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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AFTER 70 YEARS



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EDITORIAL NOTES

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION IS FOR EVERYBODY

This year's celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution sees the cause of socialism advancing not only in the Soviet Union but throughout the world. It used to be called "the Russian Revolution", but this was a misnomer, for the revolution involved not only the Russians and has transformed the lives not only of the Russian people but of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and indeed of all humankind. The Appeal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Soviet people on the occasion of this year's anniversary stated:

“Our revolution is the most outstanding event of the 20th century. It heralded the beginning of a new era in people’s lives. Time has revealed profoundly its intransient significance and illuminated the giant opportunities opened up by socialist social development”.

The transformation brought about by the revolution in the lives of the Soviet people needs no gloss. The most backward feudal empire in the world has been transformed into a great power whose explorers are penetrating the heavens in the finest spirit of scientific endeavour, blazing the trail of progress in the interest of all peoples.

The programme of the South African Communist Party, adopted at the fifth underground congress of the Party in 1962, stated:

“A new era in human history opened with the great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 when, led by the Communist Party, and inspired by the great teachings of Marx and Lenin, the workers and peasants of Russia and the former Tsarist Empire overthrew capitalist class rule and established, over a vast territory, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The heroic victories of the Soviet workers and peasants against counter-revolutions and foreign interventions, their triumph over famines and backwardness, their great achievements in the building of socialism, inspired millions of working people in many parts of the world. Powerful Communist Parties arose in many countries. In the areas of the greatest population, the colonies of imperialism in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the October Revolution aroused hundreds of millions to fight for national liberation”.

Anyone who doubts the benefits which the Revolution has brought to the Soviet people need only read Maxim Gorky’s autobiography to realise the enormous distance which separates the lives of the ordinary people then and now. Class oppression and exploitation have been ended once and for all, poverty, homelessness, illiteracy and malnutrition eliminated. From our point of view in South Africa, perhaps the most significant gains were achieved in combatting national oppression, distinction and discrimination. If today the Soviet Communist Party and people appear to be regrouping their forces and recharting the road ahead, nobody should doubt their pride in their past achievements or their determination to reach the goal they set for themselves in 1917: a Communist society, based on social ownership and control of the means of production and distribution.

The Soviet Party and people are intent on building, not merely a better life but a better kind of life, better grounded not only in the spheres of organisation and technology but above all in morality. If the ethic of capitalism is private enterprise, “each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost”, that of communism is co-operation and sharing of the benefits and burdens of life, mutual endeavour for the common good. For centuries men and women have dreamed of a social order based on peace and justice in

which all could share the toil and fruits of labour in a spirit of harmony which knows no barriers of class, creed or colour. The October Revolution has brought nearer the possibility that this dream can be transformed into reality not only for the Soviet people but for all humankind.

A Continuing Process

It is this revolutionary essence which gives November 7 its peculiar significance and fascination for friend and foe alike. To observe the anniversary is not to look back to an event which is fixed in time, over and done with, but to celebrate the beginning of a process which is still sweeping the world, to look forward to and plan for tomorrow. Lenin said:

“No force on earth is capable of taking from us the principal gains of our revolution, for they are no longer ‘ours’ but have become the gains of world history.”

On the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution, the late J.B. Marks, national chairman of the South African Communist Party, echoed Lenin’s words by declaring:

“In a very real and concrete sense, we of Africa, and all the world’s fighters for national liberation, understand that those gains are ours as well, and we are standing up to claim them”.

Today the whole world can acknowledge its debt to the revolutionaries of 1917 who, in one bold stroke, proved that class and national oppression need not be endlessly endured but can be ended by the purposeful and united action of the working class and its allies guided by Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The extent to which this lesson has been absorbed in our country is daily demonstrated on a thousand battlefronts. In the face of the most vicious brutality from police and military, death squads and vigilantes, warders and interrogators, the freedom fighters of the South African liberation movement are holding aloft the banner of struggle, expressing in action their determination to rid themselves of the unendurable tyranny of apartheid, to assert their right to a life of dignity and independence in the country of their birth. The magnificent struggles this year of the mineworkers, of the railway workers, of the schoolchildren and students, of the women, of the rent and bus boycotters, all reflect the universal consciousness that only through revolutionary action can the process of national liberation be carried through to final victory. More and more the realisation is growing that socialism is the only answer to the evils of capitalism.

This consciousness has not developed in a matter of months or years but as a consequence of decades of struggle by the working class and its allies. And it

can truly be said that the inspiration generated by the October revolution has never faded from the minds of our activists. Greeting the October revolution, *The International*, journal of the International Socialist League, predecessor of the Communist Party, said on December 7, 1917:

“The developments in Russia baffle comment. Exultation admits of no commentary. What we are witnessing is an unfolding of the world-wide Commonwealth of Labour ...Our task in South Africa is a great one. We must educate the people in the principles of the Russian Revolution as we have never done before.”

Ten years later ANC President J.T. Gumede declared on his return from a visit to the Soviet Union:

“I have seen the new world to come, where it has already begun. I have been to the new Jerusalem”.

Awareness of the role of the Soviet Union has spread steadily in the intervening period and it can truly be said that the South African people have been well and truly “educated in the principles of the Russian Revolution”, even if some among them are not always willing to acknowledge it. The influence of Marx, Engels and Lenin is daily demonstrated in the ways of thinking, acting and analysing practised throughout the liberation movement. It is surely no accident that the red banner of the Soviet Union is hoisted at demonstrations and funerals up and down the country side by side with the flags of the ANC and SACP. You will not see the Stars and Stripes or the Union Jack on these occasions. The people know who are their friends and allies.

Enemy Campaign

Our enemies know this too and have launched a great campaign to split the liberation movement and divide it from its friends. Anti-communism and anti-Sovietism are the weapons wielded by Botha, Reagan, Thatcher and Kohl in their bid to frustrate and confuse the ranks of our freedom fighters. They must not be allowed to succeed. Just as in 1917, “we must educate the people in the principles of the Russian Revolution as we have never done before”. We must defend the alliance between the SACP and the ANC as we have never done before. We must defend our relationship with the Soviet Union as we have never done before. All traces of ideological confusion on this issue must be dissipated.

On this 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, let us rededicate ourselves to these tasks — a vital part of our revolutionary programme — with the same enthusiasm and determination which brought glorious victory to our Soviet comrades in 1917.

THE DAKAR GET-TOGETHER

Last July a 17-person ANC delegation held a three-day colloquium in Dakar, Senegal, with a 61-person delegation from South Africa comprising mainly Afrikaners drawn from the academic, professional, cultural, religious and business fields. The purpose of the conference, which was organised by Van Zyl Slabbert's Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA), was mainly to discuss strategies for bringing about fundamental change in South Africa and the building of national unity.

By all accounts the conference was pervaded by an atmosphere of extraordinary cordiality. To some extent the two parties were meeting one another for the first time. The ANC's contact with Afrikanerdom, outside the ranks of policemen, gaolers and government officials, has not in the past been as extensive as it would have wished, bearing in mind that Afrikaners constitute over 60% of the white population and, through the National Party, exercise effective power. On the other hand Afrikanerdom knows practically nothing about the ANC apart from the lies and distortions peddled in the media and hostile treatises.

In this context the mere act of meeting and talking together was a positive achievement leading to greater understanding of one another's perspectives. But the Dakar conference went further than that and the final declaration registered important areas of agreement between the two sides.

All the participants declared their "commitment towards the removal of the apartheid system and the building of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa". Further, the "participants agreed that they had an obligation to act for the achievement of this objective" and pledged to take part in "the building of a nation of all South Africans — black and white".

To this extent the IDASA delegation was openly declaring its acceptance of the goal of national liberation. There was still disagreement about methods, with the IDASA delegates expressing their concern over the ANC's resolve to maintain and intensify armed struggle. Nevertheless "the group accepted the historical reality of the armed struggle" and "all participants recognised that the source of violence in South Africa derives from the fact that the use of force is fundamental to the existence and practice of racial domination.....conference unanimously expressed preference for a negotiated resolution of the South African question. Participants recognised that the attitude of those in power is the principal obstacle to progress in this regard. It was further accepted that the unconditional release of all political

leaders in prison or detention and the unbanning of all organisations are fundamental prerequisites for such negotiations to take place”.

It has been asked in some quarters what the ANC gains by taking part in such discussions and whether the energies of the ANC participants would not be better spent in prosecuting the armed struggle. The answer is that the ANC fights on many fronts and this is one of them. No achievement of the liberation movement has been more important than the splitting of Afrikanerdom, hitherto the mainstay of white domination in South Africa. It is likely that almost all the participants from South Africa were responsive to the leadership of the National Party at some stage in the past. Now all have openly rejected it; more, have indicated that they share many of the main planks in the ANC platform.

Defending the ANC's initiatives on the diplomatic front, ANC executive member Pallo Jordan, in an article in the Johannesburg *Weekly Mail* (17.7.87) wrote:

“From the ANC's point of view, the meetings themselves were an operation in sweeping away layer after layer of cobwebs of misconceptions and mystification about both the character of the ANC and the struggle for liberation.... The overwhelming majority left behind much of the baggage of Afrikaner orthodoxy; some shed their remaining illusions that change could be effected through the white parliament. Some parted with us a little more optimistic about the future. We had been struck by a profound pessimism afflicting many of our counterparts from the very first day”.

One of the main aims of the ANC is, not to destroy the whites or drive them into the sea, but to win them round to support for the principle of majority rule. The greater the contact the ANC has with all sections of the South African population, the greater will be the extent of its influence, because nobody who has real contact with the membership of the ANC can fail to be impressed by their patriotism, their idealism, their dedication to the principles of democracy, their political tolerance and maturity. The ANC is not a fly-by-night organisation with a collection of half-baked theories about revolution which change with the wind, but a national liberation movement whose structures, policies and tactics are the product of decades of struggle and experience, and in whose leadership all sections of our population apart from racists and fascists can have complete confidence.

There is no way in which the Dakar talks can be likened to Lancaster House. The IDASA delegation came as individuals, with a mandate from nobody. They have differing points of view. There was nothing to negotiate. All the participants at the conference talked together about the future of

South Africa and discovered a large area of agreement.

The isolation of the racist apartheid regime was carried a stage further. The ANC has succeeded brilliantly in winning friends and influencing people. Isn't that what diplomacy is all about?

BUTHELEZI IS PART OF THE SYSTEM

The Oxford dictionary definition of "police" reads: "Any body of men officially employed to keep order, enforce regulations or maintain a political or ecclesiastical system". On June 1 all police stations in greater Durban were taken over by the KwaZulu administration which is controlled by Mangosuthu Buthelezi and his Inkatha organisation. Since June 1, therefore, Buthelezi has been part of the state apparatus of the Botha regime, charged with the "maintenance of the political system" of apartheid and the administration of the apartheid laws.

In fact as Chief Minister of the KwaZulu Bantustan, Buthelezi has been part of the state apparatus ever since he was installed in the 1950s. He has always tried to turn aside criticism of his role by claiming that his position is hereditary. An official blurb circulated on his behalf earlier this year stated:

"He traces his ancestry back to the founding fathers of the Zulu nation and through his mother is descended from a long line of illustrious Zulu kings. The male line of succession in the Buthelezi clan traditionally provided successive Zulu kings with Advisers, Generals and Prime Ministers. When therefore the South African Government imposed so-called homeland administrative machinery on the Zulu people, they turned to Chief Buthelezi to lead them into opposition to it".

Buthelezi's hereditary claims are not undisputed, but that aside, the Zulu people might well ask what Buthelezi has ever done to oppose the homeland administrative machinery. True, he has not moved for so-called "independence" and this has helped to reduce the credibility of the TVBC sell-outs. To have done otherwise would have totally ruined his own credibility. But for the rest he has sat there in the KwaZulu seat of power like a fat cat licking up the cream and has done precisely nothing to lead his people in opposition to apartheid except make endless speeches and decline one lunch invitation from President Botha. There was another Zulu leader in the 1950s who faced the same challenge as Buthelezi — Chief Albert Lutuli; but he resigned his chieftainship rather than compromise with apartheid. At the time of the Defiance Campaign Chief Lutuli was presented with an

ultimatum by Native Affairs secretary Dr Eiselen: resign from the ANC or from your chieftainship. Lutuli refused to do either, and was promptly sacked by the government. In a public statement explaining his decision, Chief Lutuli said:

“Laws and conditions that tend to debase human personality ...must be relentlessly opposed in the spirit of defiance shown by St Peter when he said to the rulers of his day: ‘Shall we obey God or man?’ No one can deny that in so far as Non-Whites are concerned in the Union of South Africa, laws and conditions that debase human personality abound. Any Chief worthy of his position must fight fearlessly against such debasing conditions and laws.”

Chief Lutuli fought against the apartheid laws not merely by speaking but by leading his people in action against them. He was elevated to the Presidency of the African National Congress and ultimately became a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, honoured by progressive humanity the world over. At the outset of his career Buthelezi had the potential to be a part of the mass democratic movement. Instead he chose the path of compromise which has led step by step towards the position he now occupies of voluntary collaboration with the apartheid regime.

Opposition to ANC

In his speeches at home and abroad Buthelezi directs most of his venom against what he describes as “the ANC Mission in Exile”, which he accuses of following a policy of confrontation and violence which will lead only to pointless bloodshed and chaos. A briefing paper issued by Inkatha last April declared that the organisation preferred the path of negotiation.

“It (Inkatha) does not reject participatory opposition to apartheid and it believes that as an institutionalised force it will better be able to mobilise people to utilise their consumer power and their power as workers than it would be if it adopted a non-participatory protest confrontationist position”.

So Buthelezi thinks he can oppose apartheid better from within the Bantustan structures. Well, what has he done in practice? What non-violent passive resistance campaign has he ever sponsored? What strike has he called to bring about an improvement in workers’ pay and conditions, or to protest against any aspect of apartheid?

Buthelezi claims to be against violence, and to be a supporter of the strategy and tactics of passive resistance. In a speech in France on April 28 he said: “I insist that non-violent tactics and strategies and the politics of negotiation will win the day”.

What has he won? What single concession has he been able to extract from the apartheid regime? In what way have the Zulu people, apart from the

handful of place-seekers who surround him, benefitted from his operations? Why was it that in the Defiance Campaign — the biggest non-violent campaign of resistance against the apartheid laws ever staged in South Africa — Buthelezi was nowhere to be found?

Buthelezi claims that Inkatha has 1.5 million card-carrying members and is “the largest political organisation ever to have been formed in South Africa”. He describes the Inkatha-dominated KwaZulu Legislative Assembly as a “militant instrument of liberation”. But again, what are the facts?

Compulsion and Coercion

Africans living in KwaZulu are driven to take out Inkatha membership as a form of insurance. A report published in the *Guardian* newspaper in London on September 19 last year stated:

“Chief Mangosuthu’s organisation, Inkatha, does not represent even a majority of Zulus and relies heavily on violence to maintain its power . . . Candidates wishing to stand for election to either central or local government in KwaZulu must be members of Inkatha whose members staff the bureaucracy of KwaZulu which controls the rural areas of Natal as well as the vast urban townships of Umlazi, Kwamashu, and parts of Inanda.

“Traders find it almost impossible to get licences without an Inkatha membership card; pensioners say the card is needed to collect their allowance; migrant workers say it is difficult to get a job without a card; teachers and school inspectors all have to be members of Inkatha, as are schoolchildren by virtue of paying school fees.”

The power of Inkatha has never been used to mobilise the people in any campaign of opposition to apartheid, but has been directed again and again against the ANC, South African Congress of Trade Unions, the United Democratic Front and any other organisation which has tried to challenge the apartheid regime through direct action. The *Guardian* article continued:

“Inkatha intervened to pre-empt the development of mass organised action against apartheid. In trying to assert its control in the townships and in Natal as a whole, Inkatha was prepared to unleash its vast repressive machinery against those who stood in its way. Between August 8 and 11, hundreds of stick-wielding amabutho (warriors) poured into the Durban townships and marched up and down the streets ‘weeding out trouble-makers’. Those who refused to take part in an Inkatha-organised march were beaten up”.

The church also came under attack, and an Inkatha Central Committee member was quoted as threatening: “The next move is to close down those churches which are nests of rival organisations”.

The ferocious methods used by the amabutho vigilantes, which have resulted in death and injury to scores of UDF activists and their families, have

not won popularity for Inkatha. Public opinion surveys carried out in Natal have shown that support for the leadership of the ANC far exceeds that for Inkatha.

Police Forces

Buthelezi has evidently come to believe that his credibility as a leader depends on the elimination of his rivals from the political scene and he has long been calling for the KwaZulu police to be given power in the Natal African townships. Last year three police stations at Nongoma, Hlabisa and Ntambanana were handed over to the KwaZulu police. And now the huge Durban townships have been placed in Buthelezi's hands as KwaZulu minister of police.

Buthelezi has justified his co-operation with the regime by claiming that the maintenance of "law and order" is essential if the politics of negotiation is to succeed. Using the terminology of the regime, he accuses the ANC of engaging in "black on black" violence, and calls for black unity as an essential precondition for peaceful negotiation with the government.

Buthelezi has been conducting his politics of negotiation since the 1950s and he himself admits he has nothing to show for it. In a recent letter to a number of white political, commercial and industrial leaders in South Africa, he asks them to use their influence to help him vindicate his choice of the strategy of negotiation, warning that *he could not stand before his people empty-handed much longer*.

He has been prepared to make many concessions in the hope of winning concessions from the regime, so far without success. While claiming that Inkatha "is founded on the widely accepted Black political perceptions and principles first enunciated by the founding fathers of the African National Congress in 1912 and as they have been updated by Black political experience since then", he has abandoned one after the other the basic policies of the ANC.

He is no longer prepared to fight for universal suffrage. In an address to the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly in May 1985, he said:

"If violent confrontation is to be avoided, we must recognise that we will fail to do so if we insist on one-man-one-vote in a unitary state. No matter how deeply I cherish this ideal, I know that at this point in our history whites will be driven to grave acts of desperation if we tried to ram this solution down their throats".

Likewise Buthelezi has stated that while a unitary state with a one-man-one-vote franchise system is the ideal, Inkatha

"recognises that if violence of tragic levels is to be avoided, Blacks must be prepared to negotiate the future around acceptable compromises. Inkatha is therefore

prepared to look at federal solutions, amongst others". (Inkatha Briefing Notes 1987.)

Having abandoned the two key principles which have been the basis of ANC and liberation politics throughout this century, universal suffrage in a unitary state, Buthelezi has had little difficulty abandoning others. He rejects armed struggle. He rejects economic sanctions. And he attacks all those who have stood firm by traditional ANC policies and tries to drive them off the Natal political stage.

Praise For Capitalism

While the Freedom Charter calls for the national wealth of the country to be restored to the people and monopoly industry to be transferred to the ownership of the people, Buthelezi woos the bosses by proclaiming the virtues of capitalism and trying to cripple COSATU. In a speech in France last April Buthelezi appealed for support from the Western countries, proclaiming himself their obedient servant.

"Western governments must now begin to stand up to be counted as Governments which are prepared to put their names to supporting the organisations in South Africa which work through non-violent democratic means to bring about a final outcome which the West would applaud".

And for good measure he went in for a modicum of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism to persuade his audience of his bona fides.

"They (Western governments) must move to counteract the Soviet Union and its Allies who put their names very boldly and publicly to the support of the ANC's Mission in Exile and those organisations in South Africa who work for their supremacy".

No wonder President Botha considers Buthelezi a fit and proper person to be entrusted with the administration of the apartheid laws in Durban's townships. For it will be Buthelezi's job now to see that the rents are collected, bus boycotts broken, strikes smashed, agitators rounded up and carted off to jail. Buthelezi is now pledged to work side by side with Botha's military and police in "maintaining law and order" and eradicating "violence and the politics of intimidation". Already in July it was reported that South African and KwaZulu police had joined forces in a "massive airborne crime prevention operation in the Umbumbulu area outside Durban". (*Citizen* 7.7.87) No doubt there have been other joint operations since then.

But the people know the source of violence in South Africa. It comes from the regime, which deprives the black majority of the franchise and places one discriminatory law after the other on the statute book. And now Buthelezi is helping the regime in the administration of those laws. He says it is merely a

matter of "law and order". Yes, apartheid law and apartheid order, with Buthelezi part of the system, one of the subordinates of Law and Order Minister Vlok.

We hope we will hear no more of Buthelezi's claims to be leading the struggle for national liberation in South Africa. In the eyes of the people he is nothing more than a collaborator.

GREETINGS FROM SWAPO

On the occasion of the 66th anniversary of the foundation of the South African Communist Party on July 30, the following letter was sent to SACP General Secretary Joe Slovo by SWAPO Secretary for Information and Publicity Hidipo Hamutenya:

Dear Comrade Slovo,

On behalf of the Central Committee of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), I would like to express our comradely congratulations to the SACP on the occasion of your 66th anniversary.

The 66th anniversary of your party is significant in many respects.

In the first instance, it is taking place when the forces of national and social liberation in South Africa and Namibia have driven the racists of Pretoria into a corner through stepped-up armed struggle, mass action and mobilization for the external pressure of sanctions. There is no doubt that the road to victory is certainly shorter today than it was in 1921 when the founders of your party met in Cape Town to light the beacon of the struggle for working class emancipation in South Africa.

Secondly, as the SACP marks the 66th year of its existence, your party has every reason to be proud of the contributions that it has made to the advance of the liberation process of our embattled region. It has successfully eschewed the pitfall of sectarianism. The SACP was able to grasp in good time the strategic complementarity of the relationship between national and class struggle. Proceeding from this correct perspective, the SACP has been able to play its part as an important constituent of the broad liberation front in the historic fight against the apartheid version of fascism. This is, indeed, one of your greatest achievements in the lifespan of the SACP.

Thirdly, it is a well-documented fact today that many names of the stalwarts of your party have joined the ranks of the pantheon of heroes who have been leading the struggle for a democratic and non-exploitative South Africa. Thus, your party has over the last 66 years not only contributed to the development of revolutionary consciousness of millions of South African patriots, but has also been ready to go into actual battle against class exploitation and national oppression which today characterize the realities of apartheid South Africa.

As your comrades in arms and fellow combatants in the same trenches, fighting against a common enemy, SWAPO wishes you further success. We are confident that the SACP will continue to be a reliable ally in waging the horrendous battles which lie ahead to rid humanity of the apartheid crime.

*Everything for the Struggle!
All for Victory!*

OBITUARY

The freedom struggle in South Africa claims its casualties and martyrs. Among them in the recent period have been:

Two African National Congress leaders **Cassius Make** and **Paul Dikeledi**, who were assassinated by South African agents in Swaziland on July 9.

Cassius Make was the youngest member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC, elected to that body at the National Consultative Conference of the ANC in Kabwe, Zambia, in June 1985.

Paul Dikeledi was a dedicated young activist who joined the movement after the 1976 Soweto uprising and had since risen in the ranks of the organisation to a prominent position.

Both comrades were married, with two children.

The two comrades were brutally murdered when the taxi in which they were travelling from the airport was ambushed by three white South African agents who were in a car bearing South African registration plates.

In a statement the ANC National Executive Committee said: "This incident and numerous others are a clear indication that the South African

racist regime, in its desperation, is at all times bent on terror and cold-blooded murder against its opponents who are dedicated and committed to the ending of the hated and evil system of apartheid.

“We, for our part, pledge to answer these brutal assassinations of our comrades with the only language which Botha and his regime understand, the language of escalating armed struggle and intensified mass resistance”.

M.B. YENGWA

“Comrade M.B.”, as he was known, died in exile in London in July. Born in 1923 near Mapumulo in Natal, M.B. was one of the most dynamic figures in the ANC and its Youth League from 1945 onwards, serving as provincial secretary of both bodies and also as a member of the ANC’s National Executive Committee. Banned, jailed, house arrested and persecuted in innumerable ways, he fled to Swaziland in 1966, later moving with his family to London where he was a director of the Lutuli Memorial Foundation. In a letter to his widow Edith the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party declared:

Your great loss is shared by every member of the liberation movement to which he dedicated his life. He lived through stirring times, and played a vital part in the transformation of the African National Congress into the fighting revolutionary organisation it is today. The features which predominate in his long and honourable career are his loyalty to and love for his people, his devotion to Zulu language and culture, his courage in the face of danger, his willingness to sacrifice all for the cause. Neither prison sentences nor banning orders could cow him. Even the physical burden which he carried in the latter portion of his life did not dampen his spirit, and he spared no effort to serve the movement in every way possible, and was active and forward looking up to the last moment of his life. Before he was forced to leave South Africa he filled a leading role in the highest echelons of the ANC side by side with his great leader Chief Albert Lutuli. In exile he carried on the struggle in a variety of ways, attending every meeting and conference, even making his way, at great personal inconvenience, to the great consultative gathering at Kabwe in 1985.

Inspired by his example, we who are left behind pledge to carry on the freedom fight with the same determination and enthusiasm which he displayed throughout his life.

JOHNSON NGWEVELA

For decades an outstanding African National Congress and Communist Party leader in the Western Cape, Johnson Ngwevela died in Cape Town last July at the age of 86. In 1952, when he was chairman of the ANC in the Western Cape, Johnson Ngwevela led the first batch of volunteers to take action in the Defiance Campaign. Charged with breaking his banning order by attending a meeting, he appealed against his conviction and prison sentence on the grounds that he had not been given a hearing before the ban was imposed on him. His victory on appeal freed the victims of banning orders throughout the country. A leading figure in Langa civic affairs, Johnson Ngwevela devoted all his energies to opposing the regime's apartheid policies, and especially plans for ethnic divisions in urban areas. He leaves a widow, children and grandchildren, one of whom, Paulina, has played a prominent part in the Women's Section of the ANC.



70 YEARS OF LIBERATION

The Aftermath of The October Revolution

By William Pomeroy

History has known no other social phenomenon comparable to the process that was set in motion in the streets of the Russian city of Petrograd on October 25 (November 7), 1917. It quite literally changed the world, not merely for that particular time and its conditions but in a manner that has never ceased altering and transforming the lives and circumstances of humanity in general.

It is remarkable, historically, that, 70 years after the revolutionary transfer of power to councils of workers and peasants in the cities and towns of the old Tsarist empire, the revolutionary process is still occurring, at a rising pace, both in the Soviet Union that replaced that empire and in a growing number of countries around the globe. In contrast, the great bourgeois revolutions that had gone before, the American Revolution of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789, had run their course in far shorter periods of time and, by the time they had reached their seventieth anniversaries, had entrenched systems of exploitation that cancelled out "the inalienable rights" for

American working people and the “rights of man” for French workers that had been emblazoned originally on their banners.

On the occasion of the 4th anniversary of the October Revolution, in 1921, Lenin, with customary realism, stated the essence of what had been done:

“The first victory is *not yet the final victory*, and it was achieved by our October Revolution at the price of incredible difficulties and hardships, at the price of unprecedented suffering, accompanied by a series of serious reverses and mistakes on our part. How could a single backward people be expected to frustrate the imperialist wars of the most powerful and most developed countries of the world without sustaining reverses and without committing mistakes! We are not afraid to admit our mistakes and shall examine them dispassionately in order to learn how to correct them. But the fact remains that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the promise ‘to reply’ to war between the slave-owners by a revolution of the slaves directed *against* all the slave-owners *has been completely fulfilled* — and is being fulfilled despite all difficulties.

“We have made the start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete the process is not important. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open, the way has been shown.”

(Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p.641)

All the leading figures of the October Revolution, who opened the road, have long passed from the scene, but, as symbols and influences, they remain astonishingly alive. Lenin, greatest of them all, is acknowledged by bourgeois historians themselves to be the outstanding, most influential political personality of the century, his works the most published and most read internationally. With each decade since 1917 the Leninist theories and formulations have attained greater stature and application, directly guiding the lives of over one-third of the world’s people. This 70th anniversary of the Revolution is not the observance of a fixed point in time, but of the launching of a social force that cannot be halted or reversed.

Enormous Changes

Both the Soviet Union and the rest of the world have undergone enormous changes in that time, all traceable in one way or another to the bold seizure of power by a movement of workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals, at a moment of revolutionary crisis in a country where all the contradictions and antagonisms of an oppressive system had come to a head. Other revolutions, revolts and uprisings of the oppressed had occurred previously in other countries on other occasions as well as in the Russian empire itself, but the October Revolution was no spontaneous or millenarian episode, but was led by a well-organised political party with a clear understanding of social forces and with a programme for making the revolutionary leap from

the old to a new society. It was not the fact that people rebelled and succeeded in overthrowing a regime that made the October Revolution the epochal event that it was, but the fact that it was led by a party of a new type which had the scientific theory and the determination to proceed to build socialism.

The 70 years that have elapsed since that beginning have been tremendous confirmation of the correctness of the Leninist analyses and decisions, that the time had come to snap a weak link in the capitalist chain of rule and to make the breakthrough in the historical change-over from an outworn social system to its logical successor. During the past seven decades that is exactly the process that has been occurring in country after country as the conditions mature for the chain to be snapped again and again.

Capitalism At Bay

It has not been a smooth process, nor is it ever likely to be. The October Revolution and the building of socialism in the Soviet Union aroused and stimulated the working people and their allies in all countries, but it also alerted the capitalists and imperialists everywhere and caused them to take preventive measures and to erect massive defences against the revolutionary forces. The barbarous wars and the savage repressions that have occurred in the world since 1917 have killed or maimed a hundred million people in vain efforts to stamp out movements and struggles for national and social emancipation, virtually all of which have had their inspiration or their encouragement in one way or another from the October Revolution.

The attitude and actions of the imperialist powers toward the Soviet Union and toward Communists in general provide clear evidence of the enormous significance of that Revolution, of the inevitable social change of which it was the precursor. After 70 years the capitalist leaders, far from coming to terms with the unabating and unchecked progress of the Revolution, make it their constant and overwhelming preoccupation. Military alliances, blocs and strategic deployments on a global scale, all directed against the socialist countries and the liberation movements with a socialist potential, dominate the foreign policies of the leading capitalist governments. For decades they have been pouring a vast proportion of their resources into efforts to hold back the historical tide of socialism or, with vain hopes, to attain the means to destroy it.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, taken as a whole, is devoting between \$400 billion and \$500 billion a year to building armed forces against the existing socialist countries. Currently, the NATO defence ministers are calling on alliance members to increase those expenditures by 3% annually.

In addition, vast amounts are spent on arming mercenary bandits to attack, destabilise and overthrow the governments of socialist-oriented countries.

Other huge resources finance the activity of huge agencies of subversion which work day and night to try to undermine and overthrow governments with even a mildly socialist tinge, to assassinate their leaders or the leaders of liberation movements, and to carry out special projects to buy the loyalty of people or "dissidents" in socialist countries. Vast sums go into turning out a flood of anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, anti-liberation propaganda, which is inserted into the educational systems, the literature, the press, television and radio, the cultural production in general of every capitalist country. Embargos and boycotts interrupt and distort trade with socialist countries.

For decades the peoples of the capitalist West have had drummed into them, by this all-pervading campaign, the idea of the "Soviet threat". What is meant by the "Soviet threat," of course, is nothing other than the enduring attraction of the October Revolution and the growing strength of the socialist system it made possible. The "spectre" that the *Communist Manifesto* spoke of as haunting Europe 140 years ago has become the flesh-and-blood reality of living socialism being practised in one stage or another by more than one-third of humanity. Capitalism cannot meet "the threat" to its system, the challenge of socialism, by competing with it in economic and social development, but only by confronting it with an endless array of destructive weapons. In this 70th anniversary year, a capitalist part of the world bristling with nuclear missiles and military bases presents the image of a creature at bay.

Socialism's Strength

It is significant that in the 70th year of the Socialist revolution a point has been reached where the leading and most heavily armed capitalist country, the United States, has felt compelled to sit down with the Soviet Union to discuss steps toward disarmament, a demand by the Soviet Union from its inception. A number of factors have contributed to this present development, but undoubtedly the most important factor has been the sheer military strength of the Soviet Union, resting on a strong economic base, capable of matching and maintaining parity with all weapons and deployments of the United States. Such a point had seemed to be reached a decade ago, when the Soviet people were celebrating the 60th anniversary of their revolution in a climate of detente marked by such achievements as the Helsinki Agreement on Security and Cooperation that held the promise of an end to confrontation between the two world systems.

The hopes raised at that time were dashed by the ascendancy in the United States of the most reactionary imperialist, military-industrial groupings bent on a near-desperate aim of reversing the historical trend to socialism and of achieving decisive military superiority over the Soviet Union. That aim is being largely frustrated by the economic growth and defence policy of the Soviet Union, by the continuing surge of anti-imperialist liberation struggles, and by the determination of newly-free nations to hold on to their revolutionary gains in the face of U.S.-directed counter-revolutionary aggression.

One of the most convincing aspects of the strength of the socialist system, which has startled and dismayed the capitalist powers, has been the initiation of the *glasnost* and *perestroika* policies by the Soviet leadership, for expanding democracy and restructuring the economy. Far from being steps backward or retreat under pressure, as capitalist propaganda seeks to depict them, these open up greater freedoms and more advanced and efficient methods of managing and making use of the tremendous productive capacity already created over the past seven decades. The Soviet people have been given greater assurances than ever that their socialist system will prevail over all menaces from a hostile imperialism.

There is good reason for the 70th anniversary to be celebrated in confidence that the U.S. imperialist attempt to turn back the social forces that are transforming society has been checked and that the forward movement of liberation and socialism will receive fresh impetus. Whatever terms of disarmament and peaceful relations are arrived at in U.S.-Soviet and other East-West negotiations, they can only embody a further recognition of the permanence, the inviolability, and the growing strength of the Soviet Union and its advanced socialist system.

Such negotiated agreements between the leading socialist and capitalist countries, however, in no way mean the disarming of peoples fighting for liberation or for the defence of their revolutionary gains elsewhere in the world. The inability of the imperialist powers to impose their will on the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is duplicated in the inability of imperialism and its allies to prevail in imposing their repressive will on the forces of liberation anywhere.

Socialist Revolution and National Liberation

The association of the socialist revolution with struggles for national liberation has been one of the most profound influences in this century. From its inception, the October Revolution made national liberation one of its

fundamental concepts. Lenin saw clearly the interrelation:

“The socialist revolution will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie — no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries, against international imperialism.”

(*Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p.157.)

That this would be the case was made evident in one of the first decrees of the Soviet government, the Decree on Peace, October 26, 1917, which was written by Lenin. The just and democratic peace for which it called, at a moment when the imperialist World War I was at its bloodiest stage, was based on the rights of all nations to self-determination. It said:

“In accordance with the sense of justice of democrats in general, and of the working people in particular, the government conceives the annexation or seizure of foreign lands to mean every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.”

(Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp.459-60).

This was followed up in January 1918 by the more specific Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People, which announced that the Soviet government “insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.” (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p.521.)

In this Declaration the Soviet government announced that it would make the following policies “the basis of its activity in regard to the question of nationalities of Russia:

- 1) Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia;
- 2) The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination; up to and including secession and formation of independent states;
- 3) Abolition of all and any national and national-religious privileges and restrictions;
- 4) Free development of the national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.”

The principles of self-determination and equality were implemented immediately and forcefully in the Central Asian regions of Russia where the predominantly Moslem peoples had been held in national bondage and extreme backwardness. These regions (which today are the territories of the

advanced Soviet republics of Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, and Tadjikistan) were a major front of the October Revolution. Less than two weeks after the revolution took place an "Appeal to the Toiling Moslems of Russia and the East" was issued. "Arrange your national life freely as you think fit. This is your right," it said, and continued:

"You must know that your rights, just as the rights of all the peoples of Russia, are upheld by the entire might of the Revolution and its institutions. Our banners bring emancipation to the oppressed peoples of the world."

In Central Asia a bitter struggle for emancipation occurred, during which foreign (British) invasion occurred in support of colonial and feudal groups whose counter-revolutionary actions soon degenerated into banditry. An attempt to arouse ultra-nationalist and reactionary religious crusades against the revolution failed. (The parallel with today's struggle to defend the revolutionary gains of the people of Afghanistan is very close).

The phase of the October Revolution that occurred in Central Asia, embodying to the fullest the substance of national liberation, has had the most powerful impact first on the colonial and then on the newly-independent developing countries of the world. All of the characteristics and circumstances of national liberation struggles on all continents in the modern era have had their seminal prelude in what took place in Central Asia, where the following processes occurred:

- 1) A multi-national population attained unity in a common struggle to eliminate colonialism and internal social oppression, and then underwent free development as national entities and national minorities or ethnic groups with the right of self-determination.
- 2) National liberation occurred in coincidence with a socialist revolution that brought about social emancipation.
- 3) This combined process enabled the achievement of a leap from pre-capitalist to socialist relations of production, without having to pass through a capitalist stage.
- 4) The lack of a national proletariat to accomplish this leap in historical stages was made up for by the close alliance of the toiling peoples of Central Asia with the working class of Russia which, through its socialist state, was able to provide all the material needs, the funds, the training and other assistance necessary to achieve extremely rapid industrial, agrarian, social and cultural development up to the level of the more advanced regions of the Soviet Union.

The October Revolution and the End of Colonialism

This revolutionary solution of the national question in Central Asia, one of the most impressive consequences of the October Revolution, had a profound effect almost at once in the then-colonial areas of the world. The Chinese Revolution that began in 1924 turned for inspiration and all-round assistance to the new Soviet state. Heightened revolutionary consciousness across the colonial regions produced Communist Parties as early as 1920 in China, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, India, and with great early significance for Africa, in South Africa. In Morocco a five-year war for national liberation that broke out in 1921, conducted by a proclaimed Rif Republic against Spanish colonial rule, was characterised by one of the Rif leaders: "Russia has shaken off the oppressors and we are following along the same path."

The period between the two world wars was marked by enormous ferment in the colonies. A growth of revolutionary parties of the Marxist-Leninist type took place, stimulated in part by the example of the October Revolution but generated basically by the intensified imperialist investment and exploitation that followed the re-division of the colonial spoils after World War I, resulting in the greater development of a proletariat and of a dispossessed petty-bourgeoisie. Delegations of workers, peasants and nationalist intellectuals flocked to the Soviet Union from the colonies, most often by illegal routes due to repressions, to see and learn from the new society being built.

These first two decades after the October Revolution were in the main a time of consolidation of socialist power and of preparation for liberation. Surrounded by hostile capitalist powers and their colonial bases, the Soviet Union undertook the difficult task of building socialism in one country, which included the transformation of Central Asian peoples from a pre-capitalist to a socialist way of life. For the militant working class movements internationally, in both developed and colonial countries, the period was summed up in the slogan "Defend the Soviet Union!" The principal goal was to build a powerful socialist state that could not be destroyed and that could increasingly play the role of a great bulwark that could defend the coming revolutionary gains of other peoples, particularly in the colonial countries.

That goal was brilliantly realised in the heroic years of the war against fascism, known as World War II in the West and as the Great Patriotic War in the Soviet Union. That war of 1939-1945 had various facets: seen from one standpoint as the victory of the unity of the western capitalist democracies with the Soviet Union, it can be viewed just as authentically as a peoples' war in which the socialist state was in unity with the national liberation movements that fought against fascist-imperialist aggression.

The consolidation and socialist construction of the 1920s and 1930s in the Soviet Union had made possible the smashing of the Nazi invaders, while the preparation of revolutionary forces in the colonies in the same period had provided the leadership for the guerrilla liberation struggles against fascist occupation. The victory of the Soviet armies which carried their campaigns of liberation into the countries of Eastern Europe, destroying the fascist-capitalist structure of rule, released in turn the liberating forces of the people who established socialism in eight other European countries. The emergence of powerful armed national liberation movements in Asia paved the way for the advance of the liberation forces from a struggle against Japanese conquest to a struggle for complete independence against the returning colonial rulers, bringing revolutionary socialist-oriented states into being from North Korea to Vietnam, and assisting in bringing anti-colonial independence to all the rest of Asia.

Such tremendous changes in the world were directly related to the processes set in motion by the October Revolution and its stirring appeal to the oppressed peoples everywhere. In turn, the triumph of socialist-oriented forces in Eastern Europe and in Asia in the middle of the century, in the 1940s and early 1950s, was an enormous stimulus to the great liberation and independence struggles that demolished virtually the whole remaining colonial system in the next two decades, sweeping Africa and the Middle East and resulting most spectacularly in the victory of the Cuban revolution and its advance to a socialist orientation in the very front yard of the strongest imperialist power, the United States.

The breakthrough in the world front of imperialism, precipitated by the defeat of the fascist powers in World War II, signified a decisive shift in the world situation. Whereas *defence* of the Soviet Union had been a salient task of the international working class for the first two decades after 1917, the transformation had been made to an *offensive* against imperialism by all the oppressed, exploited and dependent peoples.

That offensive has had the possibilities and assurances of success because of the rapidly-growing economic and military might of the Soviet Union, now the full-fledged bulwark and defender of the socialist revolution, which has prevented the imperialist powers from attempting to destroy socialism by military means or from achieving their declared aim of "rolling back" the expanded socialist community. Most striking was the collapse of the post-war U.S. imperialist policy of "containment" of Communism, with the breaching of the containment structure at a score of places around the globe as revolutions of national liberation were victorious.

The revolutionary transformation of the world, however, has not been halted or held back by such a development: it has proceeded without let-up in the sharpest and most confrontational manner in the formerly colonial and dependent regions. Here the great successful wars of liberation by China, Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, Korea, Algeria, Yemen, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and others that shattered the imperialist chain at numerous points in past decades have been succeeded by the armed liberation struggles in South Africa, Namibia, El Salvador, Western Sahara. All of these struggles have had the many-sided support of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and have been demonstrations of the close alliance of the socialist countries and the national liberation movements.

In every sense these have been extensions of the October Revolution and the processes it set in motion, although occurring in different and more complex circumstances.

Direct international aid has also been given by the Soviet Union and the other developed socialist countries to the forces striving around the world for national liberation and for national freedom — from Communist-led revolutionary struggles to broad movements of unity for national liberation to relatively conservative nationalist groups and governments endeavouring to achieve various degrees of national development.

In an interview with the Algerian journal *Revolution Africaine* on March 31, 1986, Mikhail Gorbachov carried this policy up to the present moment:

“The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries declare openly: our sympathies are fully on the side of the peoples struggling for freedom, national independence and social progress. We have given and will continue to give them all-round support — political, moral and material.”

Problems of Social Emancipation

In an important sense, the “all-round support” stressed by Mikhail Gorbachov constitutes an international extension of the assistance brought by the October Revolution to the peoples of Central Asia. For reasons of sheer geography it has not been possible in most cases, however, for full protection and security to be extended as well, making non-capitalist or socialist development more gradual for a Vietnam, an Angola, or a Nicaragua; usually, too, in circumstances of the costly drain of having to fend off imperialist aggression or armed subversion. Also, the simultaneous occurrence of national liberation and social emancipation which characterised the Central Asian experience has not always been possible in the less favourable conditions affecting the liberation struggles in other parts

of the world: most often a lag has tended to occur between national freedom and social emancipation.

Lenin had said that “. . . in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p.482).

At the time Lenin made his forecast of “impending decisive battles” it was quite feasible to think in terms of rapidly developing change. Capitalism, however, was able to achieve relative stabilisation for a time after World War I, until the shattering economic crisis and aggravated contradictions of the 1930s that gave rise to fascist aggression and the war to defeat it overtook capitalism and swept further areas of the globe out of its grasp. Subsequently, too, imperialism was able to counter-attack in the post-World War II decades to establish neo-colonial control in many countries where its hold had loosened.

The problems of the revolutionary process that advances national liberation to the stage of social emancipation deserve close attention. For one thing, there can be no export of fully-matured socialist revolution, or of national liberation combined with the goals of social emancipation: the Soviet Union can provide the tools for building a new society but not the social forces. Such struggles depend on the state of development of class forces in each country, the degree of economic development, and the depth of the crisis of imperialism and its local allies in each case. In many of the instances where independence was gained, imperialist powers had negotiated the transfer of rule to native capitalist, commercial and landlord groups, to forestall the victory of effective participation in government of popular revolutionary forces. Imperialism, furthermore, has devised whole new systems of neo-colonialism to negate real independence and to impose new forms of dependence on former colonies.

A vast “aid struggle” has been going on as imperialism has sought to counter and to out-match the development assistance of the socialist community. Economic aid by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries has been selective, going chiefly to build up basic industries, the public sector, and enterprises that enhance the welfare and interests of the people. Imperialist aid has been equally selective in the opposite direction, used to build up private enterprise, to reinforce the class allies of imperialism, and to facilitate the entry and expanding control of foreign transnational companies and financial groups.

Furthermore, if the export of revolution is considered impracticable and is not countenanced by socialist countries, the export of counter-revolution occasions no such hesitancy on the part of imperialism. Imperialist military intervention and subversion have been able to overthrow anti-imperialist or people's governments in Chile, Guatemala, Grenada, Chad, Indonesia, Fiji and elsewhere, and to suppress national liberation struggles in Malaya, Philippines, Kenya and other countries.

The aggressive foreign policy of the U.S. Reagan administration, projected as a "crusade against communism," has been aimed at reversing the influence of the ever-fresh October Revolution and the revolutionary process it began. In imperialist terminology, "communism" is synonymous with the Soviet Union and with the October Revolution, and every anti-imperialist manifestation is branded "communist" because it is viewed as a step toward the socialist revolution that imperialism dreads. The attempts to isolate revolutionary Cuba, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea are identical to the post-1917 efforts to isolate and "quarantine" the Soviet Union. Naked U.S. imperialist intervention in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Libya, Lebanon and Angola, the setting up of a "rapid deployment force" to be used for intervention around the world, and the shameless support given to the apartheid regime in South Africa are frantic efforts to block any trend towards social emancipation.

South Africa and the October Revolution

For the victorious peoples who have won their national and social liberation, and for the struggling peoples who are striving to throw off imperialist oppression and class exploitation, the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution measures the great distance that has been travelled along the road of transforming the world. It is significant that the struggle of each people, as it develops, has become increasingly a focal point of commitment internationally, seen in terms of adding to or detracting from one or other of the two world social systems, capitalism or socialism. It is impossible for any revolt, or social upheaval to occur today without being interpreted as an advance or a setback for one or other of the two competing systems. That is the mould of world forces shaped by the October Revolution, and it has become more sharply discernible with each decade since 1917.

Of all the present struggles in a world stirring with revolutionary currents, the freedom struggle in South Africa is the most potent, advanced example. A national liberation struggle against the most vicious form of national

oppression, based on extreme racism, it is interwoven simultaneously with a struggle for social emancipation.

The nature of that struggle was recognised and clearly stated by the African National Congress in its main policy document adopted at the ANC's First Consultative Conference, in Morogoro, Tanzania in 1969:

“The national character of the struggle must . . . dominate our approach. But it is a national struggle which is taking place in a different era and in a different context from those which characterised the early struggles against colonialism. It is happening in a new kind of world — a world which is no longer monopolised by the imperialist world system; a world in which the existence of the powerful socialist system and a significant sector of newly liberated areas has altered the balance of forces; a world in which the horizons liberated from foreign oppression extend beyond mere formal political control and encompass the element which makes such control meaningful — economic emancipation.

“It is also happening in a new kind of South Africa, a South Africa in which there is a large and well-developed working class whose class consciousness and in which the independent expressions of the working people — their political organs and trade unions — are very much a part of the liberation front. Thus, our nationalism must not be confused with chauvinism or narrow nationalism of a previous epoch. It must not be confused with the classical drive by an elitist group among the oppressed people to gain ascendancy so that they can replace the oppressor in the exploitation of the mass.”

Because the main, underlying purpose of apartheid is the slavery-like exploitation of black labour, the rebellion of the black working class is the foremost anti-apartheid factor, increasingly understood as decisive as the anti-apartheid forces have grown. Since the ANC formulated its position in 1969, the organisation of black workers has increased enormously. In the minds of growing numbers of black workers apartheid is synonymous with capitalism, a colonial-style form of capitalism for which imperialism is the indispensable ally, and national liberation must inevitably point to the end of such capitalism.

In South Africa, class struggle and national liberation are not contradictory or at odds. National liberation is inscribed on the banners of the organised black working class, and social emancipation is called for by the forces of the liberation movement as a whole headed by the African National Congress in alliance with the South African Communist Party.

There have been few revolutions, outside the Soviet Union, in the past 70 years that have contained the potential of the Soviet Central Asian mixed ingredients of national liberation and transition to socialism so demonstrably as in South Africa. The revolution will win in the setting of a Southern Africa where a socialist orientation has been declared by numerous neighbouring

countries and will be enhanced when the apartheid threat of interference has been removed. It will have the assurance of extensive all-round assistance from the whole socialist community which has wholeheartedly supported the revolutionary anti-apartheid movement from its inception in the international spirit given vigorous life by the October Revolution.

It is not surprising that imperialism is so deeply concerned over the course of the South African revolution. Its victory will be a massive blow to imperialism and to world capitalism, and one of the most triumphant affirmations of the Leninist path on which the world's peoples first set foot 70 years ago.



*In Honour of the 70th Anniversary of the
Great October Revolution*

A PAGE FROM THE DIARY OF A COMMUNIST

By Theresa

I was chatting to several friends as an excursion which we had undertaken on the 1st of May, international workers' day, was drawing to an end. As is often the case in the relaxed atmosphere of an outing we were talking about this and that, with no agenda. But all being, to one degree or another, politically interested, though I was the only Communist present, political themes tended to come up and, again, as is typical in a time of relaxation, to take on a philosophical colouring. As we were sitting on a small patch of grass in the late afternoon sun, somebody commented that he could not understand how it was that today anyone who thought of his approach to the world as being scientific could keep on turning to the works of Lenin: Lenin was of another day and age. Such an approach was for him unhistorical, smacked of religion rather than science.

As the comment was clearly, in part, directed at me — I was, as noted, the only Communist present — I decided to take up the (friendly) challenge. I said, "When I am engaged in my historical work, I find that even well-known scientists of today in my field do not offer me the wealth of ideas, conceptions

and insights that Lenin's work offers me." One of my friends commented: "That is because he was a genius." "But why was he a genius?" I responded. I answered my own rhetorical question along the following lines:

Lenin was an historical product, a product of his time, deeply embedded through intellect and emotions in those times. This deep involvement was, however, self-conscious, to the extent that he was deeply aware of the historical past and, in particular, preceding revolutionary traditions, including those encompassed by the writing and political activities of those great thinkers and revolutionaries of the 19th century, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of what is known today as the Marxist world outlook.

Class Position

At the same time, Lenin took up a particular class position in his times: He was a revolutionary, a leader of the proletariat. Moreover, especially crucial if we are to understand Lenin is that he was a leader of the proletariat at a time when it had begun to come on to the stage of world history as never before. True, there had been important working class and popular movements already in the nineteenth century: Thus, for example, the working people had played a significant role in the 1848 revolutions in France and Germany as well as in the days of the Paris Commune in 1871. And one could go even further back, is indeed did the founders of Marxism, to consider the roots of the people's movements of the 19th century already in the "plebeian" and peasant movements at the time of the French revolution of 1789-93, of the English bourgeois revolution of the 17th century and even at the time of the early bourgeois risings in Germany, including what became known as the Peasant War in the 16th century.

However, a key to the times of Lenin, and I refer here for a start to the early 20th century, was that the proletariat was poised to take the lead in world development, to put itself at the head of the movement for the renewal of world civilisation at a time when the bourgeoisie had, on a world scale, finally lost the historical capacity to head the movement for social progress. Moreover, with the onset of the imperialist epoch, that is — looked at from the economic point of view — the monopoly capitalist stage of world capitalism, the capitalist system itself lost its progressive civilising potential. This, the final stage of world capitalism, represents its politically and socially and, indeed, economically reactionary stage. Its economically reactionary character, in particular in relation to the function of development of the productive forces, was to emerge, it is true, very unevenly and was to be

realised over a relatively long historical period; nevertheless, its stagnating, decaying character had begun to emerge already in the first decades of the 20th century. Moreover, its threat to world peace and thus to the lives, health and happiness of ordinary human beings and, indeed, in the end result, to civilisation itself, because of its peculiar aggressiveness already emerged with the First World War, an imperialist war which cost more lives than all the previous wars put together. Although it is only in the phase of world development which we have entered in our time that capitalism faces, so to say, its final test in so far as the productive forces are concerned, nonetheless, the epoch of world capitalism's final decline opened in Lenin's time. He is the great theorist of our epoch, the epoch of international capitalism's general crisis. Moreover, it was the socialist revolution in October 1917 in Russia which, in a dramatic manner, heralded the new epoch and introduced the transition, on a global scale, from capitalism to socialism.

Centre of Contradictions

In the first decades of the 20th century it was in Russia that the knot of capitalist contradictions was, in a global sense, to become centred. This had to do with the especially explosive social material which had gathered there, due to the overlapping of feudal remnants, in particular at the political level and in the sphere of land relations, on the one hand, and, on the other, a relatively developed capitalism which, in the second decade of the century was to become integrated into the imperialist world system. This explosive social and political material was to lay the basis not for just one revolution but for three revolutions in a matter of 12 years: the bourgeois-democratic revolutions of October 1905-7 and February 1917 and the socialist revolution of October 1917.

To live through three great revolutions is, clearly, an exceptional experience. Moreover, it was three revolutions at a time of qualitative change in the world. This was Lenin's Russia. The man who led the proletariat in three great revolutions in such; an epoch of world history is likely to have been a great man, not only in the social-historical sense but also as an individual.

Another key to an understanding of Lenin's exceptional talents, including as a social scientist, is that in all three Russian revolutions — and that is why all three can be described as "great" revolutions — the mass of the people, above all the working class and peasantry, came forward as a creative force, as an independent force, on to the stage of world history. This was clearly of enormous importance for both Lenin's political as well as personal

development. It was, indeed, the roots of his great humanism, his moral values, his deep democratic sense and, indeed, his creativity. Lenin was influenced by the people's creative capacity in a myriad of ways. Apart from anything else, it influenced in a decisive manner his conception of the relationship between the political leader, on the one hand, and the people, on the other.

He, indeed, stressed that it was not individual revolutionaries or particular revolutionary organisations which made history. History was made, above all, by the people. Moreover, the political leader, the revolutionary, must learn from the people. For Lenin, it was the people's actions, the methods of struggle the people spontaneously utilised in the course of revolutionary upsurges, which served as his compass as he worked his way through the enormous amount of fascinating and complicated material which the revolutionary events had produced. Without a great people, without a great proletariat, there could have been no great Lenin. And Lenin would have been the first to admit that.

Thus what made Lenin great was not simply his intelligence, but had to do with his total personality, in particular in so far as he was wide open, consciously open, to the people's influence and, more generally, to the actual course of history. He was thoroughly dialectical in his approach to historical events. The people's creative power underpinned his. He took what the people produced, digested it, sorted the people's experience, made it more logical, more systematic, more understandable. In the midst of the most complicated and complex train of events he pointed to the main direction of development, gave the people's experience, now enlightened by his intelligence, back to them, so that their organisations, gaining in self-consciousness and historical clarity, saw more clearly and more surely the path ahead. He lent the people's movement a striking power which it had not had before.

Unity of Talents

It was, then, that peculiar unity of his mind and his whole personality as well as his individual and social being which made Lenin not only the great political leader but also the great social scientist. He was not only open-minded, unschematic but extraordinarily conscientious, untiring in his search for the truth, an absolute necessity for a good scientist. Thus he probed events, looked at them now from this angle, now from that, investigated them at the political level and then went on to examine their economic roots. He did not easily admit failure in finding the explanation for

some historical occurrence and he had a drivingly logical and systematic mind. Conceptions which emerged in embryonic form in earlier years were picked up again sometimes years later and further developed. He was always measuring his previously accepted conclusions against ongoing historical development.

It is all this which makes delving into the work of Lenin such an exciting and eminently worthwhile experience for all who have an interest in social development, whether it be at the level of politics, economics, scientific-technical progress, or culture and morality. For we South Africans who are living through revolutionary days in our own country a study of the work of Lenin is a most enlightening experience.

In fact, the discussion we had on the 1st of May concerning Lenin was no chance event. It had to do with the new creative atmosphere abroad in the world and, in the first place, amongst Communists and those in one way or another allied to them, resulting from the new stage of socialist construction in the socialist countries. Thus it was that in discussing Lenin we were not only honouring Lenin as well as the Great October Socialist revolution which this year has its 70th anniversary; we were also honouring the peoples of the socialist countries and, above all, the Soviet Union whose leaders, indeed, are very conscious of the debt they owe to Lenin in the present stage of revolutionary transformation of the total economic mechanism and, with it, of the whole of society, including its political, cultural and moral aspects, a debt they owe to him not merely as the leader of the proletariat in the three Russian revolutions but as the great thinker of our epoch.



HOW CLOSE IS FINAL VICTORY?

Some Thoughts on the Perspectives of Struggle

By Inquilab

Today we are passing through one of the most important and decisive stages of the unfolding of the South African revolution.

The oppressed people of SA have a long history of struggle. This year we mark the 75th anniversary of the ANC and the 66th anniversary of the SACP. Through these years of struggle our people have gained strength and confidence and are refusing to live in the old way. Millions of our people, both in urban and rural areas, are now actively involved in struggle and making unprecedented sacrifices to achieve freedom.

A Canadian church visitor to South Africa (April 85) said:

“No longer do they respect or fear the white regime. They are prepared to die if necessary so that tomorrow their children might be free. The present situation of erupting unrest will continue and will escalate until whatever might the South African regime can muster will not be sufficient to contain it. The revolution has begun”.

In 1980 Nelson Mandela and other leaders smuggled out a message from prison in which they stated:

“We face the future with confidence. For the guns that serve apartheid cannot render it unconquerable. Those who live by the gun will perish by the gun. Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of the armed struggle we shall crush apartheid and white minority racist rule”.

How prophetic these words are proving to be. A characteristic feature of the present situation is that the strategic initiative has passed into the hands of the people. Even the US Schultz Commission report (Jan. 87) acknowledged that the “struggle has moved into fundamentally a new stage” and that there is now a “fundamental change in the balance of forces”.

The masses, under the leadership of the liberation alliance, have taken the initiative and their offensive is unstoppable and irreversible. This does not imply that victory will be quick or easy. We are acutely and painfully conscious of the enemy's strength. It has considerable financial and manpower resources. The security forces' budget for 1987 was: Defence R683 billion (30% increase); Police R1.53 billion (43% increase); secret services R198.2 million (17.3%); control of security measures within the Department of Development Aid R2m (100% increase); SADF housing and buildings in the Public Works vote and other items R334m. Total, a staggering R9.081 billion (19.9% of the budget). This does not include inevitable overspending or "hidden" items.

The all-white elections (May 87) indicated that, for the time being at least, the regime can count on the support of the majority of the whites. The regime can also continue to count on the support of its major Western allies, especially the Reagan, Thatcher and Kohl administrations. These objective realities determine that our strategic perspective must be one of protracted struggle. However, since the regime is unable to rule in the old way, since it is undergoing a deep and worsening political, economic, social and moral crisis, since the myth of a white monolith is being challenged and the whites are no longer confident of the permanence of the system, the revolutionary forces must be prepared for sudden transformations.

The regime has no viable political strategy and has been forced to resort to unprecedented repression to maintain itself in power. The country is effectively controlled by the military through the State Security Council and the Joint Management Centres. South Africa has been living under a state of emergency for 3 years and all indications are that it will continue for some time.

In the last year over 30,000 people have been detained and thousands killed. South Africa must surely be the only country in the world which arrests thousands of children and subjects them to mental and physical torture. 11-year-old Gili Nyathela said in an affidavit that he was forcibly taken to a police station and questioned about the stoning of a bottle store. He was then taken to a room, a sack was put over his head, he was handcuffed and given electric shocks. He lost control of his bodily functions and was forced to clean up the mess. The next day he was taken to a room with corpses and forced to kiss the corpse of an old white person.

The activities and atrocities of the official paramilitary apparatus are supplemented by the operations of state-supported vigilantes and death squads. Their activities reflect a high degree of planning and co-ordination. They terrorise and murder UDF and COSATU leaders and activists and destroy all forms of people's power, especially the street committees. The vigilantes impose state committees and many townships are forcibly "controlled" by them.

Excessive and brutal force is also being deployed against the people by the "kitskonstabels" ("instant cops"), vigilantes in uniform, who receive three weeks training and are then unleashed on to the communities. Uniformed and non-uniformed vigilantes are trained in a secret camp in the Transvaal — "ASKARI".

Death Squads

The state-controlled media are projecting these vigilantes and death squads as "moderates", "elders" who are reacting to the intimidation of the youth. Sections of the international media also promote these lies, sometimes reducing the struggle to "black vs black violence".

State terrorism is an important aspect of the regime's "Reform and Repression" strategy, the objective being to physically eliminate all genuine opposition and to create conditions for the imposition of Botha's "reform".

This strategy cannot succeed. Admittedly the reign of terror has inflicted heavy blows against the democratic movement and many casualties are being suffered. However the regime's claims that resistance has been crushed and stability has been restored are wishful thinking.

P.W. Botha introducing a policy statement once remarked that he had made up his mind and did not want to be confused by facts. It therefore does not surprise us that when reimposing the State of Emergency on June 12 he could still claim that there was "peace and stability". If there was peace and stability why is the country under a state of siege? Why has it been necessary to impose such draconian restrictions on the people? Outdoor meetings have been banned in South Africa since 1967. This ban has been extended annually, the last occasion being April 1. Since 1985 the ban has also included indoor gatherings held to organise boycotts of educational institutions or to organise for industrial action other than that permitted under the Industrial Relations Act.

In June new restrictions were imposed that not only reversed the decision of the Natal Supreme Court (which had previously overthrown some aspects of security legislation) but tightened and extended others. The Commissioner

of Police has now been given powers of direct censorship. He can prohibit the publication of any "news, comment or advertisement in connection with any matter". Added to this already existing rigid control of the media, this will ensure an almost total wall of silence. People can now be detained for 30 days before the Minister of Law and Order (sic) has to give reasons for their continued detention.

In June the powers of the Commissioner of Police to control schools and school premises were extended to cover the presence and movement of individuals at schools, the use of facilities and even the type of clothing worn on the premises.

There is no peace and stability in SA. We are in an escalating war situation.

Recently ANC President Tambo said:

"We are going through a great test of strength. We have been called upon to meet the problems we anticipated. We have never imagined that the enemy would yield easily, we must expect worse".

The oppressed people of South Africa, tried and tested through decades of struggle, have responded magnificently to this new challenge. After the initial disruptions caused by state repression, the democratic forces were quick to make organisational adjustments. New organisational forms had to be found; people had to get used to working in underground conditions; new tactics of politicisation and mobilisation were found. Most significantly, a better understanding of the nature of state power and the relation between the different levels of struggle (legal, semi-legal, illegal) emerged. Any remaining illusions of bringing about change through reforms were removed and the necessity and importance of the armed struggle was understood.

Struggle does not follow a straight path. Undoubtedly there will be some losses and setbacks. The regime will win some temporary victories. However, millions of people are now actively involved in struggle and few doubt the inevitability of final victory. A people determined to be free, organised and united in action, cannot be defeated. This is being demonstrated in action in South Africa.

The leading force of the South African revolution, the black working class, continues to grow in strength. Under the slogan "Year of consolidation and decisive action" the independent non-racial trade union federation COSATU has increased its paid-up membership to 750,000. Despite some difficulties its objective of establishing one union in one industry is achieving

success. In May 1987 the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa was established. It has a paid up membership of 140,000 (30% of all workers in the metal and motor industry). Other mergers have taken place in the food and agricultural sector and in the commercial and catering sector.

All attempts to limit workers' struggle to "pure" shop-floor issues and to isolate the trade union movement from the broad democratic movement are failing. The black working class is increasingly playing a leading role in all aspects of the struggle, including the fight for People's Education, the formation of street committees etc. The powerful National Union of Mineworkers, the National Union of Metal Workers, the Food and Allied Workers' Union have all accepted the Freedom Charter as their programme. At its July conference COSATU itself followed suit.

In 1986 there were over 793 strikes (in 1985 there were 389). Key sectors of the economy viz., mining, manufacturing, trade and accommodation, were hit hardest. In strike after strike workers are writing new glorious chapters. In 1985 workers at the British-owned BRT-Sarmcol factory in Natal went on strike. In an attempt to break the union 1000 workers were summarily dismissed. Sarmcol is the only factory in the area and the only source of income. Without it the community starves. A survey showed that one quarter of the children are "malnourished" and a further third "undernourished". An increasing number of children are dying. Striking workers and families survive on R2 a day earned from a silk-screening co-operative project (it produces many T-shirts for unions) and a vegetable project supplemented by solidarity rations.

In a desperate bid to break the strike Inkatha vigilantes attacked the community and murdered a shop steward, Phineas Sibiya, and 3 other workers. Rather than give in the workers resolved to continue the strike and appointed "marshals" and area committees to defend themselves. 2 years after the strike began Sarmcol workers are still fighting to get their jobs back.

Railway Workers' Victory

They and other beleaguered black workers will undoubtedly be inspired and encouraged by the victory of the South Africa Railway and Harbour Workers' Union against their employers South African Transport Services, a government body reputed to be one of the most exploitative and bloody minded. The dispute started when SATS sacked a worker for something which was not his fault and the rest of his colleagues went on strike. After 6 weeks 16,000 workers were dismissed. The strike continued and the workers' demands were extended to include

- full payment while the workers were on strike.
- revision of SATS disciplinary procedures.
- a clear statement of intent by SATS to eliminate racism in the workplace.
- no victimisation.

The regime launched a massive campaign against COSATU and SARHWU. Six transport workers were shot dead, hundreds teargassed, assaulted and arrested. However the workers stood firm and after 12 weeks SATS capitulated.

This victory was possible because of the existence of a strong federation; the unity and militancy of the transport workers (many involved in industrial action for the first time); unity between transport workers and workers in other sections; the failure of the bosses to obtain scab labour. SATS sustained losses in excess of R20m. There were widespread arson attacks against carriages and stations and trains had to be manned by armed soldiers. The regime became concerned at the growing politicisation and organisation of the transport workers, but could not stop them.

Under the banner "Unite and fight for a living wage" COSATU affiliates are being co-ordinated in a single campaign, the main thrust of which is the demand for a living wage and full employment. All other sectors of the democratic movement have pledged support. Living wage committees are being established in every branch, every region and nationally. COSATU has predicted the regime's reactions and warned that their "propaganda will dub the living wage campaign a communist inspired plot to wreck the country. The ideological attack will prepare the ground for a possible crackdown with detentions and bannings". True to form Pik Botha warned that the government is deeply concerned by the increased militancy of some black trade unions which are making "outrageous and irresponsible" demands. Such behaviour could lead to the end of trade unionism in South Africa, warned Botha.

Van der Walt, a top official of the Afrikaner Handelsinstituut, has also threatened COSATU, pointing out that COSATU has called for mass united action. He went on to warn that the ANC onslaught had shifted from the townships to the factory floor (*Cape Times* 9.5.1987). A systematic campaign of terror has been launched against COSATU, whose headquarters has been destroyed by a massive bomb attack and whose offices throughout the country have been attacked. In May alone there were 15 acts of arson and vandalism against COSATU offices.

Hundreds of trade unionists have been arrested. Moses Mayekiso, the secretary general of NUMSA, is being charged with treason for having organised street committees and other organs of people's power. State vigilantes are killing COSATU activists. Meetings to launch the Living Wage Campaign have been banned; educational and agitational material is being confiscated; pressure is being put on landlords not to give office space to COSATU or its affiliates. A ludicrous smear campaign has been started to show that COSATU is a front for the ANC and the SACP. There are indications that the regime is trying to manufacture evidence to bring trade unionists to trial on cooked up conspiracy charges.

A "Hands off COSATU" campaign has been launched and is getting widespread support. State terrorism cannot and will not cow the black working class into submission.

Speaking at COSATU's July congress, the president Elijah Barayi explained the stance of the federation in adopting the Freedom Charter:

"We make no apologies about connecting issues on the shop floor and issues facing workers in society as a whole. Politics, and especially the lack of even the most basic democratic rights for the majority of our people, is a bread and butter issue for the working class".

Messages to the congress from the ANC, SACTU and SACP were greeted with enthusiastic applause by the 1,500 delegates.

United Democratic Front

The United Democratic Front, representing an estimated 2 million people from over 600 organisations, has borne the full brunt of state terrorism. Almost all its leaders are in prison or in hiding. However at the end of May the UDF secretly held its third national Congress, attended by 200 delegates from 9 regions. The fact that 75% of the delegates were attending their first national conference indicates the deep roots of the organisation and the capacity of the leadership to reproduce itself. The theme of the conference "Defend, Consolidate and Advance" highlighted the key demands of today, viz., the need to defend the people's organisations from attacks by the state and its vigilantes, the need to consolidate organisation, and, most important, the need to advance.

The conference undertook to explain and popularise the Freedom Charter and committed itself to building unity of all the democratic forces. It reiterated the leading role of the working class and pledged support for COSATU's living wage campaign. It criticised Malawi, Swaziland and Lesotho for co-operating with the regime and called for international aid and solidarity for the Frontline States.

The conference set strict guidelines on the acceptance of foreign funding. No funds will be accepted if they are intended to gain influence in organisations, to justify undercutting the sanctions campaign or if they are provided by agencies which supply funds to “puppet structures, death squads or counter-revolutionary groupings”. Conference decided to call a conference of all anti-apartheid forces to look “at the crisis in South Africa and attempt to develop the shortest possible path to peace”.

Call to the Youth

On January 8 the ANC addressed a special word to the youth — the Young Lions of our revolutionary struggle.

“Dear comrades, you who have paid such a heavy price to bring us to where we are today have a responsibility to fight on with the same boldness, bravery and determination. You are justified to see that all those who share a common interest in liberation should act with the same tenacity that you have displayed. You are correct to demand victory now”.

Our youth have been hunted down, murdered, arrested, tortured, their organisation has been hampered but they have not been defeated.

To the astonishment of the regime and sceptics 200 youth delegates from 9 regions met secretly in Cape Town to launch the SA Youth Congress (SAYCO). Prior to the launch of SAYCO much effort was put into strengthening and consolidating regional youth structures. By the time of the launch the Southern Transvaal Youth Congress, the Northern Transvaal Youth Congress and the Southern Cape Youth Congress had achieved an impressive degree of organisation. Interim regional structures also exist in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, OFS, Natal and Eastern Transvaal.

The slogan adopted by conference “FREEDOM OR DEATH, VICTORY IS CERTAIN” epitomises the confidence and militancy of our youth. It was not just youthful sloganising. The delegates had frankly looked at their strengths, weaknesses and possibilities. Like the Vietnamese they “told no lies and claimed no easy victories”. They were fully conscious of the obstacles in front of them. A report from Northern Transvaal stated: “Repression has become increasingly harsh and we have to decide between the life and death of our structures. And we have decided against the death of our structures”.

The deliberations and resolutions of conference indicate the maturity and deep understanding of our youth. Having reaffirmed the illegitimacy of the regime, SAYCO resolved to intensify the struggle for the implementation of

people's democracy and the Freedom Charter and for the unbanning of the ANC, the return of the exiles, the release of detainees, Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners.

Conference noted imperialism's continued support for the regime and rejected attempts to equate the ANC with "other defunct organisations internally and externally" or to put other organisations on an equal footing with the ANC or to portray them as being in competition with the ANC.

SAYCO reaffirmed the leading role of the working class and pledged to "fight side by side with COSATU until we achieve democracy in a free, united and non-racial South Africa". A youth leader said:

"The workers are the leadership because of history. They are the producers, they hold the key to any future that can develop out of the present. But this does not necessarily make them organise on their own".

On the question of transforming society a youth leader said that the main problem was economic exploitation and national oppression.

"As the process unfolds, entire masses will be more conscious, getting rid of the old ideas, attitudes and apartheid values like racism, tribalism, individualism and acquiring new progressive values, for example collective work, non-racialism, non-sexism. So part of transforming society is transforming people, creating a new person in South Africa. It is important to build those values now. We cannot talk of freedom if we have not laid the basis for it now".

In sharp contrast to those who claim that organisation and also the spirit of resistance have been crushed, SAYCO called on the youth to

- mount vigorous resistance to all structures of apartheid.
- consolidate and sharpen organisation.
- actively build and defend unity among all sections of youth — Coloured, Indian, African and White.
- deepen unity by participating in community struggles and those of workers led by COSATU.
- form defence units to "defend our people, our leadership and activists".

The conference proclaimed that "the struggle continues, prison or no prison. Turn the disadvantages of imprisonment into an advantage. Let all prisons become schools of liberation".

In June delegates from all over the country met to launch a UDF Women's group. They adopted the Freedom Charter as their programme and decided to campaign for better housing and affordable rents, an end to the state of emergency; free and adequate hospital services, women workers' rights; rejection of identity books; the unbanning of the ANC and all political

parties; for unconditional return of exiles. They resolved to support COSATU'S campaigns and fight to ensure that women's leadership within the democratic structures is strengthened.

The UDF women's affiliate is initiating discussions with other women's organisations to launch a national women's organisation.

Meeting The Challenge

These are only some manifestations of the democratic forces' capacity to meet the new challenge. Our confidence in the future is reinforced by the fact that the liberation alliance headed by the ANC now enjoys the overwhelming support of our people. It is seen not merely as an opposition group but as the alternative power. The very legitimacy of the apartheid system is being questioned. The all-round political and military activities of the ANC underground and its army Umkhonto we Sizwe have increased. Through its rigid control of the media the regime attempts to hide the scale and scope of MK activities; however even from the limited reports it is clear that armed actions and confrontation between ANC cadres and the enemy's armed personnel have risen dramatically. From the hundreds of court cases involving ANC activists it is clear that the liberation forces have rooted themselves amongst the people.

The ANC has had discussions with representatives of many sections of our people. All agree that apartheid is the source of the crisis and violence, that apartheid cannot be reformed but must be totally destroyed. All are for a united, non-racial democratic South Africa. While not everyone agrees with the tactics of armed struggle, there is a common understanding of why the liberation alliance has had to adopt this course of struggle.

More than at any other time of our history the possibility exists for the greatest unity of all the democratic forces in our country. This is the urgent task facing the revolutionary forces.

The democratic forces have made organisational and tactical adjustments to meet the new repressive onslaught. The capacity to advance in attack has been made evident by the various activities and campaigns that are taking place, viz., the People's Education campaign; the rent boycott; the continuing attacks against the regime's administrative organs (in many townships control is only maintained by the presence of the army); the continuing efforts to set up embryonic forms of people's power; growing struggle in the rural areas; the daily confrontations at black educational and academic institutions; increasing opposition, especially among white youth,

against conscription. Resistance takes place in multifarious ways and the people have used ingenious techniques. In many townships the police were unable to use their armoured cars because the people had dug trenches.

In one court case an exasperated citizen force man gave evidence that trenches were dug at night as fast as the security forces could dig them by day; six defendants were accused of helping the police to fill the trenches during the day and then digging them up at night. A pamphlet "Umkhonto we Sizwe" and a copy of *Umsebenzi* (the voice of the SACP) which depicted the digging of trenches were handed in as exhibits.

The almost total shutdown of industry to mark May 1, June 16 and the two-day protest against the whites-only election in May (when more people stayed away from work, schools and universities than voted) were magnificent demonstrations of our people's capacity to organise and to act.

Much has been achieved, but more remains to be done. Through sacrifice the liberation forces have made significant gains. The people have the commitment and the battalions to make even further advances. State terrorism will not enable the regime to recapture the strategic initiative. The situation that the oppressed themselves have created demands of us that we seize the time and take the battle to the enemy. The key to further advance is organisation. It is vital that the widespread popularity of the ANC and the SACP be transformed into organised support. Without this it will not be possible to escalate struggle in a systematic and revolutionary way. Despite successes achieved in the armed struggle, we have not come anywhere near to the achievement of the objective of people's war. Every effort must be made to ensure that every patriot is a combatant — every combatant a patriot.

In its January 8 message the ANC called on the people of South Africa to unite in struggle and together advance towards victory, to continue and escalate our offensive to smash the organs of apartheid state power and construct organs of people's power; to create mass revolutionary bases in all black areas throughout the country and to mount a strategic offensive against the enemy in its strongholds in the towns and the cities.

This is the challenge confronting us. Faced with growing mass resistance, the regime can be expected to react more viciously. No struggle has been won without sacrifices. The South African struggle is no exception. The road ahead is dangerous and difficult but we march forward optimistically confident, because for millions of our people life itself has become synonymous with the struggle for freedom. Victory is certain.

A 70th birthday tribute to President Tambo
from one of the Soweto generation

HOW THE ANC WAS REVIVED BY THE YOUTH LEAGUE

By Comrade Mzala

“Eppur si muove.” This naive and almost childish phrase nearly cost Galileo his head during the Dark Ages. How could he dare say that the earth moved around the sun when everyone in the world, including the Church, maintained that it was a four-cornered object stationed in a fixed position? The tendency to resist new ideas and change does not belong only to ancient times. Even today, those with a disposition to challenge established views in any sphere of human endeavour have to stand up against the resistance of the forces of conservatism, stagnation and routinism. And there seems to be nothing as difficult as changing an old establishment which prides itself on the fact that it is old. Yet there are moments when history demands ‘glasnost’ or openness — bringing everything into the open, hiding nothing, no matter how painful, so as to overcome inertia and stimulate the extraordinary potential of the people to renovate their organisation and life. From Galileo to

Gorbachov, every victory of human reason, even the most inoffensive one, has been achieved by the bold assertion of progressive ideas, whether or not the innovators' heads may be chopped. Precisely when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

It was in this spirit that a young generation of Africans came to the fore in the mid-1940s and demanded the transformation of the African National Congress. By introducing a critical dimension, they provided the movement not only with new political insights but also set unprecedented strategic perspectives for that period. Like their predecessors, they considered the ANC to be the principal vehicle for all liberation efforts; but unlike them, they were impatient with the ritual employment of tactics such as deputations, passing of endless resolutions and the holding of annual conferences. They insisted that it was time for a change, that the ANC should rely on mass political action as the prime arena for the promotion of its strategic and tactical initiatives. Without the establishment of such new channels for political expression, relying on the masses of the people as the true makers of history, the ANC would mark time and, perhaps, only continue to bask in the glory of its fame but without taking a single practical step towards the achievement of majority rule.

As they expected, the immediate attitude of the old leadership in the ANC was to regard them as a product of youthful inexperience and brashness. One such leader, for example, was A.W.G. Champion, who adopted a very negative attitude to the youth, seeing them as undermining the leadership of the ANC. At one ANC conference, he publicly warned Dr Alfred Bitini Xuma that his association with the youth would bring about his downfall from the ANC presidency.

The experience of the youth in the 1940s seems to confirm the view that fear of youth is the beginning of conservatism. On the other hand, it also shows that only that part of the youth which has cast away all timidity, broken out of the egg-shell, and is ready to assert itself independently as part and parcel of the ANC is destined for an immortal place in the history of the liberation struggle.

Formation Of The Youth League

It was with this understanding that Oliver Tambo and a small group of extraordinarily dedicated young men in their mid-twenties and early thirties resolved to constitute themselves as a pressure group within the ANC and press for changes in the direction that was needed. Early in 1942 they began caucusing with some ANC leaders who were receptive to their ideas calling

for the broadening of the organisation's structures to accommodate a Youth League. These took the issue up in the ANC meetings and indeed a decision was taken that "this Annual Conference of the African National Congress authorises the Executive to institute a Youth League of the African National Congress to include students at Fort Hare" (Resolution 29 of the 1942 Annual Conference). Like most resolutions of the ANC in those days, however, this one also remained only on paper and there was no follow up.

The following year, 1943, Oliver Tambo and Congress Mbatha, both teachers at St. Peter's (Episcopal) Secondary School in Rosettenville, Johannesburg, mobilised support among the youth for the candidacy of Self Mampuru for the presidency of the ANC in the Transvaal. The two first held discussions with Mampuru and afterwards brought together a group of about eight or ten where the idea of establishing an ANC Youth League was discussed and endorsed. The second meeting was convened in October 1943 at the Domestic and Cultural Workers' Club in Diagonal Street, Johannesburg, where the Congress Youth League Manifesto was first drafted. This meeting also discussed the idea in view of the oncoming ANC annual conference in Bloemfontein, and agreed that every opportunity be utilised to get the senior ANC to implement the decision of the previous conference.

A deputation of the nascent youth organisation visited Dr Xuma at his home in Sophiatown. In the delegation were Oliver Tambo, Anton Lembede, Walter Sisulu, A.P. (Ashby Peter) Mda and Congress Mbatha. They reviewed with him their draft manifesto and constitution. Although Dr Xuma expressed his concern about their criticism of the ANC leadership, he was broadminded enough to appreciate that this was not destructive criticism coming from enemies of the movement, but rather positive proposals from young people who were sincerely concerned about giving new life and vigour to the organisation. The founders of the Youth League never considered themselves as a splinter group, and neither were their critical concerns and outspokenness about conservatism in the ANC motivated by vanity and petty opportunism. They wanted to provide a reinforcing layer to the movement so that it could realise its full potential.

After the Youth Leaguers had mobilised sufficient numbers of young people to make the formation of a national organisation constitutionally meaningful, the inaugural meeting was convened on the Easter Sunday of April 1944 at the Bantu Men's Social Centre in Eloff Street Extension, Johannesburg. Almost all of its prominent leaders, with the exception of Walter Sisulu (who left school at Standard IV and started working, first as a

dairy labourer and later as a gold miner), had either completed matric or had been to university. The majority of them were former students of St. Peter's, Lovedale, Healdtown or Adams (Amanzimtoti).

Some of those who had been to Fort Hare had been expelled for their political activities. One of them was Oliver Tambo who was expelled from Fort Hare in 1942. A brilliant student, Tambo had completed his matric with a first class pass in 1938, setting an academic record by obtaining the best results in the whole of the Transvaal, black and white students considered together. This distinction earned him a scholarship to Fort Hare from the Transkei Bunga. He graduated in 1941 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and Physics and remained at the university to do a diploma in Education, but hardly a year later was expelled. Tambo was elected by the Youth League to be its first national secretary. He and Anton Muziwakhe Lembede, who became the first President of the Youth League, were entrusted with the most senior posts in the new organisation.

Lembede, considered by many to be the most daring thinker and dynamic personality of that generation of young leaders, died in 1947 at the age of 33 after obtaining B.A., LL.B., and M.A. degrees. At the time of his death he was working for a doctorate in law and was able to speak seven languages fluently, including German and Dutch. By 1946 he had been elected to the National Executive Committee of the ANC. He and Tambo formed a dynamic partnership, guiding the youth of the time as organised within the Congress movement.

Adventurists Or Visionaries?

To fully understand the historical context in which the demands of the Youth League were made, one must understand both the political situation in South Africa (and the world) at the time as well as the state of organisation within the ANC.

On the 4 September 1939, the South African white Parliament voted 80 to 67 to enter the Second World War on the side of the Allied Forces. General Smuts ousted Hertzog to become Prime Minister, with the "liberal" Jan H. Hofmeyr as his deputy. The government recruited Africans for service with the promise that a new deal for them was forthcoming. Quoting from the Atlantic Charter, a document produced by Churchill and Roosevelt in 1941, General Smuts told the South African Institute of Race Relations in that same year that "isolation has gone and I am afraid segregation has fallen on evil days too." He went further to declare that for South Africa the Atlantic

Charter should mean “for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security.” By this rhetoric, he left open a door of expectation that the conditions of the black people might change in South Africa. Inspired by this mood, Dr Xuma also called on the Africans to draw up their own Atlantic Charter. “The world should know our hopes and our despairs directly from us,” he said.

Because of the huge demand for cheap labour in the industries brought about by war conditions, tens of thousands of African people flocked to the cities seeking employment, particularly in Johannesburg. Overcrowding and congestion forced thousands of people in areas like Pimville and Alexandra to squat on vacant space in the townships. Poverty and distress increased, and wages were far below the breadline. Meanwhile the police increased their harassment of pass law offenders, raiding slums and townships in the early hours of the morning during which they arrested hundreds of people each day. With frustrations building up among the people, a series of strikes took place on the Reef and in Natal, and there were many clashes between Africans and the police.

The ANC of those days was a loosely bound political organisation in a nearly moribund state. The Youth League referred to it as “an organisation of the privileged few . . . professionals, small traders, a sprinkling of intellectuals and conservatives of all grades.” (Youth League Manifesto). Such a movement was bound to be out of touch with the needs of the masses of the people who were already responding, independently of their organisation, to the combustible situation. In December 1940, when Dr Xuma was elected ANC president, only 41 delegates had turned up at the annual conference; 21 of them voted for Dr Xuma and the remaining 20 for Rev. Z.R. Mahabane. When he became president, Dr Xuma found the organisation without a treasury. In an attempt to revive the ANC he appealed mostly to intellectuals and “graduates” but gradually a tightly functioning and centralised national organisation emerged. He built its treasury on the basis of a strict membership fee. Branches and provinces which misconducted their affairs, whether organisationally or financially, soon found themselves having to reckon with presidential authority hitherto unknown. This strict administration greatly improved the standard of financial accounting.

New Constitution

Gone were the days of annual conferences with no organisational activity between them; Dr Xuma initiated the drafting of a new constitution for the

ANC which made provision for a year-round organisation, with a working committee composed of “persons living within fifty miles of national headquarters” meeting almost weekly. Membership increased. Whereas in 1939 there only 4,000 members of the ANC, by 1945 the Orange Free State alone had 4,176 registered and dues-paying members.

Also playing a leading role in this build-up of the ANC were leading members of the Communist Party, who sat side by side with non-Communists in the Special Committee that drafted the main policy document of the ANC at that time, the African Claims (which was the African version of the Atlantic Charter in the South African context). Members of this committee included Moses Kotane, Gana Makabeni, Rev. Z.R. Mahabane, R.G. Baloyi, Z.K. Matthews, Dr J.S. Moroka, Govan Mbeki, Edwin Mofutsanyana, Dr Pixley Seme, Rev. James Calata and others. The drafting of the constitution also received the assistance of Bram Fischer, an advocate and leading member of the Communist Party.

However, in spite of these and many other achievements of the Xuma period, the ANC was not yet a mass organisation; the weaknesses in its organisation made it unable to advance the national cause in a manner commensurate with the demands of the times. Moreover, Dr Xuma himself was temperamentally averse to mass activity and street demonstrations, preferring to resolve all political questions in committee meetings.

The first clear-cut change of direction, in terms of organisational and leadership quality, that was to be made in that period was given by the 1946 mine workers’ strike. More than 70,000 mine workers went on strike in response to the call of the African Mine Workers’ Union, which was led by John B. Marks, a long-standing leader of the Communist Party and also of the ANC. The 1946 strike, perhaps more than any other political event during that decade, marked the transition in the liberation movement from old to new tactics of struggle, from old to new style of leadership. While the debates raged within the ANC and the Youth League, the working class showed the way with practical action. This development also triggered the government’s systematic campaign to harass the leaders of the Communist Party, a harassment that culminated in the outlawing of the Party by the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950.

Oliver Tambo was among the first in the Youth League to be elected to the provincial executive committee of the ANC during that year. Greatly inspired by the mine workers’ strike and the possibility of historic mass action, he moved the first motion at the ANC annual conference in 1947 calling for the total boycott of all government structures, particularly the

Native Representative Council. Speaking to his motion, he made reference to the impotence of the NRC which he said was clearly unable to make a meaningful intervention during the 1946 mine workers' strike. The government had ignored all the recommendations of the NRC with regard to this strike, and this had led to its indefinite adjournment. Tambo's motion was defeated by 57 votes to 7, the conference deciding that ANC members should continue to be active in the NRC. It is possible that some people in the old generation still clung to the hope expressed by General Smuts that the NRC might eventually develop to be an African parliament. If such hopes did actually exist, they were dashed the following year by the victory in the May elections of Dr Daniel F. Malan's National Party.

For the Youth League, the policies of the National Party, which denied that the African people were a single national group with national spokespersons, served as a further challenge to advance their ideological creed of African Nationalism. Were not these Nationalists, they asked, the same fascists who in Germany and Italy had attacked independent nations during World War II, including an independent African nation of Ethiopians, in order to impose colonial domination? Was South Africa not suddenly under the political direction of the very same forces which, during this War, had openly supported Hitler through such organisations as the Ossewabrandwag and the so-called New Order under Pirow? Was the new Minister of Native Affairs not the same Verwoerd whom the judgement of the Transvaal Supreme Court of the 13 July, 1943, had branded as editor of a newspaper which was a "tool of pro-Hitler activities"? If so, then the new situation needed new initiatives embodied in militant action of the people whose spirit of assertiveness would be channeled in the ideology of African nationalism.

Ideological Standpoint

Karl Marx once wrote in *The Contribution to the Critique Of Political Economy* that mankind inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve, since closer examination will always show that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at least in the course of formation.

The Manifesto of the Youth League, issued in March 1944, said that the contact of the white race with the blacks had resulted in the emergence of conflicting living conditions and outlooks on life which seriously hampered South Africa's progress to single nationhood. The whites, possessing superior military strength, had arrogated to themselves the ownership of the

land and invested themselves with authority and the right to regard South Africa as a white person's country. They regarded as their destiny the task of "civilising" the Africans, thus making themselves trustees of the African people. Yet the effects of this Trusteeship alone had made the African people realise what Trusteeship actually meant, namely, the consolidation of the whites as rulers of the country who enjoy all the wealth of South Africa. This meant that the Africans, who owned the land before the advent of the whites, had been deprived of all security which could guarantee them an independent pursuit of their destiny to ensure their leading a free life. Although Africans had been defeated in the field of battle, this did not mean that they had to be oppressed. The Africans therefore demanded the right to be free citizens in the South African democracy. Civilisation was a common heritage of all mankind, and Africans claimed a full and legitimate right to make their contribution to its advancement so that they could live freely as white South Africans did.

The Youth League saw itself as "the brains-trust and power station of the spirit of African nationalism; the spirit of self-determination." It believed that the national liberation of Africans would be achieved by Africans themselves. For this reason, it was suspicious of any co-operation with other racial groups, be it white or Indian. In a letter to Ruth First (who was then secretary of the Progressive Youth Council) on 16 March 1945, Anton Lembede declined her invitation to the Youth League to affiliate to her Council because "co-operation at the present juncture or stage is premature. It can only result in chaos, ineffective action and mutual jealousies, rivalry and suspicion." In an article contributed to *Inkundla Ya Bantu* of May 1946, in which he elaborated on the policy of the Youth League, Lembede argued that

"no foreigner can ever be a true and genuine leader of the African people because no foreigner can ever truly and genuinely interpret the African spirit which is unique and peculiar to Africans only. Some foreigners Asiatic or European who pose as African leaders must be categorically denounced and rejected. An African must lead Africans . . . Non-European unity is a fantastic dream which has no foundation in reality."

Lembede's declarations, however, were ignoring the very reality of 1946, when for the first time in the history of South Africa since the time of Gandhi, the Indian Congresses in both Natal and the Transvaal, under a new militant leadership, embarked on a passive resistance campaign. As history was later to teach the members of the Youth League, these were the militant tactics they were demanding should be adopted by the ANC itself. Was the correct political position to join or dismiss this mass Indian movement? The senior

ANC was the first to recognise the Indian efforts when in March 1947, Dr Xuma signed a "Joint Declaration of Co-operation" with the Indian leaders, Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Dr G.M. Naicker, the so-called "Dadoo-Naicker-Xuma Pact". This declaration expressed its sincere conviction that for the future progress, goodwill, good relations, and for the building of a united and free South Africa, "full franchise rights must be extended to all sections of the South African people, and to this end we pledge the fullest co-operation between the African and Indian peoples in the struggle for liberation . . . it is urgently necessary that a vigorous campaign be immediately launched and that every effort be made to compel the Union government to implement the United Nations decisions and to treat the Non-White peoples in South Africa in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter."

Looking To The Past

Lembede's shortcomings at that time (and to a certain extent they can be attributed to the whole Youth League since he was one of its leading spokespersons) were inevitable in so far as his political philosophy was based on the belief that the African future should be sought in the past. That is how he phrased his article published by *Inyaniso* in February 1945, in which he argued that "we must retain and preserve the belief in the immortality of our ancestors." According to him, since the ethical system of our forefathers was based on ancestor worship and people refrained from doing certain things for fear of punishment by the spirits of dead ancestors, no wonder the "decline and decay of morals were brought about by the decay and decline of society . . . It is only African Nationalism or Africanism that can save the African people."

While there is nothing wrong with the assertion of the nationalism of the oppressed as long as it does not exclude unity and even organisational co-operation and integration with other racial groups, to argue for the inclusion of the spirits of dead ancestors in a serious political programme cannot be regarded as forward looking. Fortunately the members of the Youth League did not remain static in their ideological position, but through experience of struggle came to recognise that in the two streams of nationalism, the narrow version of exclusivism is reactionary, and the broader version that accommodates and builds up on the basis of all the nationalities for the creation of a single South African nation, is progressive.

By 1949, Oliver Tambo, already a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC as well as the vice-president of the Youth League, had moved away from the narrow version of nationalism, and was in an ANC

delegation that met with, and signed a joint declaration of co-operation with, the Indian Congress after the tragic events in Durban when Africans and Indians fought each other and many were killed.

Nelson Mandela was able to say in his evidence during the Treason Trial of 1956-1960 that the Youth League found much inspiration in co-operation with the Indian Congress which helped generate, like the mine workers' strike in 1946, the ideas which were incorporated in the Programme of Action adopted by the ANC in 1949. The Programme of Action was originally drafted by Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, James Njongwe, David Bopape and A.P. Mda. Four people were commissioned to prepare its final draft, namely, Prof. Z.K. Matthews, Moses Kotane, Oliver Tambo and Selby Msimang, and on 17 October 1949 it was adopted as the basic policy document of the ANC.

Attitude to the Communists

At the beginning the Youth League failed to appreciate the role of the Communists in the South African liberation struggle. Anton Lembede in 1945, with the support of Tambo and Mandela, once attempted to move a resolution in an ANC conference to have the communists expelled as members. Much to their surprise, the whole conference defended the Communists and insisted on their right to be ANC members as well as be in the leadership. This was an eye-opener to all of them. Later they came to experience through working with the Communists that their relationship with the ANC was not an opportunistic one. They were not out to capture the leadership of the ANC, but to contribute everything, including if necessary their lives, to the cause of national liberation. It is on this solid historical rock that the relationship of the ANC and the Communist Party is founded.

Oliver Tambo was among the first group of Youth Leaguers to develop respect for and recognition of the role of the Communists in the South African liberation struggle. This did not necessarily come about through the reading of Marxist classics or Communist literature — it was the product of experience and an honest disposition, which enabled him to broaden his outlook and grasp the significance of all the major streams that have contributed to the present greatness of the ANC. With Tambo this ability can also be traced to his own character. Unlike many of his colleagues in the Youth League who fell by the wayside, Tambo never regarded his entry into politics lightly. To him the struggle for liberation was a cause worth a life's commitment. He has been re-elected into the National Executive Committee of the ANC uninterruptedly ever since 1949. Even at the height of

the youth 'rebellion' he was trusted by the old and young generation alike for his level-headedness and principled approach to life.

Early Childhood and Upbringing

A leader's personality is formed not only during meetings and conferences but also in early childhood and upbringing.

Oliver Reginald Tambo was born at Enkantswini village in the Bizana district of eastern Pondoland on 27 October, 1917. His parents were Frederick and Julia Tambo, peasant farmers who later became Christians. His father had three wives, and his mother was the second. His mother had two children — Oliver himself and his sister Lydia. The first wife of his father gave birth to two brothers, Willie and Allen, and the last wife had two girls, Getty and Constance. Another seventh child in the family who grew up with the other children, Isaac (popularly called Japan in the family), was Oliver's cousin.

To inculcate a sense of responsibility among his children, Frederick Tambo allotted to each, boys and girls alike, plots in his orchard, where they were each responsible for the management and maintenance of their individual plots. The same was done with the fowl-run: each child had to see to the feeding, provision of water, cleanliness and the general health of his or her allocation of fowls. This method of organisation in the family not only developed a sense of self-reliance but also taught them administration and management at a very young age. In addition, Oliver was a shepherd like the other boys in the village. He also enjoyed riding horses so much that when the village chief went on his administrative trips among the villagers, he would take Oliver along as part of his entourage on horseback.

Every day Oliver walked a long distance to school at Ludeke, where he completed his primary education with a first class pass in Standard VI.

When he finished his primary school, his father announced that he no longer had the money to give him further secondary education. For this reason, he repeated Standard VI merely to keep busy. At the end of the year he passed again, but the following year his father's financial condition had not improved and this meant doing standard VI for the third time, which he did. However during his third term, he found the exercise so boring, because there was nothing he did not know in the syllabus, that he started to play truant. He would leave home normally, taking his lunch along, but would go off to join the shepherds and herdboys in the hills and share his prepared lunch with them.

This went on until one local villager, Thomas Mabude, who was a worker at the Holy Cross Mission near Flagstaff, came to Tambo's home and said that the missionaries at his place of work were looking for children whose parents had no money to pay for them, and they would take them for schooling at Holy Cross. His father promised to take Oliver there at once, but seemingly delayed, with Oliver continually asking him about the actual day when they would leave. The old man told him not to hurry as they would go the following week.

At that time Oliver Tambo's world was only within the boundaries of Enkantswini-Bizana-Ludeke and no further. The only time he had intimated any desire to leave this environment was when his father one day beat him unfairly for something he had not done. Oliver was so hurt that he vowed that if his father ever again beat him, whatever the cause might be, he would leave for Natal and join the other men from his village who worked in the sugar-cane plantations, or else get employment as a kitchen labourer in Durban. This occasion never arose, however, because his father eventually took him and his brother Allen to Holy Cross.

To their amazement, the priests at the Mission said they were unaware of any intention to take children whose parents had no money. Determined not to go back to Enkantswini but to find a place for studying, Oliver and Allen busied themselves by being helpful in whatever manual work was done on the premises. Impressed by their industriousness, the teachers admitted them as students.

Like other newcomers, Tambo was challenged to a stick fight by one of the older boys at the school. The fellow was so huge and fit that Tambo could not imagine himself fighting a duel with him; besides, he detested violence with his whole heart. But since the fight had been provoked, he fought him for hours on end, from morning until almost noon by which time their sticks had been broken into fine twigs. Neither of them would give up. As a result of that fight, this student developed such respect for Oliver Tambo that thirty years later when he learnt from the newspapers that Tambo had left the country to represent the ANC abroad, he appeared at Tambo's home and told his wife, Adelaide: "I know your husband. I was with him at Holy Cross about thirty years ago when we had a stick fight. Since that day I have admired your husband's determination and will-power; and when I read in the press that he had left the country, I decided to come to you and give you money for his children. Every end of the month I shall bring money for Tambo's children." Indeed, every month-end this man brought money until the whole family went into exile.

Oliver Tambo is fascinated by difficult tasks because for him an easy route is not challenging and, after all, it might be a wrong route. That was the reason he decided to do mathematics and physics at university, because everyone else seemed to go for a B.A. When he became a teacher at St. Peter's, he was attracted to music, which he studied and mastered, becoming a composer and conductor of the school choir. His love of music has stayed with him throughout his life. During the Treason Trial after the adoption of the Freedom Charter, it was Oliver Tambo and Vuyisile Mini in prison who organised a choir among the prisoners. Such is his optimism about life and the struggle; even under prison conditions there must be time for a song.

Tambo's desire was to be a medical doctor, but after his expulsion from Fort Hare, his keen interest in the natural sciences was overshadowed by a growing concern with the liberation of the black people in South Africa.

I have met Oliver Tambo on many occasions mostly in a formal way as president of the ANC. There have been occasions, however, when I met him informally, as Tambo the man, like on Sunday, 12 July, 1985 when we came back from the Second National Consultative Conference. That was one of the happiest moments in his life. We sat for hours discussing the Conference and other related issues. He was not in his suit and tie on that day, but in his gym attire, for he insists on doing his exercises. As a member of the Soweto generation, I draw confidence from the fact that the Tambo of the Youth League still maintains constant touch with the youth of today, gauging his own standpoint against theirs.

WORKING CLASS MUST LEAD OUR NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

by **Dialego**

It has long been recognised that the fundamental problem of theory posed by the South African revolution revolves around the question of 'the relationship between national and class struggle'. Both pillars of our liberation alliance, the SACP and the ANC, have argued that the one must not be stressed at the expense of the other. Our literature refers repeatedly to the interdependence and interrelationship, the linkage and complementarity which exists between the two.

But what exactly is the relationship between national and class struggle?

Two Struggles or One?

On the one hand, we argue that class struggle and national struggle are not identical. Rather they overlap and complement one another. On the other hand, we insist that they take place 'simultaneously and in the same arena'. It would be false to counterpose them as if they were 'two separate forms of struggle'.²

This is the position which has only been reached after decades of practical struggle focussed through theoretical argument and debate. In the 1920s South African communists tended to argue that class struggle was more important than national struggle. Some academics and trade union officers — with much less historical justification — still take this position today although it is one which we had rejected by 1928.

Slovo has suggested that after the CPSA had abandoned its 'class against class' approach in the late 1920s, it then tended to regard national struggle as more important than class struggle³ until South African communists succeeded in effecting a synthesis between them in 1962. We see echoes of this 'nationalist' argument in the 'Africanist' and liberal positions of the 1950s and at least until recently, among sections of the black consciousness movement as well.

In 1921 David Ivon Jones, a founder member of the CPSA, argued that the national and class interests of Africans 'cannot be distinguished the one from the other'⁴ and today we still find (again with much less historical justification), national and class struggle presented as though they were simply the same. Neville Alexander, for example, contends that class struggle *is* national struggle and is then perturbed to find that some 'Azanians' stress pure class struggle and pure national struggle at one and the same time, despite the 'confusion and contradiction' which this involves.⁵

Our liberation movement sets out then to *link* national and class struggle rather than to simply lump them together; to synthesise them, not to separate them; to relate them rather than merely collapse one into the other. But our critics might well object: if, as we insist, national and class struggle are different, then why *can't* we separate them? And if we can't separate them, then why aren't they the same?

Clearly it is one thing to present the relationship between class and national struggle in dialectical terms. It is quite another to explain how such a 'unity in distinction' is possible.

I want to look at three conceptual tools which can help. Drawn as they are from the arsenal of dialectical and historical materialism, they are intended to clarify and elaborate a relationship which lies at the heart of all our theoretical and strategic thinking. The first of these concepts focusses on the question of

Capitalism and the Problem of Abstraction

In analysing social problems in general and the relationship between national and class struggle in particular, we must be able to distinguish between their different aspects without at the same time treating them *abstractly*. An abstract presentation of the national question, as Lenin reminds us, 'is of no use at all'.⁶ Abstractions arise when we separate out the differing elements of a struggle in such a way that we mystify the relationship between them. Those who either pull national and class struggle apart or alternatively merely lump them together (in the ways we instanced above) are

guilty of abstraction because they make it impossible to present a dialectical analysis of the problem at hand.

An abstract approach arises as an uncritical response to the way in which national identities confront us under capitalism. In pre-capitalist societies, questions of ethnic, regional, religious and national identity are always seen as an integral part of personal relationships. There are no *individuals* as such. People are either landowning Christians or heathen Moors; Greek citizens or 'barbarian' slaves. Even in tribal societies, people are identified through their kinship roles and ethnic affiliation.

With the rise of capitalism, on the other hand, people become *abstracted* from their specific ethnic, regional or national identities and they appear (in the 18th century declarations of human rights for example) as the cosmopolitan individuals of a world community. All this sounds extremely positive until you remember (as Marx explains in detail in *Capital*), that this process of abstraction is rooted in the exchange relationships of the market. People are *abstracted* from their specific ethnic, regional and national identities in order to be exploited, swindled, robbed and defrauded. In our particular colonial context, people from different tribes, brought together to work in the mines and on the farms, become conscious of a common African identity because of the *common* exploitation they suffer. Their 'individuality' only becomes meaningful and concrete when they begin to resist the process of capitalist 'abstraction' which has brought them together.

This is why the process of abstraction under capitalism is a highly mystifying one. All that matters as far as the market is concerned is that people have commodities to buy and sell, goods whose value is determined by the *abstract* labour embodied within them. Here is the true source of capitalist cosmopolitanism. The universal commodity! A Krugerrand or a Cape apple is an abstract commodity just like any other: what does the market care about the miseries involved in their concrete production? People may be Zulus, Tswanas, Vendas, Xhosas; Coloured wine growers in the Cape or indentured labourers from India. What do these cultural and ethnic differences matter when people are simply abstract individuals to be exploited?

When the exchange process occurs in a capitalist system, the social relationships through which people express their distinct identity disappear out of sight: all that remains are 'abstract individuals' with abstract 'things' to exchange. In the Eden of the capitalist market, the process of abstraction makes it appear as though all are equal as partners whether they are wealthy farmers or impoverished tenants; haughty madams or domestic servants;

white capitalists who want to hire labour or black workers who can only survive by exchanging their labour power for wages.

This is why in classical liberal theory, real people with specific identities are transformed into the cosmopolitan citizens of the world market. For the first time in history, national identity now appears as something detachable, something which lies outside the individual. It is not merely separate: it is also abstract. Under capitalism, people are treated as abstract individuals with a total disregard for their cultural traditions and heritage. Where these traditions obstruct the 'mobility of labour', they are, as our own history of colonial conquest shows, ruthlessly suppressed and then, when people begin to unite in order to resist this oppression, pseudo-ethnic identities are assigned to them in a cynical attempt to keep them apart. One abstraction presupposes the other.

Racism, chauvinism and demagogic appeals to ethnicity are the *alter ego* of abstract cosmopolitanism. Abstractly separating individuals from their cultural backgrounds and abstractly lumping them together into arbitrarily concocted 'racial' categories are the two sides of the same capitalist coin, particularly in its colonial and imperialist phases. This is why we argue that an abstract view of the national question arises when we reflect uncritically the market relationships of a capitalist society.

Unless we can scientifically challenge the mystifying abstractions which this society generates, it is impossible to pose the relationship between national and class struggle in a dialectical manner. If the concept of abstraction is the first analytical tool we need to consider, the second relates to

Historical Materialism and the Distinction between Form and Content

Classical bourgeois thinkers analysed society and the state as a contract between abstract individuals. The world is created through an exchange: never mind how things are produced.

Historical materialism radically challenges these abstract absurdities by insisting that society is only possible because people have to produce. This need to produce compels people to enter into social relationships with one another: 'definite' relationships replace the 'chance encounters' of capitalist market mythology.

But what is implied by saying that these social relationships of production are necessary and definite in character? Relationships are definite because they are to a greater or lesser degree, *organised*. They are not the abstract, 'spontaneous' interactions of a mystifying exchange process. Relationships

are rooted in production and in order to explain how and why these relationships are organised, we need to introduce a crucial distinction between the content of a social relationship and its form.

The *content* of a relationship is determined by the power and control people exercise over the means of production. Do people work cooperatively or does one group try to monopolise society's tools and skills in order to control the surplus produced by others? The kind of power people exercise over production determines the content of the relations into which they enter. Do they control production collectively or are they exploitative capitalists and landowners? This is the most basic question we can ask, for it is the one which takes us to the heart of all social relationships.

But what then gives these relationships their definite and immediately perceptible *form*? People cannot produce either cooperatively or exploitatively unless they do so in a *particular way*; unless their relationships have a particular form. It is here that political, cultural, ethnic and national factors come into play. After all, in order to produce, people must be able to understand each other! They must speak a particular language and have a particular culture which regulates their relationships at every social level — between men and women, young and old, chief and commoners, masters and servants, priests and laity, etc. Ethnic, regional and national factors decisively influence the form these relationships take.

But if these factors are so important, is it enough to say that they determine the form rather than the content of social relationships? We identify these factors as 'formal' for this reason. You cannot really explain (with any profundity) *why* people behave in the way they do simply by their cultural or regional identity: linguistic practices and ethnic customs, national and regional factors only really tell us *how* people behave. To understand why they behave as they do, why they live in peace or go to war, why they are cooperative or act antagonistically, we must examine the way they own and control the forces of production. This is what establishes a relationship's content.

But one must not be emphasised at the expense of the other. Stressing content at the expense of form would be just as abstract, meaningless and mystifying (as Engels ruefully pointed out in the last years of his life) as stressing form at the expense of content. Both are essential to coherent social analysis. For we can hardly explain why people are exploited, for example, unless we can indicate how these exploitative relationships are organised — how capitalists justify this exploitation; how they ensure the workers continue to work for them; how they prevent the exploited and the oppressed

from uniting in opposition; how they maintain the kind of overall social stability necessary to ensure that exploitation continues. To answer questions like these we need to attend to the form and not just the content, the 'how' and not just the 'why' of social relationships.

Unless we can concretely identify the form of relationships, we cannot really bring their content to life. It would be quite wrong therefore to say that the form of a relationship is less important or less real than its content. In class-divided societies, for example, all social relationships necessarily take a political form. But there is nothing intangible or unreal about these political forms as our young lions, who are daily teargassed and gunned down in the townships, who are being tortured in police cells and concentration camps, can readily testify. In South Africa, productive relations have, as Denga puts it, been 'beaten into the racial (colonial) shape'.⁷ These shapes are as real as the barb-wire, the police terror and the states of emergency which protect them. What makes them 'formal' or 'superstructural' in character is the fact that they cannot be explained on their own terms. Race policies are rooted in capitalist exploitation.⁸ The system of apartheid reveals *how*, the capitalist relations of production reveal *why* exploitation takes place. Only those still mesmerised by the abstractions of the market place imagine that one can be explained without the other.

If form and content cannot be separated, the two nevertheless are not the same. Cultural and national factors are integral to social relationships (just as pre-liberal writers said they were) but at the same time they constitute a dimension of social analysis which is analytically distinct. They contribute to the form of relationships whose content arises from the way in which people control the process of production.

But where does this leave the question of class? Do classes simply embody the content of social relationships, as I have analysed it, or do they also embrace the question of form? To answer this question, we must now give conceptual consideration to the question of

Class Interests and the Process of Concentration

We have already argued that people do not exist as abstract individuals without any specific social identity. They live and work through organised social relationships and another way of saying that these relationships are organised, is to say that they are *concentrated*. Marx speaks for example of the

state as 'the concentrated and organised force of society'; Lenin of politics as the concentration of economics.⁹

This concept of concentration serves to highlight the fact that when relationships are organised, they are focussed around particular norms of conduct. The degree of concentration depends upon the scope and application of these particular norms. When Marx says therefore that the state concentrates and organises social relationships, he means that a particular norm of conduct can be imposed coercively through a system of explicit and binding laws upon society as a whole. A state is therefore more 'concentrated' than a municipality; a nation more 'concentrated' than a region; a city more concentrated than a neighbourhood or a single family.

But concentration exists to a greater or lesser degree at every level of society. Because people relate to one another in definite ways, their free-floating desires (which so impress anarchists and liberals) are necessarily concentrated into particular interests which compel them to behave in one way rather than another. When one group of individuals is able to exploit other individuals through the monopoly it enjoys over the means of production, these relationships necessarily concentrate the interests of individuals along class lines. The better organised a class, the more concentrated its interests; and the more concentrated its interests are, the better it is able to impose them upon society as a whole.

Classes therefore are organised groupings with concentrated and antagonistic social interests. They are not just *economic* entities. They are also political as well because no class controls the means of production unless it is also able to dominate society as a whole. A class must be able to concentrate its interests on a social-wide basis if it is to sustain its power. A fully developed class (a class which is both 'in and for itself') is therefore a class which controls the state: a class cannot properly concentrate its particular interests unless it also *rules*. We cannot understand why it is dominant unless we also understand how it organises this domination — how it concentrates its interests in such a way that it shapes the direction of society as a whole. In terms of our analysis above, this means therefore that we cannot explain the content of a class relationship unless we also understand its form.

This is why Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* not only speak of every class struggle as a 'political struggle', but they also say that the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie 'though not in substance, yet in form' is struggle which is *national* in character.² The two 'forms' are intimately linked. No class can impose its will on society as a whole unless it successfully concentrates its interests in national form: it needs to (a) unite all

the members of a dominant class around a common national identity and then (b) project this national identity as the one which moulds the pattern of relationships throughout society in general. In this way it secures legitimacy for its rule from a constituency large enough to make the state viable.

This argument takes us to the heart of the relationship between national and class struggle. Just as politics concentrates economics and the state concentrates society, so nationhood concentrates class. It is one of the forms through which a class rules. One can no more abstract national struggle from class struggle than one can abstract form from content. National struggle is not therefore something which stands *outside* class struggle: on the contrary, it is one of the forms through which class struggle finds its most comprehensive expression.

But if it is inseparable from class struggle, it is not the 'same'. What makes it distinct is the fact that it is the formal, social-wide expression of concentrated class interests. National (like political) factors explain how a class is able to rule — they do not explain why it is able to rule. National identity embodies the form rather than the content of class relationships.

Classes and nations do not therefore correspond on a one to one basis. A ruling class can only present itself as the nation if it has coopted the support and neutralised the enmity of other classes. A bloc of class forces has to exist under its hegemony, its leadership, if the dominant and exploitative class is to successfully project its particular interest as the *national* interest: if it is to make plausible its (ultimately deceptive) claim to speak on behalf of the 'people' and not simply for one element among them.

This analysis helps us to engage the question of

South African Capitalism: the National Peculiarities

In a 'normal' capitalist situation, the bourgeoisie wins power through unifying the mass of the population against a common autocratic enemy. It constitutes itself as the 'nation' in the sense that its particular class interests appear to conform to the interests of society as a whole. This common national identity is only persuasive however when the workers themselves come to exercise the same democratic rights as their rulers so that all stand together as the common citizens of a single nation.

With the bourgeois democratic revolution, in other words, the national question is basically settled. This is why it is that when workers struggle to convert formal, national rights into concrete social power, they seek to inject a different class content into the national interest rather than to express their class interest through a different national form. True, they may still feel that

(in some kind of metaphorical sense) they belong to a 'different nation'. But national oppression is now a residual issue at best — an echo of past grievances — rather than the central question facing the working class.

In South Africa, there are some similarities with the 'model' above. A dominant class seeks to concentrate its interests through a national identity which unifies all the members of the ruling class and incorporates other classes into the ranks of the 'people' as well. Following the Anglo-Boer War, for example, it was clear that capital could not rule cohesively in South Africa unless nationhood embraced the defeated Boers as well as the victorious British. The Rand miners' strike of 1922 underpinned the need to cultivate white working class support. In the period since World War 2, Afrikaner capitalists, their interests carefully nurtured under National Party rule, have come to see the importance of welcoming English speakers and other people of European descent into the ranks of the nation.

But it is here of course that the similarity with 'normal' capitalism ends. The colonial character of South African society has meant that the entire black population (whatever their class position) are formally excluded from the dominant nation: Africans in particular but also blacks in general stand condemned as a subject people without citizenship, a people without national rights. Pre-apartheid segregationists embraced the traditional colonial argument that at some indeterminate point in the future, the 'native' population would 'qualify' for entry into the ranks of the dominant nation when they became sufficiently 'civilised' as 'whites with black faces'.

The Homeland Farce

In the post-war period, however, with the growing cohesiveness of popular opposition to colonial rule and strong pressures from abroad, a more 'positive' solution to the national question was necessary. Asserting a dominant national identity for the whites (with some favouritism for Afrikaners) was now accompanied by the apartheid argument that the subject people must have 'national identities' of their own. Each 'tribe' its 'national homeland'; each 'nation' its own right to self-determination. A grotesque and farcical parody of the bourgeois democratic revolution was played out! Contrary to those liberal ideologues who would separate capitalism from apartheid, this hotchpotch of pseudo-national identities, cynically concocted in order to fragment, demoralise and divide, constitutes the particular national form through which the monopoly capitalist class in South Africa concentrates its specific interests. This is why, despite some

heart-searching in certain quarters, the apartheid 'solution' continues to be supported by the dominant sections of capital.

The difference between this and 'normal' capitalist rule should now be plain. Capitalism in South Africa expresses itself through the institutions of a colonial rather than through a bourgeois democratic system. The mass of the population do not share a common national identity with their rulers. That this is so is manifest by the fact that the granting of elementary bourgeois democratic rights is opposed by big business and it is still possible even today, despite all the recent talk of reform, for alien whites from overseas to become South African citizens in a way in which indigenous black South Africans cannot. This is why Dan O'Meara is wrong to argue that the bourgeois democratic revolution has been completed in South Africa, 'albeit in a racially exclusive form of national oppression.'¹¹ On the contrary, it is precisely the existence of this 'racially exclusive form of national oppression' which signals the absence of 'normal' i.e. bourgeois democratic, capitalist rule.

The bourgeois democratic revolution will only be completed when the entire people become citizens of the nation: that is to say, when the Freedom Charter is enacted in reality. In South Africa (as in Tsarist Russia, for example), the dominant sections of the bourgeoisie fear that a bourgeois revolution will destroy the basis of their rule! Hence they prefer to concentrate their class interests through the autocratic institutions of a special form of colonialism which mobilises white workers into the nation while excluding even the members of a black bourgeoisie. Because of its colonial origins, capitalism in South Africa recoils in fear from national democracy, the 'normal' form of bourgeois rule.

Once we grasp the fact that social relationships always express themselves through definite forms, then the abstract opposition between national and class struggles falls away. No class can rule unless it successfully concentrates its interest through a political form which is also national in character. This point throws a decisive light on the final question we want to consider, the problem of

Working Class Hegemony and the Struggle for Democracy

The struggle for national liberation is a democratic one which, under 'classical' capitalist conditions, is carried through by a revolutionary bourgeoisie. It is a 'bourgeois democratic' task for the simple reason that class consciousness cannot mature until workers have their own nation within which to settle accounts with their own bourgeoisie.

In South Africa, this 'bourgeois democratic' revolution still awaits completion. Why then do we usually describe this revolution as 'national democratic' rather than 'bourgeois democratic' in character? Basically because in South African conditions, the white bourgeoisie prefers to concentrate its class interests through a special kind of colonial autocracy and the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation is too weak and undeveloped to provide leadership to the struggle for national liberation. *Working class* hegemony is essential, as the ANC itself pointed out at Morogoro in 1969, if democracy is to win through. But our 'national democratic' revolution still remains 'bourgeois democratic' in character (even if it is a bourgeois democratism of a highly radical kind) until we have moved through it and beyond it to the establishment of socialism itself.

But why can't the working class combine (as leftists argue) the struggle for national liberation *with* the struggle for socialism so that they become one and the same? Majola has recently explained in detail why 'two stages' of the revolution are necessary,¹² and our concept of concentration helps to emphasise the fact that the class struggle must always be analysed as a *process* through which a class seeks to establish its particular interests as the common interest of society as a whole. Ever widening circles of organisation are necessary if class leadership is to be secured.

This is the reason why, for example, working class leadership cannot be won simply through struggles on the factory floor. The strategic concentration of working class muscle in factories provides an essential basis for further advance but this advance only becomes explicitly political in character when immediate working class demands are coherently linked to the demands of society as a whole — to the grievances and suffering of all the people (including sections of the bourgeoisie) who are oppressed under monopoly capitalism. Workers as trade unionists are not representatives of the working class as a whole even though, as Jay Naidoo, General Secretary of COSATU puts it, 'they constitute its most powerful weapon'. Workers only become representatives of their class as a whole when they provide the political leadership for a proletarian movement which, as the *Communist Manifesto* emphasises, must be a 'movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority'.¹³

Democracy Is The Key

Democracy is the essential precondition for socialist advance and the national question is indissolubly linked to this democratic stage. The question of working class emancipation *as such* cannot possibly be posed

until the workers have a nation in which they can be emancipated: the oppressed black people of South Africa cannot begin to raise questions of a specifically proletarian character until the question of citizenship and nationhood has been settled. As Kotane emphasised in his celebrated Cradock letter, 'the majority of the African working population are more national conscious than class conscious'¹⁴ and this will necessarily remain so until the Freedom Charter becomes a reality. Socialist class consciousness only arises through national democratic struggle. Only when formal and legalised race discrimination is removed will the precise mechanisms of class discrimination stand revealed. Until the members of an oppressed nation are free, they have, and must have, a common national interest which overrides all their class differences.

This does not mean that liberation politics somehow suppresses class politics; on the contrary, as Cronin has so ably pointed out,¹⁵ working class politics itself demands the formation of a popular movement broad and cohesive enough to liberate the nation from apartheid. The working class cannot successfully concentrate its own interests until it has established a national interest with which society in general can identify. To ignore the democratic phase of the struggle for socialism is therefore to abstract class from nationality, economics from politics and to replace the historical materialist analysis of social relationships with spontaneist abstractions that merely echo the mystifications of the capitalist market place.

A class analysis of the national question makes it possible to understand why national identity itself is not something static and frozen. Nationhood is necessarily fluid and variable for it is intimately tied to the process of class formation and struggle. By 1910, as we have seen, capital established the hegemony of a 'white nation' in South Africa, whose ranks were swelled by alien white immigrants from Europe. With the formation of the ANC, an African nation, a new nation transcending the old tribal divisions, was born. As the struggle for national liberation has developed, so the new South African nation has come to expand its ranks, embracing in the first instance all oppressed black people, but extending its scope to all South Africans, white and black, who identify with the democratic nation and the oppressed masses. The 'national groups' of the Freedom Charter have become the *groups of the nation* — the different nationalities of a united South African people. Any attempt to either artificially retard or artificially hasten this process of nation formation can only undermine the class struggle for it is only *through* the formation of a free nation that the working class can establish its leadership in the struggle for socialism.

Our three concepts — abstraction, concentration and the form-content distinction — are intended to facilitate a dialectical approach to this problem,

to assist in analysing the relationship between class and national struggle. They seek to explain why the two are not the same and yet why they cannot be separated. On the one hand, national struggle is the form class struggle takes in its democratic phase when the most pressing task is the constitution of a 'free people', a nation composed of different classes. This is what makes national struggle *distinct*. On the other hand, no class can rule without securing a national identity through which to concentrate its particular class interests. This is why the two struggles cannot be *separated*.

In the South African revolution, the question of national liberation and working class hegemony are particularly closely intertwined for unless the working class leads the people's war against colonial rule, the struggle for socialism itself cannot even begin. The Freedom Charter embodies the specific class interests of the South African workers in the current national democratic phase of the struggle.

NOTES

1. Slovo, 'South Africa — No Middle Way', in *Southern Africa: the New Politics of Revolution* (Pelican 1976), p.119.
2. See the contributions in *The African Communist* (hereafter *AC*), Nos 103, p.60; No.93, p.70; No.87, p.40.
3. Slovo, 'No Middle Way', *op. cit*, p.160.
4. *South African Communists Speak* (Inkululeko, 1981), p.54.
5. Alexander, 'Approaches to the National Question in South Africa', *Transformation*, 1, 1986, p.65.
6. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol.36, p.607.
7. *AC* 100, p.68.
8. Slovo, 'No Middle Way', *op. cit*, p.119.
9. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1970), p.751; Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol.32, p.83.
10. Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p.493.
11. O'Meara, 'Democratic Trade Unions and the Struggle against Apartheid' in *Labour, Capital and Society*, November 1985, p.417.
12. *AC* 110.
13. *AC* 107, p.23; Marx and Engels, *Collected Works* Vol. 6, p.495.
14. Kotane's comment is in *South Africa Communists Speak*, p.121.
15. Cronin, 'The Question of Unity', *South African Labour Bulletin*, 11, 3, 1986, p.31.

BICENTENARY OF SHAKA'S BIRTH

'BAYETE NKALAKATA! uSHAKA KA SENZANGAKHONA'¹

By Thando Zuma

The mere mention of uShaka scares many people. Why should this be so? In a country such as ours, where the propaganda of the ruling class reduces African history to insignificance and ridicule, where African warriors and heroes/heroines have been equated to savages, where to be 'civilised' may mean rejection of one's history, it is not surprising that in the history books of apartheid education Shaka is equated with horror.

At the same time, romantic/bourgeois historians² have also distorted our past for the sake of publishing sensational books and making commercial films. Historians like "naval officer" Donald Morris (1966) cannot possibly conceive of an African political philosopher such as Dingiswayo without giving credit to some 'Dr' Robert Cowan who is supposed to have influenced Dingiswayo along the lines of European civilisation so that "his rule was liberal, enlightened and altruistic". (*Morris*, 1966, p42.) According to the ruling class South African history is the history of the "civilising mission" of colonialism. Thus South African history only begins "in earnest" in 1952 with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck. All other developments prior to the imperialist occupation of our country are dismissed as the fumbling of 'barbarians who would have exterminated themselves' had the civilizing agents not come.

South African history is standing on its head. It must be made to stand on its feet by all democratic and revolutionary forces.

Last year (1986) marked the bicentenary of the birth of that remarkable warrior and diplomat, Moshweshwe, who was born in 1786. This year marks the bicentenary of the birth of King Shaka, the fearless, original, creative and great warrior-general who was born in 1787 to Nandi of eLangeni. He was the son of Senzangakhona, one of the chiefs of the clans which lived in and around the 'white Umfolozi' river outside the domain of the larger Mthethwa clan.

Legend has it that one of the Nguni chiefs, Malandela, was succeeded as chief by his son Zulu³ after whom the clan acquired the name of Amazulu (Zulus). Senzangakhona was the fifth chief in the lineage to become chief of the Zulus after Chief Zulu. It was this Senzangakhona who, during the ritual of 'ukuhlobonga'⁴, made Nandi of the eLangeni neighbouring clan pregnant. In traditional cultural terms of the time, pregnancy should not occur during 'ukuhlobonga'. In the event, the eLangeni brought Nandi to Senzangakhona and demanded that he marry her. But the elders of the Zulu clan are alleged to have rejected the pregnancy charge. Mudli, who was an uncle of Senzangakhona, told them that it was "impossible... [and to] go back home and inform them the girl is harbouring *iShaka*". (Ritter, 1955, p16.) When Nandi eventually gave birth to a son, it was difficult for Senzangakhona to refuse responsibility and he eventually agreed to let Nandi become one of his three wives.

Almost Refugees

Senzangakhona was never committed to Nandi and Shaka. A quarrel in Senzangakhona's family involving Shaka led to Nandi and son being sent back to eLangeni. Their return coincided with the 1802 famine which in turn forced Nandi and her children to leave eLangeni again. This time they eventually settled in Kwa-Mthethwa. The Mthethwa clan was situated in and around the area where the tributaries of the Umfolozi met (i.e. the so-called black and white Umfolozi) and extending to the coast where the Umfolozi joins the Indian Ocean. The chief of the Mthethwa was Jobe the father of Tana and Godongwana (later to change his name to Dingiswayo).

After Jobe's death, Dingiswayo returned from his exile⁵ amongst the AmaHlubi and became chief of the Mthethwa around 1809. By this time Shaka was twenty-two years old and had already proven himself a brave young man. At thirteen years of age he had "...attacked and killed a mamba which had bitten and killed the prize bull of the cattle that he was herding".

(*Ritter*, p18.) At nineteen he had done the unthinkable: alone he attacked and killed a leopard with a spear, shield and club. For this brave act, Shaka was given a cow. (*Ritter*, pp22-23.) Dingiswayo incorporated Shaka into the Izicwe regiment. It was while in this regiment that Shaka proved himself a great up-and-coming young warrior.

Dingiswayo was an interesting chief: kind hearted, brave, political thinker, organiser. Soon after becoming chief to the Mthethwa, he set out to bring into his political domain all the neighbouring small clans. Firstly he built a very strong army and used it to conquer and incorporate defeated clans into the Mthethwa domain. Secondly Dingiswayo used his power and diplomacy to persuade neighbouring clans to fall under his authority for their own political security and economic interests. Thus war and persuasion were used to exact a *Pax Mthethwa*. (*Ritter*, p25.)

According to the historian Leonard Thompson, though Dingiswayo's battles were bloody, depending on the enemy's resistance, he "...did not annihilate the enemy. He spared women and children, and he often allowed the ruling family to remain in power, provided he could find a member who was loyal". (*Thompson and Wilson*, 1982 ed, p341.) Dingiswayo's political influence had so grown that by the time he died in 1818, the area under his domain "...extended... from the Umfolozi in the North to the Tugela in the South. In the North there had been little expansion, because Zwibe, the Ndwandwe chief, had been building up a confederacy along similar lines across the Umfolozi". (*Thompson and Wilson*, p342.)

Fearless, swift and deadly Shaka distinguished himself as a dominant warrior amongst his Izicwe. He was a military genius and innovator, "...abandoning traditional fighting methods, Shaka used a throwing spear as a stabbing weapon, closing in with the enemy instead of standing off from him. Finding that his sandals hampered him, he discarded them which gave him superior speed. Parrying his opponent's thrown (spear) with his shield, he would charge forward, hook the enemy's shield aside with his own, and stab to death with the...warcry of *Nqadla!*"⁶ (*Ritter*, p25.)

Shaka went further. He developed the "...massive bladed (spear) with a stout, short handle. This would mean fighting at close quarters, with deadly physical and psychological effects." (*Ritter*, p25.) It was this combination of Mthethwa/Zulu bravery and the ferocity of their new weapon that made Shaka's warriors the most feared of their time. The bravery, wit and military talent that Shaka possessed did not go unnoticed by Dingiswayo. Shaka was promoted to the head of his regiment.

Dingiswayo and Shaka never had any serious squabble. Shaka was very loyal to Dingiswayo but he saw Dingiswayo's kindheartedness as a weakness. He once argued that the practice of conquering a clan, subjugating it only to the political domain of the Mthethwa and leaving the defeated chief ruling was a mistake. He argued that "one must strike an enemy once and for all. Let him cease to exist as a tribe or he will live to fly at your throat again". (*Ritter*, p49.) Accordingly he advocated *impi embovu*⁷ as the best strategy to conquer and bring under complete political rule all neighbouring clans who had dared to put up a fight against the Mthethwa. He followed this strategy of total war later when he became King of the Zulus.

Senzangakhona died in 1816 and one of his sons Segujana succeeded him. But it was to be a temporary affair. Assisted by Dingiswayo, Shaka became chief of the Zulus the same year after Segujana was killed by Ngwadi, Shaka's younger brother. Apparently Dingane tried to put up some protest when Shaka moved into his father's kraal, but was overwhelmed by the sheer stature of Shaka. On assuming power Shaka immediately concentrated on building the Zulu army in accordance with what he had come to accept as the best military training, arming and tactics of war.

Military Strategy

Shaka trained and drilled his warriors in the use of a new military formation which was "...a method of attack by which one regiment fought in the centre, supported by a reserve regiment, and the others formed flanks or horns which advanced and enveloped the enemy". (*Thompson and Wilson*, p343.) He took away the traditional sandals from his warriors so that they could increase their speed and mobility. To boost the morale of his warriors, Shaka made sure that they were well looked after when they went into battle, "he conscripted young boys as baggage carriers, and doctors to treat their wounded... captured cattle were divided between the regiments according to their colour".

Meanwhile in 1818 Dingiswayo's longstanding enemy Zwide was again at war with him. By this time, Zwide had come to learn some of the best fighting skills of the Mthethwa warriors and was prepared for a long and sustained battle. Dingiswayo on the other hand had taken the resumption of hostilities lightly. One day he fell into an ambush laid by Zwide's elite warriors who captured him and took him to Zwide's kraal. After a few days Dingiswayo was executed by Zwide. So came the end of one of Africa's remarkable political philosophers and nation builders.

Following the assassination of Dingiswayo by Zwide of the Ndwandwe, the Mthethwa were more than happy to let Shaka become their new king. He then incorporated the Mthethwa into his Zulu kingdom. Gradually Shaka's political influence was expanding; surrounding clans which had not become part of either the Mthethwa, Zulu or Ndwandwe were defeated and incorporated into the growing Zulu kingdom. Shaka introduced a new mode of political organisation which was slightly different from that of Dingiswayo. Using his theory of total war, Shaka would destroy "...absolutely the capacity of an enemy to resist, by eliminating the ruling family and even, when it seemed expedient, by massacring the women and children as well as the men. Once he had conquered an enemy, he incorporated the survivors into his own system, allotting the men to regiments appropriate for their age". (*Thompson and Wilson*, p343.)

Clan Incorporation

The recalcitrant Zwide of the Ndwandwe was eventually defeated by Shaka in a bitter and bloody battle at Mhlatuzi in 1819 after the first attempt failed. The Ndwandwe were brought into the Zulu political system after this defeat. Zwide escaped into the now North Eastern Transvaal and tried to settle near Ha Mojaji which was ruled by a formidable and feared Queen Mojaji of the Lobedu (Pedi). He died soon thereafter.

With Zwide defeated, the Mthethwa, Zulu and Ndwandwe chiefdoms, including all other small clans, came under the political domain of Shaka. The Zulu kingdom was huge and expanding, stretching from the Pongola in the North to the Tugela in the South. By this time Shaka was about thirty-two years old.

Attempts to expand westwards across the Drakensberg mountains were frustrated by the growth and development of the Basotho nation under Moshweshwe, who had been building a nation mainly based on the Bakwena and other people who were victims of the Difaqane. He had eventually been forced to settle his few thousand Basotho at Thabo Bosiu in order to protect them against all sorts of invaders. Thabo Bosiu was an impenetrable flat-topped mountain fortress which was defended by Moshweshwe's warriors, and from there grew the Basotho nation. Shaka tried to attack Moshweshwe but failed dismally and his warriors were forced to retreat shame-facedly. But on their way home Moshweshwe sent them gifts of cattle, saying to them: go well, hunger brought you here, take these herds of cattle to your king.

It was this experience that was to be the beginning of friendly diplomatic relations between Shaka and Moshweshwe. Shaka never attacked Moshweshwe again and in fact once when Moshweshwe was attacked by the Batlokwa, Shaka sent his warriors to attack the Batlokwa, thereby relieving pressure on the Basotho. So strong was their relationship that Moshweshwe used to bring Shaka the beautiful plumes which he used to decorate his warrior-generals. One Makoanyane of the Basotho used to be the main roving ambassador for Moshweshwe, and it was this Makoanyane who used to run errands between KwaBulawayo and Thabo Bosiu.

A number of Shaka's generals escaped⁸ from his political domain, Mzilikazi and Soshangane being two of the well-known. Mzilikazi eventually settled in present day Zimbabwe, establishing his headquarters at KwaBulawayo. Soshangane "carved out his Gaza Kingdom in the lowlands between Delagoa Bay and the lower Zambezi, subjecting the Tsonga inhabitants and destroying the Portuguese settlements at Delagoa Bay, Inhambane, and Sena". (*Thompson and Wilson*, p346.)

Death of Mother

It was at the height of Shaka's empire building campaign that his mother Nandi fell sick and died in 1827. Shaka was devastated. He loved his mother very dearly because of what she had done to bring him up in trying times. Rejected by his father, he had found support and guidance from his mother. He does not seem to have recovered from this blow. He relaxed his political control over his generals whilst allowing an element of ruthlessness to overshadow many other considerations. For example, immediately after his mother's death he ordered a prolonged period of mourning which implied that there would be no cultivation of the land, no bearing of children, and so on. Many people died and this was a source of discontent among the closest warrior-generals including the two co-conspirators, Dingane and Mhlangana. True, Shaka was loved and feared by his people, but he had also instilled in them pride and bravery and they were not prepared to be silent as Shaka destroyed their kingdom. Leading *Indunas* confronted Shaka, demanding that this prolonged mourning and senseless executions of people suspected of breaking the order should stop since Nandi was not the first person to die. (*Ritter*, p280.)

Amidst all this confusion, Shaka ordered his warriors to attack Soshangane, who had earlier deserted him. He did not allow the military preparation to include the customary support system of the baggage carrying boys. This was something alien to his own military strategy of boosting the morale of his warriors going to battle. Something was definitely wrong with

Shaka by this time. The warriors had to use a very difficult route because they had to avoid Sobuza of the Ngwane across the Pongola river and the Pedi. At the same time Soshangane was waiting for them since he had been warned by a Zulu traitor. Dingane, Mhlangana and Mbopa turned back on the way with a plan to assassinate Shaka. Meanwhile Soshangane gave the Zulu warriors a convincing defeat and they were driven back in disorder, "... hungry, fever-ridden and exhausted." (See *Thompson and Wilson*, p350.)

Dingane and his co-conspirators succeeded in assassinating Shaka on 24th September 1828. Thus on that day, Shaka lay dead, killed by his own half-brothers Dingane and Mhlangane, together with Mbopha. There lay a remarkable warrior-general, a political leader of his time, military genius and a marshal of the Zulu forces, *uShaka ka Senzangakhona*. Dingane became king. Well, for a while . . .

The Land Question

What then were the factors that moulded the growth and development of the Zulu Kingdom? This question becomes even more important given the insistence by some bourgeois historians that the development of the Zulu kingdom can be explained in terms of 'European' influence on Dingiswayo and Shaka's alleged disturbed psychosexuality.

People make history, says Marx, but in conditions not chosen by them. In order to make history people must *live* and that in itself presupposes the constant struggle to acquire the means of *livelihood*: people must eat, drink and find shelter.

In his study of ecological factors in relation to the Zulu kingdom, the South African historian Jeff Guy (1980) says that "... the key to understanding the rise of the Zulu Kingdom and the events associated with it would seem to lie in the first instance in a study of the productive potentialities of the physical environment and the way in which it was exploited and changed" by the people living there. (In *Marks and Attmore*, 1980, p118.)¹³

The area in which the Zulu kingdom subsequently developed was suited for stock grazing. The clans in and around the Umfolozi were mainly characterised by stock-farming. For them, ownership of herds of cattle and other animals and control over the land were crucial factors in their mode of existence. Those who controlled good pasturelands and owned stock were in an advantageous position to sustain themselves. Thus one of the major sources of conflict in those social formations was ownership of stock and control over grazing land. Membership of a royal family or hierarchy meant easy access to these means of livelihood. It was not surprising therefore that

most clans around Dingiswayo brought themselves under his domain for protection and also to gain access to grazing land under him.

Rewards of Battle

As Shaka built his kingdom, brave warriors who had proven themselves in battle were allocated herds of cattle; generals were allocated homesteads “. . . in districts which were particularly favourable on account of their proximity to a variety of pastures”. (*Jeff Guy*, p109.) This could have been one of the reasons why Shaka's warriors performed so well in battle, because of the knowledge that victory meant access to increased sources of livelihood in the form of cattle and land allocation.

This specific geographic area is characterised by a variety of grazing types; summer, spring and winter grazing. This meant that the ability of the chief to control the whole region would result in his herdsmen being “able to move their stock freely . . . to take advantage of the (region's) grazing potential: to higher areas of sourveld in the spring, to mixed grazing in the summer . . . and to the low-lying sweetveld in the winter.” (*Guy*, p109.) Clearly most of the wars that occurred around that area before and during Shaka's period could be attributed to this conflict over control and ownership of land and stock. In the process a centralised political system was developing under the Zulu king.

The result of this struggle for control over the means of livelihood during Shaka's period was “. . . political control over a larger area of land and an increased number of people . . . moreover an extension of territory would give numbers of the (Zulu kingdom) access to a greater range of grazing and arable land. But beyond this the kingdom he founded was sufficiently large to redistribute cattle over a much greater area than was previously possible. This enabled the Zulu to avoid local concentrations of stock, and to utilize more effectively seasonal variations in quality of pasturage”. (*Guy*, p112.)

If availability of land and ownership of stock were the major driving forces towards the consolidation of the Zulu kingdom, no one could doubt the secondary role that could have been played by other factors such as pride in conquest and political control by some chiefs. But these factors are definitely secondary. In an era characterised by primitive forces of production, in which people struggled to make nature satisfy their needs, the control over land and stock was fundamental. In the specificity of our case “this only became possible after the power of the small localised social units (clans) had been broken and the peoples of the region brought under centralised control.” (*Guy*, p112.)

In this year of the bicentenary of Shaka's birth, we need to celebrate this great African leader: military genius, political organiser and nation builder. His achievements and those of his people must be celebrated as part of Africa's contribution to human history. The slogans are still relevant today: Mayihlome, Victory or Death. The place of the new warriors is in Umkhonto we Sizwe!

NOTES:

1. This means that we salute you great one, Shaka son of Senzangakhona.
2. One faces a problem in studying South African history in that the dominance of bourgeois historians means that one has to carefully separate some historical facts from racism, sensationalism and inaccuracies.
3. Zulu literally means heaven. Note that not all the clans were called Zulus before Shaka incorporated them into the Zulu Kingdom. The major chiefdoms were the Ndwandwe, Mthethwa and the Zulu.
4. Ukuhlobonga was a Nguni traditional ritual performed for the release of sexual tension among young, unmarried people without conception resulting. (*Ritter*, p11.)
5. Tana and Godongwana connived to assassinate their father Jobe and take over the throne, but Jobe learned about this plot and sent a few of his warriors to destroy the conspirators. Tana was killed, Godongwana escaped but was badly wounded. He sought refuge amongst the Amahlubi having changed his name to Dingiswayo.
6. Ngadla is a warrior cry, literally meaning "I have eaten", which was shouted in triumph when a warrior had killed his opponent.
7. This literally means "red war", meaning total war.
8. Shaka's warrior-generals who had become jealous of Shaka's power, and who were greedy as well, assembled a few warriors and escaped. Mzilikazi for example had been accumulating some of the heads of cattle captured from defeated clans; when this was discovered, he fled.

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GREAT ADVANCES ON THE TRADE UNION FRONT

By R.E. Nyameko

The mere existence of large masses of workers does not ensure their ability to mount the pressure necessary to bring about revolutionary change. This proposition relates to Marx's distinction between workers who constitute a force in themselves on the one hand, and on the other hand a force for themselves. Workers who are organised in trade unions fall in the first category, i.e. a force in themselves; when they become politically conscious and organise for meaningful change they constitute a force for themselves.

Though there is no clear-cut boundary between these two conditions, generally however it can be said that when a body of workers are organised in trade unions and identify with a struggle for political change such as the sharing of power or the overthrow of a reactionary regime, they are a force for themselves.

COSATU's July Conference attended by over 1,000 delegates took a momentous step by adopting the Freedom Charter as its programme of action. A further manifestation of their positive stand came with the adoption of the resolutions on sanctions and full consultation with workers on disinvestment.

The progress made in the growth of political understanding and militant action has predictably provoked a counter-attack. The Pretoria regime with the connivance of the capitalist class has dropped the mask of tolerance towards African labour unions that it adopted in 1979 and 1981 when it removed the statutory colour bar in the labour laws.

For the first time African workers were given the same formal recognition as that extended to White, Coloured and Indian workers under the notorious Industrial Conciliation Act of 1942 and 1956 which excluded African workers from the definition of "employee", membership of registered trade unions and collective bargaining procedures.

It is now generally recognised that the Labour Relations Act of 1981 was and remains the only significant change introduced by the regime in its much advertised promises of doing away with apartheid. Given this measure of recognition and the ability to operate legally, African trade unions made a tremendous leap forward.

The antagonistic contradictions prevailing in our society resulting in the fight of our exploited and oppressed workers for democratic rights on the one hand and the increasing repression of the racist regime on the other, have brought COSATU centre stage in the liberation struggle.

Workers' Unity

In this critical stage of our revolution, workers' unity is under attack on two fronts. The one is a combined offensive by the state and employers. It is multi-pronged and includes physical assault, infiltration and the promotion of fragmentation, as well as cooption. The other arises from the different tendencies within the working class itself. It has its roots in political and ideological differences and radical divisions within the working class.

There is a long-established history of close cooperation between the state and employers on the means of exploitation and oppression of the black majority and specifically of the working class.

Under the current state offensive to assert continued white domination in the face of all-round opposition from the political and oppressed majority, the capitalist class has supported, used, profited and been part of the assault.

The pre-election campaign, and then the election results, show the generalised support or acquiescence of the bosses for the climate of repression. The capitalist class chose to take a very low profile during the election campaign. For some this was a response to the explicit intimidation of individual employers who had spoken out against the assault on democratic forces, or who had acted in a way which could be construed by the state not to be hostile to them. The prime aim of the Chris Ball fiasco was to intimidate any such tendencies within the capitalist class.

The complacency generated by the illusion of greater state control was reinforced by a relative upturn in the company, thanks to a sympathetic hearing given to the SA Reserve Bank by international financiers and especially as a result of the increase in the price of gold. Every dollar added to the price of

gold per ounce brings in an annual amount of R20 million! And for most, their response in the pre-election period and in the election stemmed from the advantages they have reaped over the years from National Party rule and that they are continuing to reap in the prevailing repressive climate.

The bosses' response in the white election confirms a general trend in their behaviour which has been observed about the response to the state of emergency and the resultant attack on the workers' and the trade union movement, specifically. With a few notable exceptions, the response to most employers to the state of emergency imposed on June 12, 1986, was an uncanny silence. Only Premier (Bloom), AECI (Saunders) and the FCI (Waddell) made unsolicited condemnations. Several employers sent messages or telexes after being pressurised to do so by workers taking action on the shop floor. Most, however, did not oppose the state of emergency. Assocom and the FCI appealed to trade union leaders and their members to resist COSATU's call for industrial action.

The White Ants

The infiltration of the trade union movement by agents of the bosses and the state is as old as the trade union movement itself. It is part of the strategy of both cooption and disruption employed by the enemies of the working class. The extent of this activity and of the success on the part of the employers and the state cannot be accurately assessed, since it is only when such agents are exposed that this type of activity comes to light. The most recent exposure of infiltration and subversion comes from South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU) organisers working in Pietersburg. In February this year they revealed that they had uncovered a concerted campaign by local police and employers to destroy their union by offering individuals up to R500 a month to become police informers. (New Nation 19.2.1987)

Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA)

The decline and final dissolution of TUCSA on 2 December 1986 is of importance to the evaluation of the present situation in the trade union movement. In the 32 years of TUCSA's existence it played games with African unions. It deprived them of the right to affiliate by adopting a constitution restricting membership of TUCSA to registered unions.

To destabilise and break the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) it established the Federation of Free Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA), carrying out the policy of the International Confederation of 'Free' Trade Unions (ICFTU). The international labour movement rejected TUCSA. TUCSA started a department for African unions in line with the

regime's Native Affairs Department. This was acceptable neither to African workers at home nor to the international labour movement.

In 1968 TUCSA amended its constitution and invited African unions to affiliate. Some white, racist-led unions then disaffiliated from TUCSA because TUCSA had African unions as affiliates. Once again TUCSA amended its constitution to exclude African unions. Thereafter the TUCSA leadership appealed to affiliates to establish parallel African unions under the tutelage of white unions — a white baasskap, white domination on the pattern of the regime.

Right through the years of terror against freedom fighters TUCSA did not protest against the detentions, torture and murders committed by the regime; on the contrary it hobnobbed with the regime. TUCSA's 22nd annual conference held in East London in September 1976 (the year of the mass murders committed against our children, and mass detentions and torture) Chris Heunis, the then Minister of Economic Affairs, was the guest speaker.

TUCSA in its evidence to the Riekert Commission stated: "An underestimated flow of people to the cities would have a number of harmful effects, among which would be the depression of wages in the cities. This would be prevented by the application of vagrancy laws." (*Sunday Tribune*, 24.9.1987) Thus TUCSA suggested another oppressive law.

Many African workers began to resign from TUCSA unions to join unions of their own choice. For example Nampak workers resigned from the SA Typographical Union and joined the Paper, Wood and Allied Workers' Union (PWAU).

Swan Song

In the last days of its demise, Robbie Botha, TUCSA's president, criticised unions which "insist that employers give them what they could not, like demands for the release of detainees or that blacks be given votes." He said: "We oppose sanctions and disinvestment because they do not promote the interests of labour — sanctions and disinvestment will not create employment." On the call for recognition of May Day, TUCSA issued a statement rejecting this because of "connotations attached to that day." "There should be a labour day but it need not be on 1 May."

In all parts of South Africa 1.5 million workers demonstrated and struck to commemorate the 100th anniversary of May Day and demanded that 1 May be declared a workers' holiday. All over the world workers commemorated this day — TUCSA was out of step with our working people and the international labour movement — but in step with the regime. In response to our workers'

demand for May Day, which received support even from employers' organisations, Botha has announced that the regime will introduce a labour day — but not on 1 May. This is what Hitler did in Nazi Germany in 1934.

TUCSA ex-affiliates who are homeless must be worked on to affiliate to COSATU. In September 1986 TUCSA-affiliated unions in the clothing, textile and leather industries and the National Union of Textile Workers, a COSATU affiliate, met to decide to merge together all the unions in this sector comprising about 200,000 members. This new sectoral federation accepts COSATU's principal of one union for one industry and COSATU supporters must work actively with members in these unions to win them over for affiliation to COSATU.

NACTU — A Divisive Force

The Council of Unions of South Africa — Azanian Congress of Trade Unions (CUSA-AZACTU), now named National Confederation of Trade Unions (NACTU), talks left but acts right. Their newspaper *Izwilethu* of November/December 1986 set out their principles as workers' control, national liberation struggle, etc, and one wonders why they are a separate federation. In fact they are a divisive force. Their empty slogans must be exposed. For example, as soon as COSATU established a Farm Workers' Union in April, NACTU announced the formation of a Farm Workers' Union a few days later. When the State of Emergency was declared COSATU issued a list of demands and guidelines to employers for the State of Emergency conditions. At a meeting with the FCI at which COSATU and CUSA were present, CUSA opposed COSATU's demand for national action and stated that "national action could exacerbate the situation rather than obtain the release of workers and trade unionists" and on 10 July 1986 CUSA issued a joint statement with the FCI and ASSOCOM stating that "they believed conflicts could be resolved through negotiation, discussion and compromise." So much for NACTU's empty sloganising.

Inkatha and UWUSA

The support and active creation of forcers to fragment workers' unity by both the state and employers are equally as insidious. The most explicit example of this in contemporary trade union politics in South Africa is the creation and promotion of UWUSA.

UWUSA (the United Workers Union of South Africa) was launched in a blaze of publicity on May 1, 1986, at an Inkatha Rally at Kings Park Stadium in Durban. Formed as a deliberate and calculated response by sections of the state

(Buthelezi and Inkatha) and capital — both local and international — it is the only union formed in and operating from a bantustan.

By the time of its official launch only 3 small unions had affiliated — the African Domestic Workers' Union, the Black Staff Association of SATS and the National Union of Brick and Allied Workers. The Natal Sugar Refinery and Allied Industrial Employees' Union which is recognised by the Tongaat Hulett's Sugar Refinery in the industrial complex, although closely associated with Inkatha, had no Uwusa presence by the end of 1986.

In fact, over the year the "union" had made next to no real progress amongst workers in the region of Northern Natal, despite the widespread presence of Inkatha, support from employers and substantial assistance from the state.

State collusion with the operation of UWUSA is most explicitly visible in the extent of repression of COSATU in the Northern Natal Region. It is not incidental that of all COSATU regions, the Northern Natal region, which covers some 10,000 workers and is the smallest region, has also been the hardest hit by the State of Emergency. Unionists were very surprised by the widespread detentions in the area which saw 6 main officials — Vilane, Mchunu, Ntombela, Mkhonsa, Mkhwanazi and Oliphant — picked up just before the emergency was declared, and 3 days after the SOE was imposed, the entire COSATU regional executive. Not a single COSATU affiliate in the region was left untouched and at least 22 were detained. As Oliphant stated, none of those detained represented unions with recognition agreements in the area. Rather they were all actively involved in organising, for example at ISCOR and Defy. "This made us reach a conclusion that . . . the state must have been helping UWUSA to organise".

Indeed, UWUSA did approach companies for recognition while COSATU members were locked up. CCAWUSA reported that it was having some difficulties in securing a strong base in smaller shops. MAWU too found management actively discouraging workers from becoming members. At one factory they were threatened with retrenchment if they did not join UWUSA (10 of 12 were MAWU members). At another scrap metal plant they were told that management did not like COSATU and preferred UWUSA and at a third where 267 of the 325 workers are MAWU, management delayed signing a recognition agreement because it was wanting "to see whether workers would like to join UWUSA".

Confidence

The workers themselves have little confidence in UWUSA. This is because of the steady and carefully built relations that have been nurtured with the non-

racial, democratic trade union movement. It is also because of the self-exposure of Inkatha and UWUSA betrayal of workers' interests in the area, beginning with the 1985 Empangeni Bus Boycott, followed by their blocking of workers' proposals to stage a boycott of white shops when the first state of emergency was declared and brought to a head by the physical attack on Jeffrey Vilane (MAWU) and the burning of his home and car in April 1986.

The negative feelings towards UWUSA have been compounded by the fact that in this region COSATU meetings in the region are banned. Workers don't understand why they cannot hold union meetings in their communities. In Mandeni they have managed to negotiate for venues, but at Sikhaweni — the largest concentration of workers in the whole industrial complex — all COSATU affiliate meetings are banned.

But while UWUSA has made little headway in organising as a legitimate union, its primary role is that of a union-bashing vigilante-like outfit. In June 1986 at Hlobane Colliery Inkatha thugs were brought in under the cover of UWUSA by mine security to break a peaceful strike. In the resulting skirmish the union organiser was hounded from the premises, 11 miners were killed and 115 injured.

In the FAWU dispute with Clover Dairies in Pietermaritzburg, UWUSA threatened FAWU members and management dismissed the chairman of the shop stewards' committee alleging that he had instigated workers to attack UWUSA! In March this year miners at the Zincor plant accused senior security members employed by the company of encouraging UWUSA members to attack NUM members and then standing by while the workers were stabbed and bludgeoned to death. At least 3 NUM members were killed.

We must expose UWUSA's outrageous campaign of sabotage and intimidation against the observance of June 16 and June 26. They issued leaflets and placed a whole-page advertisement in the capitalist press which read: "UWUSA MEMBERS AND OTHER WORKERS — READ THIS WELL!! IGNORE CALLS TO STAY AWAY. GO TO WORK DURING THE PERIOD JUNE 12 TO 26." (*Star*, 11.6.87). In brief, UWUSA adopted the same line as the regime and its armed forces.

The enemy, confronted by the mass of oppressed and exploited people, has created the A-Team, vigilantes, Kitskonstabels, Witdoeke and UWUSA. This danger must be tackled now by the entire liberation movement including our Party cadres to thwart these enemies. The townships' street committees, civic, youth and women's organisations and trade unions must carry out an energetic campaign of exposure and education.



AFRICA

NOTES & COMMENT

By Ahmed Azad

THE COMMUNISTS AND THE ELECTIONS

Egypt occupies an important strategic position in the Middle East and Africa. Under Nasser Egypt emerged as an influential force in international politics. A founder member of the non-aligned movement, Egypt played a prominent role in the struggle against imperialism, Israeli aggression and racism. But since the death of Nasser this role was reversed. His successor Sadat signed the notorious Camp David accord with Israel. By his "open door" policy Sadat paved the way for US imperialism and monopoly capital to penetrate Egypt economically and militarily. This policy facilitated growing co-operation between Egypt's big bourgeoisie together with large sections of the middle bourgeoisie and the multinational companies. Military facilities given to the USA were used to destabilise progressive countries in the region and to derail the Arab and African national liberation movements. On the other hand relations with the Soviet Union were deliberately reduced to the barest minimum. Sadat proved to be a willing accomplice of imperialism.

Hosni Mubarak took over after Sadat was assassinated in 1982. His rule was "legitimised" by elections in 1984. But both left-wing and right-wing opposition forces constantly challenged the validity of the election. They maintained that due to Act 114 (1984) the elections were loaded in favour of the ruling National Democratic Party. Only those parties that gained 8 percent of the votes could have representation in the Parliament. This 8 percent threshold presented a formidable barrier to independent candidates. In that election the opposition as a whole received 27 percent of the votes cast, but only 8 seats. All these seats went to the conservative Neo-Wafd party which polled 15 percent of the votes.

In the elections held on April 1987, Mubarak pre-empted the opposition by modifying Act 114. This minor change enabled independents to contest one seat per constituency free of the 8 percent threshold. But the 8 percent rule was maintained for all the contesting parties.

The Egyptian Communist Party (ECP) is banned and so is the right-wing fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood. The latter was banned for its alleged involvement in the attempt to assassinate President Nasser in 1954.

The elections were contested by six main parties and a large number of independents who were in one way or another connected to the political parties. These were the NDP, the Neo-Wafd, the left-wing National Unionist Progressive Party (NUPP), the Umma (Islamic Nation) Party, the liberal Socialist Labour Party and the conservative Al-Ahrar Party. The Muslim Brotherhood candidates stood on the platform of the latter two parties. The NUPP, led by Khaled Mohieddine, rejected an electoral coalition with the Brotherhood. Mohieddine, a former leading army officer during Nasser's time, consistently takes anti-imperialist positions on national and international issues. The Neo-Wafd also refused to form an alliance with the Brotherhood. This is due to the communal violence directed against Coptic Christians. The Copts, who traditionally support the Neo-Wafd, are deeply entrenched in commerce and business. This was a change for the Neo-Wafd. After the 1984 elections 8 out of their 15 deputies were members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The latter is extremely wealthy and runs its own banks. In addition it receives financial and political support from Saudi Arabia and the USA. Thus this reactionary fundamentalist group is an influential factor in Egyptian political life.

Except for the ECP and the NUPP the other political parties contesting the elections are basically to the right of the NDP.

Compared to previous elections the last one was freer and fairer. However, even before polling day the opposition had warned that large-scale ballot rigging was planned. They repeated this accusation after the elections. They also said that more than 750 had been arrested during the election campaign. In a number of districts force was used to expel left and other progressive forces. Furthermore on the eve of the elections 10 supporters of the NUPP were arrested on suspicion of being members of the ECP. They were accused of planning to use the elections to "incite unrest".

Despite the publicity and ballyhoo surrounding the elections fewer than 50 percent of the country's 15 million voters bothered to cast their votes. In the cities the turnout was less than 30 percent. To no one's surprise there were many spoilt ballot papers in those areas in which the left was expected to do well. The NDP gained 69.2 percent of the votes, the Neo-Wafd Party 10.93 percent, the two parties allied to the Muslim Brotherhood 17.4 percent and the independents 2.39 percent. Out of 458 M.P.'s the opposition has 123.

Prior to the elections it was widely accepted that Mubarak had arranged a trade off with the right-wing opposition. He would concede more seats to them on condition that they endorsed his sole candidature for the Presidential elections in October. In terms of the constitution the Egypt Parliament chooses a sole candidate for President who has to muster two-thirds of the eligible voters. In July of this year 420 deputies nominated Mubarak as the sole candidate thus ensuring him a further six years of rule. The 32 members of the Neo-Wafd party walked out of Parliament in protest at the practice of appointing a single candidate.

The Egyptian Communists

The ECP circumvented its illegal status by fielding 4 independents who stood on a communist platform. The communists emphasised that the deep changes sought by the people would not be achieved through the election campaign but by "mass actions and the class struggle." Nevertheless they felt that the election campaign constituted an important manifestation of the people's struggle. Their programme, which was widely distributed throughout the country, calls for the consummation of the national democratic revolution. They point out that before the strategic goal of socialism is reached, the country would have to pass through a number of stages in which a whole series of socio-economic transformations would occur.

Since the seventies the Egyptian working class has grown numerically. Unfortunately the latest available figures are for 1976. These census figures show that production workers (industry, transport and construction), commercial workers, service workers and agricultural workers number 4,487,800 — 70.1 percent of the total work force. The industrial workers constitute 24 percent of the labour force. Given the increased penetration of capitalism, it is likely that this number has increased appreciably. Moreover a sharp class differentiation is occurring in the rural areas. According to the 1976 figures more than half of Egypt's landowners own less than an acre, whilst 2,000 rich landowners own 413,000 acres, with an average holding of 206.5 acres. This is in contravention of the land reform act of 1969 which limited land ownership to 100 acres per family. (*Democratic Palestine*, No.21, January 1987).

In its programme the ECP calls for the revocation of the Camp David accords, and fully supports the PLO's demands for self-determination. In calling for an anti-colonial, anti-imperialist foreign policy, it declares "the Soviet Union is a friend of our country and the mainstay of its struggle for liberation and development." Together with other progressive and democratic forces the communists are calling for freedom of expression, association and movement.

For the reconstruction of the national economy

Over the past few years the Egyptian economic crisis has gone from bad to worse. Under pressure from the IMF the government has imposed an austerity programme which enriches the few at the expense of the many. Furthermore the IMF is trying to compel Egypt to phase out food subsidies. Given the low wage economy, with unemployment at around 20 percent, such a course would have a devastating impact on the lives of millions of people. Egypt has a crippling debt of over 38 billion dollars and the interest charges alone are fast draining the country's reserves. To meet the worsening economic situation, and to chart a new way forward, the communists put forward a number of concrete proposals. These are:

- 1) Eliminate the domination of foreign capital, the IMF and the World Bank.
- 2) Develop the export industry and prohibit the import of luxury items.
- 3) Nationalise the major industries, banks, insurance companies and foreign trade.
- 4) Ensure the leading role of the state sector.
- 5) Protect the private sector and encourage it to make capital investment in

industry and agriculture in conformity with state directives and the state development plan.

- 6) Control speculation on the foreign markets by investment companies.
- 7) Suspend the payment of foreign debts and annul the interest payments accruing from them.
- 8) Retain state subsidies for foodstuffs.
- 9) Remove customs and tax privileges for foreign investors and big local capital.
- 10) Reduce expenditure on the security services.
- 11) Prohibit import operations in which the deposits of Egyptians in foreign banks are used.
- 12) Promote the development of economic and trade relations with the socialist countries and the non-aligned states.
- 13) Lay the basis for a large co-operative sector and increase its participation in the sphere of production and its services.

The ECP used the election to put forward their views and perspectives. The breathing space offered by the election was utilised to mobilise the masses and to heighten their patriotic and internationalist consciousness. Under difficult conditions our Egyptian comrades are attempting to strengthen their underground structures and to step up their ideological work. Amongst their published material they also produce a theoretical journal *Ideological Questions*. In each issue they try to deal in depth with a specific theme. In two of the five published issues they have dealt with the socio-economic situation in Egypt and the struggle of the Palestinians.

Post Election Moves

Following the elections, Mubarak took steps to improve relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. He is doing this in part to wring even more assistance from the USA, France and Britain. At the moment Egypt's military debt is four and a half billion US dollars with an interest repayment of 14 percent. Mubarak is keen to reduce this to 7 percent but the creditors are refusing. France refused to supply the Mirage 2,000 fighter plane because it was concerned that Egypt might not be able to pay for it.

But with the Soviet Union Mubarak has arrived at beneficial agreements. Egypt's debts to the Soviet Union contracted during Nasser's time have not yet been paid. The Soviet Union has removed the 2 percent interest on the debt and has given Egypt 6 years grace before making payments. The Soviet Union has also expressed its willingness to supply spare parts for Soviet

machinery, technology and military equipment, and to increase the volume of bilateral trade. Already a number of economic agreements have been signed and Soviet specialists and technicians have returned to Egypt. Furthermore, relations with Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and Poland have improved.

During the Sadat years a vicious anti-Soviet campaign was conducted through the mass media. This has now ceased. An interesting article in the influential *Al Ahram* compared the involvement of the USA and the Soviet Union in Egypt. In it there were references to the friendship of the Soviet Union, and on the whole that country was cast in a favourable light.

The ECP fully supports these moves. They point out that for years the Egyptian people have been brainwashed by anti-Soviet, anti-communist propaganda. Thus improved relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries could contribute to a healthier atmosphere.

These slight but important changes have to be seen in the context of the all-pervasive influence of US imperialism. Their military bases in Egypt are a threat to peace in the Middle East and to the independence of that region and North-East Africa. A further impediment is the Egyptian bourgeoisie that is closely tied to foreign capital. For their own selfish interests they are keen to entrench Egypt's dependent status.

After the elections the ruling class can no longer revert to the bad old days of Sadat. For a start the opposition forces, both left and right, are now better organised and more cohesive. The demand for the legalisation of the ECP and the Arab Socialist Nasser Party can no longer be ignored.



MOZAMBIQUE: AN HISTORIC VISIT

Recently a delegation of the South African Communist Party, led by its General Secretary Joe Slovo, visited the People's Republic of Mozambique at the invitation of the Frelimo Workers' Party. This visit marked the first bilateral exchange between the two parties. The warm, fraternal welcome accorded to the SACP delegation symbolises the growing comradeship and co-operation of the two Marxist-Leninist Parties.

The two delegations held a series of discussions on the situation of their respective countries and in the region. They also discussed relations between the two parties, the inter-party processes in the continent and other issues of mutual concern. The Frelimo delegation was led by comrade Armando Gebueza, member of the Political Bureau and Minister of Transport.

In his briefing comrade Slovo covered the following issues:

- 1) An historical panorama of the development of the SACP and its relations with the ANC.
- 2) The communist perception of the South African situation: colonialism of a special type, class and national question and the relation between the national democratic and socialist revolutions.
- 3) The interconnection of the struggle in South Africa and the efforts of the Southern African states for independent national development.

In outlining the internal situation in Mozambique the Frelimo Party delegation pointed out that they are facing problems in the economic, security and social areas. Despite great difficulties they have had some measure of success in dealing with these problems. The leading role in this process belongs to the Party. In order to abort the revolutionary process imperialism and apartheid South Africa are trying to create discontent among the people and foment contradictions between the Party and its social base. But Frelimo is in control. This was clearly demonstrated after the assassination of Samora Machel when the whole nation stood behind the Party and showed confidence in its leadership. Since the 4th Congress the number of Party cells has increased from 4,200 to 7,000 and membership by about 50,000. The Frelimo Party plays a leading role in mobilising the population to withstand attacks by the counter-revolutionary bandits in an organised manner.

South Africa's campaign of aggression has caused serious economic problems. The bandits have destroyed a large part of the economic infrastructure. About 4 million people have been displaced. There is a fall in production, dislocation of transport, shortage of food, scarcity of foreign exchange. The Frelimo Party points out that to enable the state to administer

the economy and exercise effective economic control, it needs own only the commanding heights of the economy. However the government is paying serious attention to the development of the socialist sector for which it receives support from the socialist countries. But this support has been slowed down due to the security situation. Economic development is also enhanced by regional co-operation. Through the SADCC, countries in the region are lessening their dependence on South Africa and at the same time gradually creating viable national economies.

The source of the security problem faced by Mozambique is racist South Africa. Mozambique is a target because of its ideological standpoint, economic, political, social and cultural policies and its strategic geographical position. The Frelimo Party delegation stressed that Pretoria's acts of aggression and destabilisation have not abated. However, the security situation has somewhat improved due to the armed offensive of the FPLM and its allies. Nevertheless the Party and government are daily seized with the task of improving the effectiveness of the armed forces. The threat to the country was tragically demonstrated on July 18th, 1987, when the MNR bandits massacred at least 386 civilians in the southern Mozambique town of Homoine. The terrorists carried out their carnage within five hours, using AK47 automatic assault rifles, bayonets and machettes. The political bureau of the Frelimo Party accused the racist Botha regime of responsibility since the MNR is "nothing more than an operational extension of the South African armed forces".

During this historic visit the SACP delegation got a first-hand account of both the enormity of the problems facing the people of Mozambique and their resolve to overcome them. The SACP delegation was impressed by the consistent anti-apartheid positions adhered to by the Frelimo Party and government.

The visit will no doubt help to strengthen links between the Frelimo Worker's Party, the government and people of Mozambique on the one hand, and the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa and their liberation alliance headed by the ANC on the other.

PRESS RELEASE

1. A delegation of the CC of the SACP led by its General Secretary, Comrade Joe Slovo recently visited the PRM at the invitation of the FRELIMO Party.
2. During the visit the delegation paid homage to the memory of the Heroes of the Mozambican Revolution and in particular to the memory of the late President Comrade Samora Machel.
3. The delegation was received by Comrade Joachim Chissano, President of the FRELIMO Party, as well as by Comrade Marcelino dos Santos, Member of the PB of the CC of the FRELIMO Party, and had talks with another delegation of the CC of FRELIMO Party headed by Comrade Armando Gebueza, Member of the PB of CC of the FRELIMO Party.
4. All meetings and discussions took place in an atmosphere of warm and fraternal friendship and militant solidarity, based on the common principles of Marxism-Leninism and Proletarian Internationalism.
5. During the talks the situation in Southern Africa was analysed and both delegations shared a common view on the questions of the immediate need to put an end to colonialism in Namibia, destabilization and aggression in the region, and apartheid in South Africa.
6. Both parties appealed to all countries, regardless of their political social system, to increase their efforts to prevent generalised war in Southern African, and reinforce their assistance both to Frontline States and the Liberation Movements of Namibia and South Africa, led by SWAPO and ANC respectively.
7. The two delegations reiterated their commitment to the building of a free, independent, peaceful and non-aligned Southern Africa. They recognised that the existence of colonialism and apartheid has to be removed in order that the peoples of the region can contribute to the peace, progress and prosperity of their zone, to the development of the African continent and of mankind as a whole.

Maputo
June of 1987

THE TRIPLE OPPRESSION OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

by Phasha Mwandla

“In reality, all of us were prejudiced against women. We used to believe that all that a women could do was just wash the dishes, wash and iron clothes, cook, keep the house and bear children — all these were age-old prejudices that placed women in an inferior position in society. But the revolution has taught us that women are an enormous potential force and provide extraordinary human resources for any revolution.” — Fidel Castro, *Granma*, December 1986.

From comrade Castro’s speech it is clear that all revolutionaries need to fight oppression — social, national, sexual — because it is against the interests of the exploited masses and because oppression of any kind blocks the growth of national and class consciousness.

The triple oppression of African women is related to national and racial oppression and to class exploitation. Women’s emancipation can only be realised by the achievement of national liberation and by the elimination of class division in our society.

The majority of African women feel their oppression as mothers, citizens and workers. They know that the racist system of apartheid determines and shapes their role in the family, the community and in society as a whole and deprives them, as mothers, citizens and workers, of their basic human rights.

They are denied the right of citizenship, the right to live with their family, and the right to all the socio-economic and political freedoms which would bring with them the provision of shelter, food and clothing — those basic necessities of life. It was Engels who stressed that the basic human needs of life such as food, drink, shelter and clothing have to be fulfilled before any other activities are undertaken, be it art, religion or politics.

Unlike the feminists, the oppressed and exploited African women are not concerned about the superiority of one sex over another, or by the assessment of the intellectual make-up of one sex over the other or the comparison of the physical and psychological structures of men and women. They believe that each person, man or woman, should be given the fullest opportunity to determine and develop his or her capabilities and they are agreed that the present national and class structures of South African society prevent this from taking place.

Jack Simons, in his book *African Women — Their Legal Status in South Africa*, shows how apartheid perpetuates the triple oppression of women through the rules, regulations, policies and courts, all of which exploit the productive and reproductive labour of the African women as mothers, citizens and workers.

The System is a Cage

At the level of the family, the apartheid system oppresses women through the policies of influx control, the Group Areas Act, inadequate housing and the legal provisions of marriage, all of which determine where the family should live and how they should live. Industry and commerce exploit women with their “family wage” ideology which declares the man to be the “breadwinner” who should support his wife and children, ignoring the women workers who head their household — widows, divorcees, single women.

This triple oppression of women has been reinforced by certain accepted practices which define the roles of women and men — with men who maintain their wives and children and women who are the housewives and home makers — assumptions which place pressures on family and marriage relations and further subordinate women. There are differences in these family structures, in both urban and rural areas, as a result of the unfavourable socio-economic and political circumstances.

Faced by this triple oppression that threatens the livelihood of their families and of the communities as a whole, these women, unable to manage on the meagre wages earned, have time and again taken to the streets to

demonstrate and picket, demanding lower rents, housing, the subsidising of basic commodities for free, equal and democratic education, the release of their detained children and husbands and the return of their exiled husbands, sons and daughters as well as the demands for child care, educational and health facilities. These campaigns have taken place recently in Soweto, Tumahole, Tembisa, Bonteheuwel, Lanmontville and many other areas.

As in the urban areas, women in the rural areas face even greater oppression, working in the fields or informal wage work. Their oppression is also exacerbated by the traditional and customary practices that have certain role expectations from both men and women. These rural women form 60 per cent of the population of South African women, and 40 per cent of them are illiterate, a fact which explains the differences of education and political consciousness between them and their urban counterparts. Because of these differences their strategies and methods of struggle also differ. Faced by massive poverty and starvation in absolute and relative terms, by their forced removal from their subsistence lands, the terrible shortages and the lack of infrastructure — roads, transport, health clinics, education and child-care facilities — these rural women demand that they be provided with these basic human needs. Evidence of this comes from the Driefontein and Rooigrond women who fought against the forced removal from their land, the Brits women who demanded land to bury their dead, the Sekhukhuneland women who demanded the release of their husbands and children from detention and the release of all detainees, and the Huhudi women who protested against their community councillors. All this provides massive evidence that the rural women are challenging their oppressors.

Rural women, like their urban counterparts, are attempting to solve their poverty by participating in “anti-poverty and developmental programmes” such as sewing, knitting and other handicrafts to augment their family income. Owing to high unemployment and high inflation, these groups could amount to 60 per cent of the rural population. Although such groups do contribute positively to the reduction of their social problems, they obviously cannot solve the existing poverty within a highly regulated and competitive market. These groups do challenge the subordination of women by teaching them skills which provide the confidence and opportunities to leave the immediate domestic arena, even though this may be only for a while before returning “back to the kitchen”. Among these groups are the Malihambe sewing and knitting groups, the Mazibemonye knitting club, the Masizakhe sewing club at Motherwell and the Siyaphumelela club in

Port Elizabeth. At the present time the participation of women in these groups is limited but, given political direction by showing the link between their poverty and apartheid, this can help challenge their overall oppression.

In the factory and on white farms

In industry and commerce, on the white farms and in domestic service, employers exploit women by paying them low wages which exclude unemployment and maternity pay as well as other legal benefits. The conditions under which they work are bad — they are exposed to sexual harassment at work from supervisors and managers, particularly the night shift women workers.

In the factories outside Durban and Pretoria and in areas of the Orange Free State women rural workers also have additional domestic and housework responsibilities. However their employment brings them into contact with trade unions and with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) where they learn through collective action to challenge their oppressors by demanding a living wage, better working conditions, unemployment benefits and maternity rights. Their entry to this arena reduces their economic and psychological dependence on men.

The conditions of women farmer workers are more oppressive because of the nature of farm work and the difficulties in organising them into trade unions where they can collectively challenge their sexual harassment and the male violence of farmers and other farm workers against them. The maximum monthly wage of R30 plus a box of tomatoes or a bag of cabbage is totally inadequate. This wage is paid to women farm labourers on the tomato and tobacco farms of Pedi in the Ciskei, the tobacco and wheat farms at Hoewel, Brits and the wine farms of the Western Cape. Besides farm work, these women have also to undertake their domestic responsibilities of housework and child care in their living quarters — often a mud hut. Before the abolition of the labour tenant system, women farm workers used also to have to work at the family plot “given” to them by the farmer. This only added to a woman’s exploitation and subordination.

Though by no means yet fully organised, women farm labourers, particularly in the Orange Free State, the Vaal and Sekhukhuneland Areas, are being drawn into COSATU where they demand a living wage, proper housing as well as educational, health, childcare and recreational facilities — again challenging their triple oppression.

Domestic Wage Work

According to conservative South African statistics, there are 800,000 domestic workers in South Africa, excluding the bantustans. This figure covers registered male and female domestic workers employed mainly in white homes — for even a poor white family can afford a domestic worker. Many are employed by rich Indian, African and Coloured families and, according to Margaret Nhlapo of the domestic workers' union SADWA, their exploitation with these families is even greater. The oppressive and exploitative nature of this work is reflected in the nature of the work which is boring and repetitive. The women have to take on domestic responsibilities in the caring for other people's children, rearing them as well as undertaking housework for low wages varying from R40 to R150 per month with bad working and living conditions. For most women, these responsibilities are in addition to their own domestic responsibilities and housework which most husbands and male children refuse to undertake. This work is unproductive although essential. It was Engels who pointed out that "domestic work is a senseless waste of labour power", and that these workers spend their time in work which results in the isolation of a person inside four walls. Such work is a result of the bad arrangement of our social relations. In a rationally organised society, where everyone will live without unnecessary luxury, this labour power will be used to the advantage of all and also to its own advantage.

In spite of the exploitative nature of domestic work, it does provide an income for the women who cannot find productive work and it has resulted in the formation of the trade union SADWA (South African Domestic Workers' Association) which deals with the exploitative nature of the work. Like all other sectors of the apartheid economy, the organisation of the workers into trade unions and their demands for a living wage, for child care facilities, and the end of discrimination and sexual abuse are hindered by many factors.

The Fight for Liberation

The main problem is one of prejudice that sees the role of women as child bearers and all that follows on from there — child care, child rearing and house work. Man's role, reinforced by the legal and traditional or customary ideology of "Indoda ye Indoda" — he who heads the family calls the tune — is very prevalent in the KwaZulu-Ingwavuma area, Vendlaland, Transkei and Ciskei. This ideology, accepted by both men and women, impedes the struggle for national and women's emancipation.

A second factor which impedes women's involvement in the struggle is the fear of the loss of the husband's material and psychological support designed

by tradition, law and capitalism which accept the "breadwinner tag" of the male. In addition to this there is also fear of the state, for participation in political activity can lead to detention and result in child neglect. This is related to their mother-role and the fact that as mothers they are accountable to their children.

Thirdly, the participation of women in the struggle is impeded by women themselves, their attitude to one another, their petty jealousies of one another, competition, rivalry, narrow-mindedness and rumour-mongering, all of which affect their unity, their love for one another and the cohesion within their women's organisations. These attitudes are also displayed by some of the politically and intellectually developed women and this has a negative affect on their less educated, sometimes illiterate and politically more backward sisters. Marx was aware of this phenomenon when he stated that they are "themselves captives of their own ideas which they themselves reinforce and perpetuate."

Finally women's involvement in the struggle is hampered by the backward and conservative ideas of some of the male activists and cadres, who must learn to respect and promote the legitimate rights of women. There have even been instances of wife-beating and this behaviour has been dealt with by the disciplinary structures of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the townships, resulting in a considerable reduction of the inhuman treatment of women. These backward ideas and prejudices not only impede women's participation but also hamper the organisation of the movement and the carrying out of its policies which could facilitate the national and women's liberation we all want. It is acknowledged that no revolution can succeed without the full participation of the women.

Women's Campaigns

Women's organisations have been formed to fight this triple oppression of women. These organisations have affiliated to the UDF and are working in alliance with COSATU, youth and student organisations and all those working for a democratic South Africa. The campaigns of the women include the demand for a living wage, an end to sexual harassment and sex discrimination in all spheres, demands for child care, health, education, programmes to promote the understanding of questions relating specifically to women, the demand to share house work and other domestic responsibilities with their menfolk, the promotion of women to leadership positions at all levels of the struggle. All these measures will advance the cause of women and help tackle their triple oppression.

The organisations fighting for an end to apartheid realise that this cannot be achieved without the full participation of women. As Lenin said: "As long as women are still drugged and stupefied by the environment of the house and kitchen, it will be impossible to guarantee freedom and to build even democracy, let alone socialism." No revolution can succeed without the women. Castro said: "Their participation in a revolution, is a revolution within the revolution."

The inequalities in marriage and family relations are the products of capitalism, but the achievement of certain basic needs can help alleviate some conditions and help to bring about an end to the inequalities which Engels stated are "fostered and developed by institutions of private property, women's private service within the family, their inability to work outside the home and their material dependence on men." Only through the socialisation of the means of production and the socialisation of child care, child rearing and domestic work can women be emancipated. However, the process of that emancipation should start now as child care centres, public catering establishments, kindergartens which can be created within the orbit of capitalism.

In fact the exploited masses are entitled to these concessions as it is their sweat and blood, their labour which has created the wealth for the individual capitalists. These services which would help lessen women's oppression are rare and expensive because they are profit-making under capitalism and therefore inaccessible to most people, unlike under socialism where they are available to all the people.

If we follow the road of our sisters in Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, Nicaragua, and many other countries, the triple oppression of South African women can also be ended. We need to dismantle the institutions of national and racial oppression and class exploitation. True emancipation of women will come with the liberation of the working class, and that process will take a long time.



THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ETHIOPIAN FAMINE

Resettlement and Rehabilitation, Ethiopia's Campaign Against Famine, by John Clarke, (Harney and Jones Ltd. 1987.)

From its inception in 1974 the Ethiopian revolution has come under fierce attack from US imperialism and the CIA. The CIA uses its dirty tricks expertise to spread lies, half-truths and confusion about developments in Ethiopia. During the last few years this campaign has been stepped up to include the resettlement programme.

Over the last 15 years Ethiopia has suffered from three devastating famines. The famine of 1984/85 pricked the conscience of the world and international aid and famine relief on a vast scale was needed to cope with its horrific consequences. But this aid and famine relief could not be more than a temporary measure. As the Ethiopian government fully recognised, measures were needed which held out the prospect of finding long-term solutions to famine, hunger and starvation.

One of the important measures undertaken by the government is the resettlement programme which began in November 1984. Up to the present some 600,000 people have been resettled in more congenial and productive areas. In the West some groups have condemned this programme as nothing short of genocide, others have labelled it as counter-productive and others have accused the government of using it to undermine the secessionist movements in Eritrea and Tigray.

One of the most vicious opponents of this programme is the French organisation *Medicins Sans Frontiers* (MSF-F). Although it claims to be non-political and only concerned with humanitarian issues, leading members of this organisation are also members of a political party *Liberte Sans Frontiers*.

The MSF-F is also heavily engaged in supporting the counter-revolutionary bandits in Afghanistan. Their fallacious and reprehensible propaganda campaign against both revolutionary powers receives favourable coverage in the Western mass media. For example they allege, "The main problem in Ethiopia today is that people are dying not from famine, but from resettlement." (p.4) This was written at a time when more than 5 million Ethiopians were in dire need of basic foodstuffs to stave off death by starvation.

These and other allegations are firmly rebuffed by John Clarke. In a well-documented and thoroughly researched book he shows that resettlement is a planned and well-conceived programme. The author does not dodge any of the main criticisms and doubts expressed about the resettlement programme. He visited some of the areas of resettlement and gives the reader an eye-witness account of the achievements, drawbacks and unresolved problems of the programme.

People Moved From Famine Areas

Resettlement in Ethiopia means moving people from famine areas in the north to more fertile areas in other parts of the country. It can also "benefit the country as a whole with more production, fewer people in need of assistance and less international relief aid required." (p.42) Indeed, as Clarke points out,

"The nature of the environment in northern Ethiopia, where the land is unable to properly support the number of people there and where their attempts to eke out an existence are actually damaging the environment even further — possibly irreparably — under these circumstances resettlement would seem like a very pragmatic and sensible policy. (It) would enable those moved to become self-sustaining and productive in areas currently under-utilised but potentially productive, and it would mean that within the northern region itself the lower level of population would not only allow those who remained a better chance of producing enough to live on, it would also allow rehabilitation work to improve the environment without the excessive population demands on the soil and vegetation." (p.43)

Opponents of the programme claim that the people are deliberately denied food-aid or are forced at gun-point to join the programme. The "evidence" for this comes largely from refugee camps in the Sudan. The Ethiopian government is fully aware that a forced programme can only be counter-productive and alienate those that it is designed to help. It would have been quite impossible to conceal the forced removals of hundreds of thousands of people from the foreign relief workers and media crews working in the country. In fact Clarke quotes a number of the latter to expose the lie

that resettlement is forced. One of them is Graham Hancock, former East Africa correspondent of *The Economist*. He writes,

“I trust that these accusations are incorrect. Far from being forced, the majority of the drought affected people strongly want to go. And this impression, I know, is shared by many voluntary agency personnel who have spent months working with the famine victims.” (p.58)

In the resettlement areas of primary consideration was the provision of adequate food, clean water and sanitation. By November 1985, Clarke points out,

“There were 85 health stations, 10 health centres and five hospitals in the resettlement areas with a total staff of over 600 full-time personnel, both Ethiopian and foreign medical workers. One of the hospitals was a fully-equipped and staffed field hospital from the Soviet Union sent specifically for the resettlement programme.” (p.62)

In the West a strange combination of bed-fellows from the right and ultra-left accuse the ruling Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) and the government of embarking on the programme to prosecute even more venomously the “war” against the secessionist groups in Eritrea and Tigray. But the facts are that no resettler comes from Eritrea and only 10 per cent of the total come from Tigray. Moreover it would be illogical and irrational to settle people who it is claimed are against the government on the borders with Sudan. Since 1974 Sudan has been a base and haven for the counter-revolutionary secessionist groups. They have their offices, military bases and recruitment centres in the Sudan. One of these groups is the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) which receives aid and support from the USA, Saudi Arabia and certain left-wing groups in Western Europe and the charity War on Want. It is noteworthy that the TPLF which has emerged as a potentially destructive destabilising force was only founded in 1975. Despite its revolutionary rhetoric and phrase-mongering it is a counter-revolutionary force aiming to destabilise a country that is becoming a genuine material base for socialism on our continent. It cannot be over emphasised that imperialism has singled out for destabilisation the socialist oriented countries in Africa.

Ten-Year Plan

In its ten-year plan the Ethiopian government gives top priority to the development of agricultural production. The strategy of villagisation is one aspect of this enormously difficult and complex task. However in the recent period critics have claimed that this programme too is implemented by force and that it is disrupting agricultural production. But as Clarke points out

"Villagisation is a policy for bringing together small rural settlements, many with between only one to twelve families, into villages which would contain a hundred or more families...., the objectives of bringing these together into villagers is to aid rural development, making all forms of service delivery, such as water, health, education, electricity and transport, much easier. The policy has political as well as economic advantages in terms of the organisation of the peasantry and the reduction of their isolation in the country." (p.137)

The Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Committee is also severely criticised for "corruption" and the "use of coercive measures". Clarke shows on the contrary, that the RRC has played and continues to play an invaluable role in rehabilitating rural land in drought prone areas and in giving all kinds of assistance to the peasants. Aid to peasant farmers, he writes, "has included nearly 9,000 tonnes of selected seed, over 3,000 tonnes of fertilizers and 1.7 million litres of pesticides since 1975." (p.29)

John Clarke also effectively demolishes the anti-Soviet attacks on politicians, aid agencies and the purveyors of cheap propaganda, lies and distortions. He points out that the Soviet Union is involved in large long-term projects including providing education, skills, training and a hydro-electrical and agricultural development project in Bale and Illubabor. In the last famine disaster the Soviet Union was one of the first countries to respond to the Ethiopian government's plea for help. It provided 10,000 tonnes of emergency food aid, water-drilling equipment for projects within the drought regions and a field hospital in the resettlement areas. "The bulk of Soviet aid for the famine disaster was in the form of transport: aircraft plus 300 trucks for the transport of relief supplies and the movement of resettlers." (p.147)

Relations With Soviet Union

The comradely fraternal relations between Ethiopia and the Soviet Union were strengthened during the visit of Mengistu Haile Mariam to the Soviet Union in April 1987. In his talks with Mikhail Gorbachov, Mengistu Haile Mariam said:

"We are concentrating efforts today on expanding production, providing jobs and land for people, giving the mass of the working people a life worthy of a human being, achieving unity and equality in the country and providing conditions for the development of all nationalities and ethnic groups. However, as we build a new life, we are exposed to continuous political, economic and ideological pressure on the part of imperialism and the reactionary forces, and have to fight armed counter-revolutionaries".

In expressing support and understanding for the policies of the WPE Gorbachov noted that it was important to proceed from realities, not to outrun stages of development and not to grow complacent.

The book under review shows that the resettlement programme is an important part of Ethiopia's efforts to deal with the enormous problems of environmental degradation, population pressures on the land, drought, famine, under-development of agriculture and the poverty and backwardness of the country. The book deserves the widest possible publicity and circulation. Because it is a well-researched explanation and defence of the policies of the WPE and the Ethiopian government it has been largely ignored in the West.

A.A.

REFORM AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO REVOLUTION

Up Against the Fences: Poverty, Passes and Privilege in South Africa edited by Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, (David Philip, 1985.)

This collection of essays focuses primarily on the influx control system and the relationship between rural and urban poverty. The overall purpose of the book is to marshal data, analysis and political views to support a policy of political and economic reform.

The twofold aim of the influx system, particularly as it has been developed by the regime since 1948, is identified by Giliomee and Schlemmer as being, firstly, 'the political exclusion of the blacks' (p.1) through a 'comprehensive geo-political dispensation for Africans (p.342) in the bantustans, and, secondly, 'to protect white working class occupational interests by keeping cheap black labour at a minimum in the white areas' (p.343).

Significantly, however, the editors do not consider either of these objectives of the system. Instead, they confine their discussion to the regime's claims that influx control is designed to protect the social and economic conditions of the black people and they proceed to demonstrate that, although there may be some merit in some of these claims, 'on balance' the effects are negative for black people, for capital and, indeed, for economic growth and political stability in the country as a whole.

The result is that the question of the dismantling of apartheid is completely side-stepped and this is not accidental, for the issue which concerns the editors (and other contributors) is how to avoid a political crisis which may threaten economic growth through political instability or the free market system through a revolutionary transformation. For them, therefore, the central concern is to identify the economic (and to some extent, social) conditions and processes in the urban and rural areas which may encourage radical political opposition among the black people in order to determine what needs to be reformed for the purposes of 'avoiding the crises' (p.333), that is to say, for the purposes of preventing a revolutionary transformation.

The basic argument advanced is that influx control with the associated system of migrant labour intensifies rural poverty, increases the pressures on blacks to become urbanised and thereby ensures the failure of the regime's policy to control and limit the urbanisation process. For Giliomee and Schlemmer this has dangerous political consequences.

Rural Revolt

This leads the editors to the question of whether or not increasing rural poverty — the rural crisis — is likely to lead to a rural revolt. They argue that whether the 'survival crisis' will turn into a political crisis depends on a number of factors. In the case of the bantustans the factors tending towards rural revolt — great population density, authoritarian rule by the chiefs and the experience of exploitation as proletarians — are offset by other factors. These are: organisational — the absence of the 'outside leadership' without which, they argue, the peasants are incapable of revolting; the existence of sharp divisions of interests within the rural population; the disappearance of middle peasantry whose role is more or less indispensable in a peasants' revolt; the absence of the 'most able men' because of the migrant labour system.

The conclusion is that 'ruralising the revolution' (p.318) is, therefore, unlikely. But what is the effect of rural poverty coupled with the influx control system on the potentiality of an urban based revolt?

According to Giliomee and Schlemmer, it could be argued, however implausibly, that a number of benefits accrue to urban blacks from the influx control system, nevertheless, these are far outweighed by the negative consequences of influx control.

There are negative social consequences — reduction of respect for the law because of pass offences and the breakdown of family life. But more serious are the obstacles placed in the path of economic development: it impedes

the free flow of labour required by the free market system, it undermines productivity which only a stabilised labour force can deliver and, finally and most importantly, it tends to push up urban wages — the free movement of labour would weaken the bargaining position of black workers and of the trade unions in the urban areas and lead to 'labour-intensive sectors of super-cheap black labour' for industrialists. (p.344)

The most important negative effect of the influx control system, however, is the political opposition it generates among the black people. As if it were not well enough known, one of the editors conducted attitude surveys and "discovered" that the pass system was one of the major sources of 'discontent'!

Furthermore, despite influx control, the effect of rural poverty is to drive more and more people into the urban and, particularly, peri-urban areas where there is dense overcrowding, considerable poverty and the virtual absence of amenities — conditions which provoke radical political opposition.

False Supposition

Given this and the economic disadvantages they claim to have identified, the editors pose the question as to why the regime persists with the influx control system. The answer is that firstly, it is based on the supposition that, if the system were lifted, there would be a 'massive swamping' of the cities by migrating blacks (p.340-1) and this leads, secondly, to the fear, on the part of whites, of a political swamping. Basing their argument on a variety of projections, however, Giliomee and Schlemmer argue that the assumption of massive urbanisation is quite unwarranted.

Nonetheless, given its determination to control urban migration, the regime is forced to find ways of defusing the black opposition it stimulates.

The State's strategy, the editors suggest, is to try to co-opt a restricted number of black permanent urban dwellers (insiders). By granting them the first choice of urban jobs and some vested rights, the State hopes that they will see their interests as separable from those of new immigrants (outsiders), 'making them prepared to act as a buffer against both the impoverished masses and the revolutionaries.' (p.318) The aim is to drive a wedge between insiders and rural dwellers as well as rural migrants squatting in the peri-urban areas through providing the former with higher incomes, better housing and training.

Although friction has occurred between squatters (particularly the peri-urban influx) and 'township blacks', Giliomee and Schlemmer argue that this strategy cannot succeed for two reasons. Firstly, insofar as this strategy is based on encouraging the expansion of, and co-opting, the black middle class it is subject to a major obstacle — the weakness of that class.

Secondly, all differences between the various sections of the black people are subordinated to the common interest of overcoming the oppression and domination of apartheid. Thus, for example, squatters who cannot find homes will be pushed together with insiders who cannot afford homes and are subject to pass raids and coercive control. Again, the black middle class will not be able to escape from the townships. They will suffer the same humiliations of white dominated society and will be pushed together with other classes. Thus uprooted squatters and urban dwellers alike will unite:

“In every class and stratum — insiders, outsiders, students, criminals, and revolutionaries — there will be people prepared to radicalise a local issue to the limits.” (p321)

The effect of government policy will be that the black trade unions ‘will increasingly take the overall political framework into account’ (p321) and the black working class, not the middle class, will shape political organisation and strategy. The result, if present trends continue, will be large-scale unrest with adverse affects on economic growth and political stability.

Another Road

If this, and the even greater spectre of the overthrow of the free market system, is to be avoided then a different, reformist, strategy is necessary: one which will cope with the inevitable process of urbanisation without undermining the long run ‘collective stability and welfare of everyone’ (p.348) Such a strategy entails the abolition, not the reform, of the system of influx control and its replacement by a rational policy of orderly urbanisation arrived at through shared decision making.

That, however, Giliomee and Schlemmer argue, is a matter for the future since account must be taken of the hard reality of white fears of swamping. In the result they propose a mild tinkering with the influx system — a ‘reform’ which does not differ radically from recent changes introduced by the government, and which we know to be completely consistent with the continuation of the system. Their ‘solution’ to the fate of the black people and to the current crisis is summed up by them in the following passage:

‘In the face of this political reality, it may be inappropriate at this stage to expect a complete phasing out of the system of influx control. However, given the mix of costs and benefits, and since the movement of blacks to the cities under conditions of greater freedom would be in any case limited, adjustments to the policy to make it more flexible and attuned to the varying needs of individuals are surely the minimum which is required.’ (p.332)

Thus, trapped in its own logic, the liberal reformist position ends up with minor adjustments to the system which it rejects because it is oppressive and unjust.

Eric Shipton

A MIXED BAG

Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies, by Tom Lodge et al. Southern African Studies, Vol 4. (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1986).

The book under review is a collection of 8 papers — 2 deal with Namibia and Kenya — which “are inspired as much by the conflicts of South Africa’s contemporary history as they are by the topics and periods which formed their subjects.” Reviewing a book of this nature causes problems precisely because the political and ideological orientation of the authors is not the same and therefore the depth of analysis, presentation of the case and sheer weight of argumentation differ.

Helen Bradford in her paper *Class Contradictions and Class Alliances: The Social Nature of ICU Leadership 1924-1929* starts from the premise that after the Pact electoral victory of 1924, “petty bourgeois Africans began to replace working class ‘Coloureds’ as organisers” (p.49) and her article assumes the character of a long wail about “failures” and “mistakes” of the petty-bourgeois leadership of the ICU and by implication of the ANC of the time. The article is static, not dynamic, not dialectical and therefore not very useful to political activists, let alone present-day trade unionists.

This is more or less the tone of the other articles on *The Simplicity of the Native Mind: Black Passengers on the South African Railways in the early Twentieth Century* (Ronald Ellsworth) and *Politics, Ideology and the Invention of ‘Nguni’* (John Wright). There are exceptions. Mirjana Roth’s *Domination by Consent* (sic): *Elections under the Representation of Natives Act, 1937-1948* sees the elections as important because “they were the only elections ever held in South Africa on a national level in which blacks took part. And secondly, because the holding of free elections in a country which denied the electorate many of the other basic freedoms such as freedom of movement, of speech and of assembly was an anomaly in itself and ought to be examined for this reason.” (p.144). One cannot always agree with her interpretation and formulations, e.g. “...Congress was at all times reluctant to define its position in case this should imperil its always shaky facade of unity” (p.152). However she does make some interesting points:

“Kahn was the first communist member of the House of Assembly, chosen by the blacks to represent them. This was a development of importance in that there was no doubt that in one constituency where the electorate had been given a choice between a liberal, a member of the National Party and a member of the Communist Party, they chose the Communist Party member. However as has been shown in the case of the Transkei, in the absence of a Communist Party candidate a man with liberal sympathies was more likely to be chosen by black voters than one who was not a liberal” (p.159).

Colonialism of a Special Type

The most penetrating article in this booklet is the one by Raymond Suttner on *African Customary Law — Its Social and Ideological Function in South Africa*. Amongst all the authors he is the only one who situates his argument against the background of colonialism of a special type and the national oppression of the Africans.

“This paper seeks to demonstrate how the special court and legal system set up to deal with civil cases between Africans contributes ideologically, economically and socially to the national oppression of the African people” (p.119).

He goes on to say that in a class or class-based society, coercion may be used or held in reserve — it is preferable to the ruling classes to govern without the use of force or rather through ideology but “in a colonial-type society (where one encounters not only class exploitation but also national oppression, consequent on the denial of self-determination to the majority of the population) there is much more recourse to repression of the oppressed than ideological domination” (p.120). He analyses the racist interpretation of the law — one cannot be an accused under certain laws, unless one is Black and “Black law” is not synonymous with the original customary law.

He shows the connection between colonialism and the legal system in South Africa:

“The existence of a separate court and legal system to regulate civil relations between Africans is a specifically colonial phenomenon. Colonizers invariably declare their own law to be the ‘law of the land’. The law of native peoples has to be specially ‘recognised’. In the case of South Africa, the existence of legal and judicial dualism is merely an aspect of a wider bifurcation of state functions with separate state structures existing for white and black in education, politics and most other facets of their existence” (p.123).

And he draws the conclusion:

“The fundamental problems that Africans face in civil cases will remain unresolved, irrespective of whether the hierarchy of appeal is segregated or integrated... To respond adequately to the personal law needs of Africans one requires a mainly African bench — trained to respond more dynamically together with adequate provision of legal representation of all who require it. This cannot be realised in the present state structure” (p.127).

The most disappointing article is that by Tom Lodge *The Poqo Insurrection* which is supposed to have taken place in 1961-68. He writes:

“PAC insurgents were very much more numerous than the Umkhonto activists. Whilst the latter operated as an elite within the framework of a larger clandestine and sometimes less committed ‘support organisation’ the Poqo insurgency in certain localities attained the dimensions of a mass movement. Reaching the peak of its influence in 1963, the Poqo movement was still capable three years later of inspiring violent conspiracies... In terms of its geographical extensiveness, the

numbers involved and its time span, the Poqo conspiracies of 1962-68 represent the largest and most sustained African insurrectionary movement since the inception of modern African political organisations in South Africa" (p.179).

He goes on to say "neither the PAC nor the ANC had a particularly sincere concern for unity, not if this required making concessions to the other side" (p.184). "...in mid 1961 and early 1962 the PAC's leaders committed themselves to an insurrectionist strategy" (p.185). "Umkhonto was a much smaller organisation than Poqo..." (p.201).

Where does Tom Lodge get this information? By his own admission his two main sources are "the often grandiose claims made by the PAC leaders themselves and secondly emerging from court cases" (p.186). Not one of his 199 footnotes refers to an ANC source and yet the ANC is the one organisation which knows the PAC better than anyone in South Africa. ANC leaders lived with these characters in the same locations, grew up together with them, attended the same schools, political organisations etc. and yet Tom Lodge will not listen to their voice. Tom Lodge makes the mistake of identifying Poqo with PAC and conveniently 'forgets' that when the PAC was banned in 1960 it had been in existence for less than a year.

What is the cause of these wrong judgements? Tom Lodge himself gives the answer. In the introduction to this book he tells us:

"The academic examination of South African popular culture still takes place at a considerable social distance from its bearers and participants. This is not a unique problem... but in South Africa the chroniclers of popular history are additionally isolated from their subjects by barriers of race, language and culture, as well as those of class. Much still needs to be accomplished before those barriers can be overcome" (p.5).

It seems to me the best way to overcome problems is to get involved in the ongoing struggle so that one can start seeing problems from the point of view of the oppressed people themselves. Nothing short of this will solve the problems faced by the "chroniclers of popular history" including Tom Lodge.

Nyawuza

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION KILLS

The World of Nat Nakasa edited by Essop Patel, (Ravan Press, Johannesburg).

Nat Nakasa, journalist and writer, committed suicide in July, 1965, by throwing himself from the seventh floor of a building in New York. This book of his own writings and of the tributes paid to him should have provided some indication of the reasons for this seemingly inexplicable act, but nowhere do the reasons fully emerge. And perhaps no suicide can ever be explained.

Can Themba, Nadine Gordimer and Mongane Serote help to fill out the man who was Nat, but only in the tribute of Kathleen Conwell does an inkling emerge of what went wrong.

Nat, like all blacks living in South Africa, was a victim of apartheid. As a black writer and journalist, the paths to creativity were severely restricted; so much so that he suddenly decided he must leave South Africa. When he arrived in the United States, quite confident that the things he had only dreamed were possible for him inside South Africa would be the normal way of life for him in his new home, the dream eluded him. He discovered the truth about the racists who, without having racism legally entrenched, nevertheless carry out racist thoughts and actions to a degree which is as bad as blacks suffer inside South Africa. After his visit to the South, where this was doubly confirmed, the bubble finally burst and he felt he could no longer live with the terrible blight of racial discrimination. He was so unhappy he could no longer laugh and, as he said, if he could not laugh he could not write.

One can only feel regret at a valuable life lost in this way. There are so many who suffer from racism, from prejudice, from repression — not all can or wish to choose the same way out. It is necessary to change society so that all can live in peace and happiness, so that everyone can enjoy the good things of the world which are at present hogged by a small, selfish minority.

When one reads what Nat had to say, it is all the more difficult to accept that he is no longer putting pen to paper. His cameos of life in the townships, of the giving by most and of the taking by some, of the pinpricks and the deep wounds inflicted by apartheid, of the poverty, the lack of health services, the problems of education, housing, jobs and the scourge of the pass system — all his exposures are so deft and vivid, shot through sometimes with humour, sometimes with pathos, that one cannot but feel sad that it all came to an end in 1965, when Nat was only 28 years old.

B.S.

THE IMAGE OF THE PLO

Flashback Beirut 1982: by Abu Attayib, Commander of the PLO's Seventeenth Forces (Sabah Press, Cyprus 1986. Price £7.95.)

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, encouraged and backed to the hilt by US imperialism, was an outrageous violation of the territorial integrity and independence of a member of the United Nations. Fierce battles raged for months between the Lebanese patriotic forces and the PLO on the one side and the Israeli aggressors on the other.

For the defence of Beirut the joint Lebanese-Palestinian leadership had divided the city into seven sectors. The author of this book fought and commanded his troops in the third sector. Understandably therefore the author concentrates his attention on the sector he knows best.

In dealing with the war in Lebanon Colonel Abu Attayib gives an account of Israel's barbarous attacks on innocent Lebanese and Palestinian civilians. To achieve their objective of liquidating the PLO and reducing Lebanon to a puppet state the Israeli military machine indulged in indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas with cluster, phosphorus and napalm bombs. It also attempted to starve the population by cutting off supplies of food, water, electricity and medicines.

The Israelis had calculated on the war lasting 72 hours. In the event it lasted 90 days. On 6th June, 1982, 48,000 Israeli troops supported by 380 tanks, 1,600 armoured cars, 220 semi-armoured vehicles and 600 cannons entered Lebanon. By the first week of July their troop numbers had swelled to 170,000 (p.263).

Some elements of the right-wing Phalangists and of the Lebanese army supported the invasion. In fact according to Attayib the Lebanese troops guarding the international airport were instructed not to confront the Israeli army and even to provide assistance if requested. French colonialism has lumbered Lebanon with a divisive constitution which gives the Maronites — 25 per cent of the population — special political privileges, power and influence including the office of President. Over the years Lebanon came to occupy a privileged position in the Arab world with regard to banking services, freight forwarding, public relations and tourism. The Israeli invasion, internecine fighting between different Lebanese confessional groups and Lebanese chauvinist attacks on Palestinians have reduced parts of Beirut to rubble and severely damaged its special economic status.

In the book the author pays considerable attention to military matters. He gives detailed information about troop deployments, weapons used, battle-field tactics and strategies. Attayib points out that a vast quantity of the weapons used by the PLO came from the socialist countries. But the PLO was also capable of manufacturing its own arms and ammunition in secret locations in Lebanon. Reading this book one is impressed by the quality, battle experience, heroism and courage of the Palestinian resistance movement. In this respect the book would be of interest to South African freedom fighters, in particular to the soldiers of Umkhonto We Sizwe.

The manner in which the author deals with the Arab states reveals the divisions within the Arab world. Unfortunately the difference between Fatah led by Yasser Arafat and progressive states such as Syria and Libya have not yet been resolved. The meeting of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers earlier this year marked a historic advance in bringing about unity of the Palestinian resistance movement. It may also lead to a rapprochement between Arafat and Syria. The Palestinian Communist Party which has consistently fought for the unity of the Palestinian resistance movement played an important role in the negotiations leading to unity.

The book has a brief chapter on Yasser Arafat, affectionately known as Abu Ammar. Attayib feels that any person who is to lead the Palestinians "must possess exceptional abilities and have a thorough knowledge of the people. Arafat has these qualities." He goes on to add: "He (Arafat) understands history, he is a philosopher and he is conversant with the modern branches of science. He is an avid reader and follows world events closely." (pp.24/25). In other sections of the book Arafat is praised for possessing almost superhuman military qualifications. It is obvious that the author has the deepest respect and affection for Arafat, but in this book exaggerations abound and the hagiography is off-putting.

In the concluding section of the book Attayib singles out the following military facts and lessons learnt:

1. The ability of the leadership to maintain direct control throughout the battle and to maintain contact with all its forces despite the fact that their headquarters were bombed several times.
2. The ability to send in reinforcements with the minimum of delay to back up forces already in position.
3. The PLO's artillery strength and expert use of its guns, most of which were electronically operated.
4. The frequently demonstrated skills of the PLO's corps of engineers, whose expert planting of booby-trapped mines and setting up of successive barricades and fortifications so effectively impeded the enemy's advance in the battle of Beirut.

5. The high level of logistical support, the capacity to move supplies of ammunition and food to the forces when they were needed.
6. The efficiency of the Joint Forces' air defences and their relative success in preventing the enemy's aircraft from hitting their targets.
7. The effective role in the battle of the multiple rocket launcher (Stalin organ).

Whilst the book gives a graphic and informative description of the courage, determination and fighting qualities of the Palestinians it ignores the vital role played by the Lebanese patriotic forces. It is well known that fighters of the Lebanese Communist Party acquitted themselves with distinction in that war and are continuing to do so in battles with the Israeli occupation forces. Moreover it was the Lebanese patriotic forces that inflicted on the Reagan administration a humiliating military defeat.

Another weakness of the book is that the author gives the impression that US imperialism's role is that of an adjunct to Israeli aggression. He fails to bring out the anti-liberation, anti-communist, anti-soviet strategy of US imperialism in that region as in other parts of the world, including Southern Africa.

Following the war the PLO was forced to remove its troops and other personnel from Beirut thus leaving the Palestinian refugee camps at the mercy of a number of confessional and chauvinist groups. But whatever the difficulties and however long it takes, the Palestinians will one day have their own independent state.

A.M.

FILM REVIEW

CAPITALIST AND COMMUNIST ATTITUDES TO WAR

Come and See directed by Elem Klimov, 1985, USSR.
Platoon directed by Oliver Stone, 1986, USA.

Two films, one Soviet, one from the USA. A common theme: war. Each film a reflection of the culture of which it is a product. The contrast could not be more stark. *Come and See* is a call to humanity to look squarely at the barbarity

of fascist war and genocide, and to choose peace instead. *Platoon*, hailed by some as a welcome antidote to *Rambo*, does not even manage to be genuinely anti-war.

There is little to say about *Platoon*. The protagonist, Sheen, is a middle-class American who volunteers to fight in the Vietnam war. The film focuses on his moral dilemma: should he report a fellow officer who encourages 'free-for-all' massacring of Vietnamese villagers? Especially when this officer murders another officer who has declared his intention to institute disciplinary proceedings. Sheen resolves the dilemma by resorting to murder himself. The morality of the Americans being in Vietnam never crops up. War is bad only because it makes such monsters out of good American soldiers.

Not surprisingly, the film is racist: black American soldiers are portrayed as unreliable, slack and cowardly. As Sheen flies out of Vietnam at the end of the movie, his thoughts are that for those who have managed to survive Vietnam, it is necessary to seek for good in life. The need to oppose war, struggle for peace or — perish the thought — defend the right of the Vietnamese to self-determination are light years beyond his moral universe.

The juxtaposition of *Platoon* and *Come and See* provides a dramatic contrast of imperialist and socialist culture and values.

As a South African, I was chilled by the familiar images of fascism in *Come and See* — debauched Nazi soldiers indulging in an orgy of mass murder; indiscriminate machine-gunning of villagers; the burning down of a village hall with all the villages barricaded inside — all this to the accompaniment of music and speeches over the loudhailer about 'civilised Germany'. I was chilled because the world has experienced fascism and genocide which have been declared wars against humanity, but the imperialists continue to sustain fascism in our country and elsewhere in defiance of international law, using anti-Communism as their chief smokescreen.

As a child I was told all about the holocaust. Wrong, I was not told *all* about it. I was told about six million Jews exterminated. I was told about gas chambers and concentration camps for Jews. I had nightmares when my grandmother told me a story of a Jewish mother who strangled her baby so that its crying would not betray the hiding place of the group to the Gestapo; her hair turned white overnight. But no one told me then about 628 Byelorussian villages destroyed by the Nazis together with all the people in them. No one told me about 20 million Soviet lives lost in the war to defeat facism. No one mentioned the fascism in which I was living in South Africa.

In Klimov's film I saw it was the same fascism.

The main protagonist, Florya, is the vehicle through which we experience the horror of war for each and every ordinary human being. Through him we live the nightmare out and know that we must achieve peace — we must be partisan about peace just as we are partisan about fascism.

In the film, a contingent of partisans capture some of the Nazi officers and their collaborators shortly after the villages have been massacred. Some of the partisans came from that village. One of the collaborators tried to plead for mercy on the grounds that he was coerced. One of the Nazi officers claimed he and his fellow officer never harmed anyone. Florya, who survived the massacre, placed a can of petrol in front of the criminals and through clenched teeth told the partisans that the officer was the one who had told the villagers in the hall that those who had no children should come out.

Defending himself, this officer declared that he had given that command because the Russians were an inferior race who should be exterminated and therefore the children in particular must die. In the intense hatred which erupts as he speaks, the criminals are doused with petrol. But before the petrol can be ignited, a woman partisan opens fire on the prisoners. Other partisans follow suit and the Nazis are all shot dead. As the partisans depart, one of them symbolically drops his burning torch in a pool of water.

This film made me understand why communists are such consistent enemies of fascism everywhere in marked contrast to the vacillation and appeasement characteristic of the imperialists. After all, fascism is merely capitalist rule by means of brute force, the open expression of the anti-democratic essence of capitalism. In particular, I understand why the Soviet people have so unstintingly supported our liberation struggle over the decades. It is not just a matter of abstract principle — it is a concrete bond of shared experience.

While *Platoon's* spectacle of Hollywood horror evokes only disgust and revulsion, *Come and See* deepens our commitment to fighting fascism and war. Undeniably a harrowing film, yet its impact is inspirational.

M.L.



THE NECESSITY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION AND THE MYTH OF SOCIALISM NOW

From Moreku Gaitherule

Dear Editor,

As we advance towards seizure of power, interest among different social forces in our country is increasingly focussing on the question of the new society that should replace the present apartheid regime. The most commonly raised issue is whether we shouldn't move directly to socialism. The proponents of this argument claim that the stage of national liberation is not necessary.

This ultra-leftist view which proclaims itself Marxist fails to take into consideration the real situation in our country. Lenin wrote that "Marxism requires of us a strictly exact and objectively verifiable analysis of the relations of classes and concrete features peculiar to each historical situation. This requirement is absolutely essential for giving a scientific foundation to policy."

Unlike the ultra-leftist view of directly moving to socialism, the ANC's strategic goal of national liberation, which is accepted by the SACP as a minimum programme, is a scientifically founded policy which is objectively verifiable. The stage of national liberation is a need which, like all other needs, is created by certain inevitable demands of the South African situation.

Generally speaking the level of South Africa's economic development does provide a basis for the construction of socialism. But under present

conditions, once the question of the forces for socialist transformation is taken into account, such a possibility evaporates into a veritable El Dorado. "In assessing a given situation, a Marxist must proceed *NOT* from what is possible but from what is real," said Lenin.

Any talk of socialist revolution should immediately consider the forces for such a revolution. Such a force is not just a working class, but a highly conscious and united working class. In South Africa successive white governments have for decades consciously interfered with the maturing of these basic requirements. The creation of a chasm between black and white workers has been one of the important interferences.

Over the years these governments have succeeded in co-opting sections of classes among the whites by extending to them privileges, solely on the basis of racial identity. This 'choice' was not due to a mysterious irrational hatred towards the blacks. It was dictated by a certain objective reality which was laid down at the beginning of mining and later of manufacturing industry.

It would be nihilistic to wish away the white working class as an essential — though not most important — force without which the South African working class is incomplete as a force for socialist transformation. As long as the apartheid regime is in power it would be nonsensical to "... posit for South Africa a classical political confrontation between the working class (black and white) in alliance with the peasantry (black and white) against the capitalist class (black and white)". Such a unity can only be achieved under conditions of a transitional government of national democracy. (Joe Slovo, *No Middle Road*.)

Decisions on matters of strategy i.e. whether the struggle is for socialism or national liberation, cannot be motivated simply by factors which are considered by certain groupings to be expedient and/or desirable. There has to be a scientific class analysis which reveals the real line-ups, alliances, contradictions and roles in the social organisation of labour.

The co-option of the white workers has given rise to a white consciousness whose economic, political and social interests lie in the preservation rather than the destruction of the capitalist system. Such backwardness indicates a lack of consciousness to fight for socialism.

An analysis of the effects of this system on the consciousness of the blacks has resulted in an objective barrier for them to develop into a conscious force for socialist revolution now. This anomaly has led to the development of national consciousness. While the latter is an integral part of class consciousness it is not sufficient to guide black workers in the fight for socialism. This does not mean that socialist education must be postponed to a later

date. On the contrary. The fight for national liberation is a preparation for the fight for socialism. On liberation day the South African working class must be ready to continue with the struggle on the morrow to socialism. National liberation is not separate nor antagonistic to socialist revolution. Rather it is a way towards it.

National Liberation as a Stage

When talking about forces for socialist revolution in the South African situation, we refer to forces that are going to bring about national liberation and are shaped under capitalist conditions. These forces cannot immediately proceed to construct socialism. Time is needed during which these forces will be properly shaped. This period, while having distinct features of its own, is an organic part of the process towards socialism. This has happened in countries where socialism was a declared strategic goal, for example the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and the people's democracies in Eastern Europe. In countries where national liberation was the first step, such as Vietnam, a period of socialist orientation had to be undergone. South Africa especially needs such a rectification stage which will be characterised by an ideological conflagration to cleanse her of the scourge of racism.

Three centuries of uninterrupted oppression of our people has had adverse effects on both black and white. It has produced a subject people who are politically, socially and culturally (in the field of education) backward. The same applies to the oppressor nation. The mere acceptance of superiority on the basis of colour is itself a backwardness which has been shaped over a long period of time.

This cannot be rectified overnight. It will involve a systematic and conscious effort to uplift the oppressed majority and the same process to destroy the basis of white superiority. This will not be a smooth process and will require great efforts to eradicate the backwardness of the oppressed. It will doubtless have to defeat a determined counter-revolution which will be led by the most backward sections among the whites who will resist any change.

Those who state that the struggle in South Africa should be for socialism are floating in the air far above and detached from reality. If they persist in their theories they will only mislead the oppressed masses and ensure the continuation of capitalism because their reactionary stand will lead to the defeat of the revolution.

The ANC's strategy for national liberation is the only correct path dictated by the objective conditions in South Africa. It is not reformist or anti-socialist as the petty bourgeois claim. It is actually the only way to ensure that socialism will be built in our country.

STRUGGLE AGAINST BANTUSTANS

From A.M., Boputhatswana

Dear Editor,

The South African regime has divided itself and skilfully developed its repressive forces in the homelands where police and soldiers crush and crack down on opposition of every kind.

The homeland in which I live — Boputhatswana — has Mangope as its sellout with a history which dates back to 1959 when he organised the issuing of passes to women and the arrest of those who resisted this in Zeerust. The homelands puppets were visited by Mr Botha on the ID issue. Mangope has opposed this move and even stated he will never accept citizenship in his bantustan.

People are now losing employment as a result of this. From July 1, 1986 a South African-born person is treated in the same way as a person coming from Uganda!

People in Boputhatswana must take up this ID issue. They must demand the right to come together and exchange views. They must campaign against the so-called homeland independence. The people must test the truth of Mangope's pronouncements against racism, especially in education and the continued segregation of schools to which he has turned a blind eye.

Our comrades in the South African metropolitan areas are fighting for free and equal education. We must do the same in the bantustans. There is some relaxation in the homelands on this issue which is why more police and soldiers are deployed in the other areas.

The bantustan recognises only the boer holidays such as Kruger Day and Republic Day — the latter was boycotted on a big scale in 1961. We now have a Thanksgiving Day, but no recognition of June 16 or 26, or Dingaan's Day or Shaka Day. We are told these were Xhosas and Zulus, not Tswanas.

The regime is opposed to African unity. Their policies are aimed at driving us further apart. Because we are weakened inside the country by these divisions the regime is able to commit acts of incursion into neighbouring states.

By their actions the people of the homelands must prove the illegitimacy of the bantustans.

Long live the people's struggle!

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7.00-9.00 p.m. Monday-Saturday
7.00-8.00 Sunday

Radio Ethiopia

Shortwave 31mb, 9595 KHz

9.30-10.00 p.m. Daily

Radio Tanzania

Shortwave 31mb, 9750 KHz

8.15 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday
6.15 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

The above are South African times