)

This is the double burden of national and class problems facing Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland and perhaps other countries in the region. Let us liberate South Africa and therefore free countries like Swaziland from this double oppression.

Nyawuza

Film Review

WHAT IS HIDDEN BEHIND CUNNING LAUGHTER!

In his critique of the “revolutionary socialist” journal *Svoboda* published in Switzerland in 1901/02 Lenin wrote:

“The vulgar writer assumes that his reader does not think and is incapable of thinking; he does not lead him in his first steps towards serious knowledge, but in a distortedly simplified form, interlarded with jokes and facetiousness, hands out ‘ready made’ *all* the conclusions of a known theory so that the reader does not even have to chew but merely to swallow what he is given”.
(*Collected Works* Vol. 5, pp. 311-312.)

In his film *The Gods Must be Crazy* which has recently circulated in Europe the South African Jamie Uys seems to be operating in this fashion. His film is categorised as a comedy, but whether one laughs or not depends on the extent to which one accepts the stereotypes of apartheid. Behind the cunning laughter there is disinformation and propaganda which is akin to racism.

An underlying idea in this film is that the “underdeveloped” African cannot understand the “difficult” and “complex” principles of “civilised” administration. It is more or less taken for granted that a black man will always be under the command of a white man, that in some of the countries bordering on South Africa there are nations which are backward and whose people are living in the stone age. They have to be educated and civilised by whites.

To make his jokes Uys depicts the “primitive” way of life of the San people — who incidentally are now, of course, in the minority. The San are called “bushmen”, a derogatory term implying that they live in the bush and are a barbaric and uncultivated people unwilling to accept “civilisation”. The fact is, however, that the San people do not live only by hunting but are today in contact with “civilisation”. Some are even serving in the racist army in Namibia.

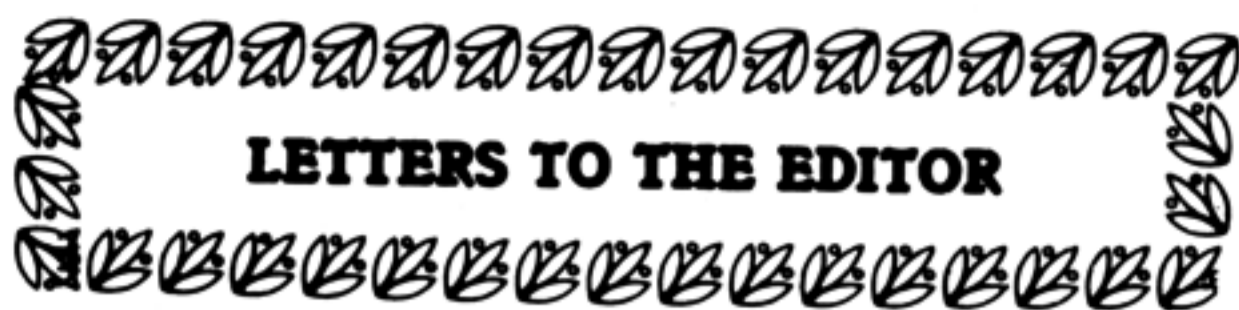
The struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa and Namibia is generally presented today in a way that suits the colonialist. Liberation movements are presented as “terrorist” organisations which are involved in raping, kidnapping and robbing.

Throughout the film, the liberated African countries and the liberation movements are disparaged. Uys is apparently trying to convince his public that we Africans are not interested in “civilisation”, that we don’t want to live side by side with the whites in the big cities but prefer to stay in the bantustans.

The film has been so cunningly made that the brutality of apartheid is obscured and it wins the acquiescence of the audience by its wit. Uys seems to have won the approval of white audiences in Europe, but the fact remains that his vulgar film has had the opposite effect in South Africa where progressive white South Africans reject the idea that the African is as ignorant and naive as Uys presents him.

Uys’ film has avoided the cultural boycott because it has been circulated as a Botswana-French and not South African production. It has even won a number of awards, which it does not deserve.

Boy Moremi



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

STEP UP THE OFFENSIVE

From Maciste Sesupo, Lusaka

Dear Editor,

The economy of South Africa can become a source of great weakness for the enemy at a time when the people's war develops to a high level. One of the main weak points of the economy is its dependence on the black working class, in particular the African working class. Thus the economy can be effectively sabotaged by strikes and the physical destruction of machines and materials. But strikes on their own cannot defeat the ruling class. We have to combine strikes with mass political actions and an escalation of armed revolutionary struggle.

The racist regime is by its own actions blurring the distinction between civilian and military personnel. White civilians, including women, attend shooting clubs, carry arms and use them against the black people. White children are also drilled in military matters during school breaks. In special training programmes whites are trained in all aspects of civil defence including road blocks, radio communication, protection of installations and so forth. In so-called "Civil Defenders" programmes white children from the age of ten are involved, and in one case an 83-year-old man.

Armed struggle needs to be developed from sabotage to the stage where it is dominated by operations such as assaults, ambushes, mine warfare etc. We have to hit hard at enemy installations and personnel. A war atmosphere must be felt in our country. Military operations demoralise the enemy forces, and raise high the morale of the oppressed and exploited.

South African patriots and revolutionaries should be guided by:

- 1) Loyalty to our movement;
- 2) Devotion to its course;
- 3) Love for our people, and
- 4) Hatred for the enemy.

Love and hatred are different sides of one and the same coin. A person who loves his people must hate those who practise genocide.

STRENGTHENING THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

From Khululwe

Dear Editor,

It is generally accepted that the ANC and SACP must seek to improve their performances and underground organisational capacities. Both organisations should be ready and prepared to meet adequately the exacting demands of the present situation. The working class must assume the leadership of both the revolutionary democratic and working class movements. We must deal effectively with the attempts of right-wing and ultra-left petty-bourgeois elements to impose their pernicious views on our movement.

The proletariat can only assume its historic role if it is effectively led by a Marxist-Leninist Party, in our case the SACP. The SACP must be seen/felt to be an independent representative and leader of the most revolutionary class.

If we are to maintain our position as the alternative power to the racist Pretoria regime we must sharpen our spears. One way of doing this is to ensure that bad elements are weeded out by a process of strict accountability. Those that fail to fulfil the tasks assigned to them must be moved.

FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

Dear Editor,

Reading your journal, I'm proud to learn of your hard fight against South African fascism. This is a dangerous foe and you are proving what good Marxists and revolutionary fighters you are ... The Ernst Thaelmann communists, of whom I am one, had to fight against Hitler ... When I see how skilfully you apply Marxism-Leninism it is always a delight for my old heart and I'm convinced that in the end you will be victorious.

Ernst Diedrich, Warin, GDR

HOMAGE TO BRAM FISCHER

Dear Editor,

We have heard and read a lot about self-sacrifice and about dedicated communists who have emerged unquestionable leaders in every struggle of the people against the forces of darkness and reaction. Great personalities have emerged in different periods and under harsh conditions.

In this year when we celebrate the 40th anniversary of victory over fascism and the 30th anniversary of the founding of SACTU, I would like to deal with our history of struggle. I have in mind Bram Fischer who rejected privilege and the life that could have been his. He joined the Communist Party of South Africa in 1942 and served on its Central Committee from 1945 until he was arrested in 1966. He was unflinching, selfless and devoted to the cause of liberation.

He belonged to the generation of Lutuli, Kotane, Dadoo, Mandela, Sisulu, Kathrada and many other great leaders of our national liberation movement. In this Year of the Cadre we must endeavour to assimilate their indomitable fighting spirit ... As we mark the 10th year since the heart of Bram Fischer stopped beating, we must make more effort to realise our aspirations and perspectives. Forward to victory!

James Ndaba.

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