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THE RIVONIA TRIAL *AFTER 25 YEARS*

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BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO NELSON MANDELA

The 70th birthday of Nelson Mandela on July 18 presents South Africa and the world with a challenge that cannot be ignored. It is simply intolerable that he should be forced for a single day longer to suffer constraints of any kind upon his liberty. If he is still in jail, the demand that he be released must be pressed with irresistible force. If he has been released under restrictions similar to those imposed on Govan Mbeki, the "Free Mandela" campaign must be continued, to include not only Mbeki but also all political prisoners suffering because of their opposition, in particular his fellow Rivonia trialists whose suffering and deprivation, as well as achievement in adversity, parallel his own. (See "Twenty-Five Years After Rivonia" on page 36)

The life of Nelson Mandela covers some of the most crucial years of struggle in the history of the South African resistance. Born in 1918 as a member of the Royal Tembu household, Mandela was from his earliest days steeped in the tradition and history of the African people, making inevitable the conflict arising from his personal rejection of white domination and his determination to pursue the path of national liberation. In his famous speech in the Rivonia trial on April 20, 1964, he rejected the state accusation that the struggle in South Africa was instigated by foreigners or communists and said:

> "I have done whatever I did, both as an individual and as a leader of my people, because of my experience in South Africa and my own proudly felt African background, and not because of what any outsider may have said.
>
> "In my youth in the Transkei I listened to the elders of my tribe telling stories of the old days. Amongst the tales they related to me were those of wars fought by our ancestors in defence of the fatherland....I hoped then that life might offer me the opportunity to serve my people and make my own humble contribution to their freedom struggle".

On the occasion of his 70th birthday it can be recorded that Nelson Mandela has devoted his whole life to the service of his people and never wavered in his determination to contribute to their freedom struggle. As early as his student years at Fort Hare he took part in student organisation and student protest, and for his pains was suspended from the university in 1940. In a way this was a blessing in disguise, for he moved on to Johannesburg, the political storm-centre of the country, where Walter Sisulu befriended and guided him at a critical stage in his career, setting his feet firmly on the road to liberation.

Nelson Mandela's subsequent career is well known. Always he has led from the front, winning the respect, trust and admiration of all who have worked with him. He was in the Youth League with Tambo and Sisulu, elected its national secretary in 1948 and its president in 1950. Elected to the ANC executive in 1949, he was appointed Volunteer-in-Chief during the 1952 Defiance Campaign and was amongst the first to go to jail. Neither bans under the Suppression of Communism Act nor immobilisation by the treason trial of 1956-61 could prevent him from exercising his leadership functions, and he was the star speaker at the All-in African Conference held in Maritzburg in March 1961 the moment his bans expired.

The All-in African Conference called on the government to convene a national convention of elected representatives of all adult men and women, on an equal basis, irrespective of race, colour or creed, to draw up a new constitution for South Africa. It is well to remember this today, when the likes of Botha and Thatcher accuse the ANC of being a "terrorist organisation". The

leadership of the African people, after 50 years of struggle, during which they had been treated with the utmost brutality by the regime, after the 1960 Sharpeville massacre, the state of emergency, the arrests and detentions, the mass deportations, the banning of the ANC itself — the African leadership nevertheless still resisted the call for armed struggle which was being raised on all sides and called for a national convention to be convened before May 31, the day on which Verwoerd planned to introduce his new republican constitution.

The Pietermaritzburg conference had appointed a National Action Council under Mandela's leadership to pursue the request for a national convention, and to organise a three-day strike and countrywide demonstrations around May 31 should the request be rejected. Not only was the call for a national convention ignored by Verwoerd; the three-day strike met with savage repression and a warrant was issued for Mandela's arrest. This was the last straw that broke the camel's back. On June 26, South African Freedom Day, Nelson Mandela announced that he would not surrender to the police but would continue to lead the struggle from underground. His words then have been the inspiration of revolutionaries in the ensuing decades and still serve as a call to battle:

> "I have chosen this latter course (not to surrender to the police — ed.) which is more difficult and which entails more risk and hardship than sitting in jail. I have had to separate myself from my dear wife and children, from my mother and sisters, to live as an outlaw in my own land. I have had to close my business (as a lawyer in partnership with Oliver Tambo — ed.) to abandon my profession, and live in poverty and misery, as many of my people are doing.
>
> "I will continue to act as the spokesman of the National Action Council during the phase that is unfolding and in the tough struggles that lie ahead. I shall fight the Government side by side with you, inch by inch, and mile by mile, until victory is won."

Placing the issue squarely before the South African people, he went on:

> "What are you going to do? Will you come along with us, or are you going to cooperate with the Government in its efforts to suppress the claims and aspirations of your own people? Or are you going to remain silent and neutral in a matter of life and death to my people, to our people? For my own part I have made my choice. I will not leave South Africa, nor will I surrender. Only through hardship, sacrifice and militant action can freedom be won. The struggle is my life. I will continue fighting for freedom until the end of my days".

Mandela had already, during the 1950s, been associated with the launching of the M-Plan to mobilise and organise the masses at grassroots level — a plan which has been implemented over the years almost by a process of osmosis and which has shown its potential with the development of street and area committees in the recent period of upsurge and mass resistance. After his Freedom Day statement in 1961 Nelson Mandela worked with others in the preparation of the launching of Umkhonto we Sizwe on December 16, 1961. The manifesto issued by MK undoubtedly reflected Mandela's sentiments when it declared:

> "The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom".

Sentenced to life imprisonment at the end of the Rivonia trial, Nelson Mandela has continued uninterruptedly with his life's work of leading and organising his people. In many ways his stature and authority have grown with the years, and there is no doubt that his influence has spread world-wide despite all the efforts of the South African security to contain it. He has triumphantly fulfilled his commitment to fight the Government side by side with his people, inch by inch, mile by mile, until victory is won. The courage he has displayed, his dignified and statesmanlike behaviour in court and prison, the masterly statements of policy he has issued from time to time, have won the admiration of the world. Honours have been showered on him as the representative of a people fighting for a just cause.

The regime's timorous behaviour towards Mandela and the other political prisoners is a reflection of the prisoners' own achievement, the advance of the movement as a whole, and the regime's failure and insecurity. Because of the odium created by the continued imprisonment of Mandela, Botha would dearly like to see him free and no longer the focus of world complaint, On the other hand, Botha is fearful that he would not be able to handle the crisis that might arise if Mandela were released to his people and once more able to play an active part in day-to-day politics. Opinion polls have shown again and again that Nelson Mandela is the most popular person in South Africa today. His release might provoke an explosion — of support from the African people and all progressives, and of anger from the likes of the Conservative Party and the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging. So Botha takes refuge behind the excuse that Mandela must renounce violence before he can be released, and thus paints himself into a corner from which there is no easy escape.

When the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948, there were a number of right-wing extremists still serving prison sentences for offences committed during the war: Robey Leibbrandt, who had been sent into South Africa by the Nazis to organise a fifth column; Visser and Van Blerk, two members of the Stormjaers organisation who had been convicted of a bomb attack on the Benoni Post Office in which an innocent bystander had been killed; and Holm, Strauss and Pienaar who had committed treason in Germany. All were immediately released by Minister of Justice C.R. Swart (later President of the Republic), who said it was necessary that the wounds created by the war should be healed.

President Botha no doubt remembers all this, because he played an active, though safe, part in the anti-war movement of the time. He will also remember the defence of the wartime traitors proffered by Ossewa Brandwag leader Van Rensburg:

> "They voiced the protest of the Nationalist Afrikaner element, which felt that it was being discriminated against and being trodden under in its own fatherland".

The Afrikaners may have had grievances, some of them longstanding. But they also had the vote, and through its use eventually came to power. The African people, who comprise the majority in South Africa, have no such remedy to hand, and are far more discriminated against and trodden under than the Afrikaners ever were. The wounds inflicted on the African people are far deeper and more gruesome than any suffered or imagined by the Afrikaners.

Leibbrandt and his fellow-prisoners had been in jail for only a few years when they were released to "heal the wounds created by the war". By contrast, this is the 26th year of Mandela's incarceration. Turning 70 this year, he was only 44 and in the prime of life when he was arrested in Natal. The longer he and the other political prisoners remain in jail, the deeper the wounds the regime is inflicting on its opponents and the longer they will take to heal.

In the interests of harmonious race relations, in the interests of peace, all progressive forces in South Africa and the world have a duty to take action to ensure that Mandela's continued incarceration is brought to an end immediately. This stain on the conscience of all humanity must be wiped out once and for all.

TWIN EVILS OF ZIONISM AND APARTHEID

When, some years ago, the United Nations bracketed Zionism with apartheid as crimes against humanity, there was a howl of protest from Israel and its friends and allies who insisted that there was no comparison. Recent events, however, graphically underline the essential similarity between the two regimes. Both exist on the basis of the theft of land from the indigenous peoples, who are in consequence placed in a position of dependence and inferiority and denied the basic right of self determination. Both follow domestic policies based on race discrimination and oppression in the interests of the colonising elite. Both follow policies of aggression against neighbouring states in the interests of the preservation of capitalism and imperialism. Both are protected against the indignation of the rest of the world by the support of their western allies, in particular the United States.

And both regimes are racist to the core. Nobody who has seen the television pictures of the Israeli operations in the occupied West Bank and Gaza territories can doubt this. Palestinians armed only with sticks and stones — men, women and children — are hunted down like animals, shot, gassed, whipped and maimed by the occupying troops because they dare to demonstrate in support of their demand for national liberation and the establishment of their own state. Hundreds of Palestinians were killed and thousands mutilated in the first months of this year and the savagery continues without let as the regime strives desperately to bludgeon its opponents into submission. Abroad the Israeli security services, just like the South Africans, engage in a programme of selective assassination of PLO activists.

The increasing resort to brutal terror by Israel and South Africa flows directly from their inability or unwillingness to concede to the people their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in a state of their own choosing. Amidst all the violence and bloodshed in both countries, the ruling regimes have failed to come forward with a single constructive proposal or offer any concession which might open the way to peace. Both have called only for the intensification of repression, more murders, detentions and deportations, more death squads and assassinations as a means of restoring "law and order".

Perhaps what is most striking is that both regimes are failing in their objective to break the spirit of resistance amongst the oppressed peoples. Despite declarations of states of emergency and curfews, mass arrests and detentions without trial, despite the killings and the beatings, the people fight back, determined to win their freedom. By strange coincidence, general strikes were called in both regions in the month of March — in the Israeli occupied

territories on March 14, and in South Africa on March 21, Sharpeville Day. In both cases the strikes were overwhelmingly successful; the people stayed at home, shops were shut and the authorities were left in no doubt that their policies were unacceptable.

Above all the people were demonstrating that they had made enormous advances in their capacity to mobilise and organise their forces for continued struggle. The authorities had gone to great lengths to prevent these strikes. The Israeli government had cut fuel supplies, banned incoming and outgoing telephone calls, prohibited Palestinians from entering or leaving the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, raided homes and detained activists. Yet the strike was solid.

In South Africa the Botha regime had also gone to great lengths to suppress opposition. On February 24 it banned the United Democratic Front and 16 other organisations from doing anything except keep books and sign cheques and placed crippling restrictions on the Congress of South African Trade Unions. Bans were also imposed on most leading figures in the UDF who were not already in detention. In March the *New Nation* was banned under the emergency regulations, and in May *South* was likewise banned. Notice has been served on other members of the alternative press that a similar fate awaits them if they do not toe the line.

Under the emergency regulations it was impossible to hold public meetings or rallies to prepare for the March 21 strike, nor could leaflets or pamphlets be circulated legally by any of the banned organisations or individuals. Nevertheless, mass distribution of propaganda took place illegally, under the noses of the police and their informers, and on March 21 the strike was solid in all the main centres, some areas registering a 90 per cent abstention.

Nowhere are the repressive intentions of the Botha regime revealed so clearly as in the sphere of media control. The freedom of the media in South Africa today is restricted by over 100 laws plus the emergency regulations. An editor knows that if he criticises the regime he does so at his peril.

From the time of the first emergency in South Africa in 1985 journalists have been prohibited from filming any public disturbance, strike or boycott, or any damage to property, or any assault or killing, or any member of the security services engaged in any activity relating to the termination of the state of emergency. Since then visual evidence of military and police brutality in South Africa, the shootings, gassings and whippings of demonstrators, Trojan Horse killings of women and children, have been wiped off the TV screens of the world.

A study done by the Canadian Department of External Affairs has found that United States network airtime on South Africa had declined by about two

thirds following the tightening of media restrictions. At the same time, the survey found "a levelling off and even a decrease in the American public's understanding of the issues in South Africa". (*West Africa* magazine, London, March 28, 1988.)

Taking a leaf out of South Africa's book, the Israeli government has also taken steps to restrict media coverage of events in the occupied territories following the widespread horror evoked throughout the world by the TV pictures of Israeli soldiers coldbloodedly breaking the bones of young Palestinian stone-throwers. And the Israelis have also taken to the course of banning opposition newspapers circulating in the occupied territories.

Both Israel and South Africa justify their suppression of democratic rights on the grounds that they are defending themselves against "Communist aggression", preserving their regions in the western orbit. True, the Communist Parties of Palestine, Israel and South Africa are in the front line of struggle, but they fight, not to impose, but to free their countries from foreign domination, and they include in their Party ranks and leadership representatives of all sections of their population without distinctions of race or colour.

In banning *New Nation* and *South* the South African regime alleged that they identified themselves "absolutely" with the ANC and communism, though it made no attempt to prove this ridiculous assertion in a court of law. Similarly President P.W. Botha maintained that the banning of the UDF, COSATU and the other organisations was "not to oppress people but to prevent people from being oppressed by a communist dictatorship".

President Botha should ask himself why, 38 years after the passage of the Suppression of Communism Act through his Parliament, and all the murders and detentions of the ensuing years, support for the Communist Party and opposition to his regime are now running at higher levels than ever before in our history.

P.W. Botha, whose Nationalist Party hoped for a Hitler victory in the second world war, may think that a fascist dictatorship is the best defence against "communist subversion". He has evidently learnt nothing from history. The multitude of repressive laws introduced by the Nationalist regime since it came to power in 1948, the banning of the Communist Party and the ANC, the suppression of newspapers, the arrests and detentions, the death squads and vigilantes have not crushed the resistance of the people, nor even given the white population a greater sense of security, as the recent by-election defeats of Nationalist candidates have proved.

The bankruptcy of the regime was thoroughly exposed in President Botha's speech at the opening of the 1988 Parliament, which contained no reference to the "unrest situation" and did not advance a single proposal for ending the disastrous state of emergency. He appears to be pinning all his hopes on the local elections scheduled for October which he believes will produce a crop of collaborators in the African townships and the Coloured and Indian ghettoes who will sanction the introduction of his National Council and make his tricameral parliament work.

It must be one of the main tasks of the democratic movement in South Africa to frustrate Botha's ambitions. The October elections must be nullified by a massive boycott, just as they were in 1983, when Soweto, for example, registered a poll of only 10 per cent, and the councillors who were "elected" were unable to enjoy any legitimacy in the eyes of the population.

During this year's session of Parliament, the Nationalist Government introduced a piece of legislation called the Promotion of Orderly Internal Politics Bill. It was not aimed, as its name might lead one to expect, at extending the franchise or in some other way removing the grievances of the people, but at preventing the foreign funding of internal anti-apartheid organisations.

Orderly internal politics cannot be promoted by repression but only by extending full democratic rights to all sections of the people. History will prove that to Botha — and the Israeli government — the hard way.

THE ANSWER TO BOTHA'S TERRORISM

On March 28 a South African death squad attacked a house in Gaborone, capital of Botswana, killing four people, including three Batswana women, the fourth being a male South African refugee. After killing their victims, the raiders mutilated their bodies and burnt them beyond recognition.

The following day Dulcie September, the ANC's chief representative in France, Switzerland and Luxembourg, was murdered at the door of her Paris office by an unknown assassin. And a few days later Albie Sachs, well-known author and ANC activist, was gravely injured by a car bomb outside his apartment in Maputo.

In Brussels on March 28 a 40lb bomb was discovered outside the offices of the ANC's chief representative to the Benelux countries, Godfrey Motsepe. This was the second time in a few weeks that Motsepe had been the target of attack. In February he was slightly injured when shots were fired at him in his Brussels office.

These are not the first, and will not be the last, members of the liberation movement to be targeted by the regime in foreign lands. We recall the names of Joe Gqabi, Ruth First, Jeanette Schoon and her 7-year old daughter Katryn, Vernon Nkadimeng, Cassius Make, Paul Dikeledi and many, many others. We recall also the plot to kidnap ANC members uncovered in London last year.

The Pretoria regime openly claimed responsibility for the Botswana raid, but pretended ignorance of all the other incidents. Foreign Minister Botha said the killing of Dulcie September and the bomb attack on Albie Sachs were the result of internal ANC quarrels.

It is significant that precisely the same excuse was advanced by the Israelis when they denied responsibility for the assassination of Abu Jihad in Tunis last April.

Clearly the apartheid regime has instructed its security services to step up the attack on the ANC abroad. "We will not talk to the ANC. We will fight them", said President Botha last year. And on February 19 this year the Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, said: "Wherever the ANC is, we will eliminate it".

It is not a sign of strength, but of weakness, that the regime has to resort to such appalling and violent tactics to deal with its opponents. The assassination of ANC activists abroad is paralleled at home by the operations of the death squads and vigilantes, which are enabled, with police protection, to achieve by terror what is out of the reach of the normal agencies of "law and order" because of the very depth of popular opposition to apartheid.

If the apartheid regime had the support of the majority of the people of South Africa, it would not need to kill, mutilate and destroy to achieve its objectives. It is precisely because it represents only about 5 per cent of the total population that, unable to win consensus, it has to rely on force to impose its policies on an unwilling people.

In the face of the murderous assault launched by the regime, there is an urgent need for the liberation movement to take all possible measures for the protection of its leaders and activists. But no security system is foolproof, and it has to be recognised that the only effective answer to state terrorism must be furnished in the political sphere. When the regime realises that terror is counterproductive it will have to give it up.

★ For every cadre struck down by Botha's assassins, ten must come forward to take his/her place.

★ In the countries where the ANC is represented, public opinion must be roused to ensure that South Africa is warned off before its agents can strike

again. Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl and company must be compelled to take action against South Africa by way of sanctions, the closing down of embassies etc. in response to any act of terrorism perpetrated on their soil.

★ Inside South Africa itself the continuing campaign of state terror must be answered by mobilisation of the people for self-defence and greatly intensified organisation, legal and illegal, to promote the objectives of the liberation movement.

An enhanced level of activity by Umkhonto we Sizwe is obviously called for.

Lenin's Warning

The most effective response to state terrorism is mass action. At the beginning of this century Lenin drafted a resolution for presentation to the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in 1903 which read as follows:

> "The Congress decisively rejects terrorism, i.e. the system of individual political assassinations, as being a method of political struggle which is most inexpedient at the present time, diverting the best forces from the urgent and imperatively necessary work of organisation and agitation, destroying contact between the revolutionaries and the masses of the revolutionary classes of the population, and spreading both among the revolutionaries themselves and the population in general utterly distorted ideas of the aims and methods of struggle against the autocracy." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p.474.)

The congress did not reach this point in its agenda, but it is clear that the sentiment contained in the resolution became settled policy amongst Russian Communists. Russian history was full of attempts by anarchists, socialist-revolutionaries and other groups and individuals to kill the Tsar and his police chiefs and officials. Sometimes they succeeded, sometimes not, but always, Lenin declared, they set the movement back. In "New Events and Old Questions", written in 1902, Lenin replied to Socialist-Revolutionary arguments that acts of individual terror could "rouse" and "stimulate" the masses. Referring to a strike by 30,000 workers in Rostov-on-Don, he said:

> "We believe that even a hundred regicides can never produce so stimulating and educational an effect as this participation of tens of thousands of working people in meetings where their vital interests and the links between politics and these interests are discussed, as this participation in struggle really *rouses* ever new and 'untapped' sections of the proletariat to greater political consciousness, to a broader revolutionary struggle". (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p.280.)

Lenin was not opposed to the use of violence by revolutionaries but always insisted that revolutionary violence was quite different from the individual terrorism advocated by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and others. In "Revolutionary Adventurism" (1902) he wrote:

> "The Social-Democrats (Communists — ed.) will always warn against adventurism and ruthlessly expose illusions which inevitably end in complete disappointment. We must bear in mind that a revolutionary party is worthy of its name only when it guides *in deed* the movement of a revolutionary class."

Recalling the support which the Social-Democrats had given to demonstrating students on another occasion, Lenin pointed out:

> "We began to call on the workers to come to the aid of the students... When the demonstrations became consolidated, we began to call for their organisation and for the arming of the masses, and put forward the task of preparing a popular uprising. Without in the least denying violence and terrorism in principle, we demanded work for the preparation of such forms of violence as were calculated to bring about the direct participation of the masses and which guaranteed that participation". (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p.194-5.)

Only the direct participation and involvement of the masses will succeed in bringing about the overthrow of the apartheid regime and the transformation of South Africa into a land where all can live together in peace and freedom. In a mood of anger or revenge provoked by apartheid outrages, some may seek satisfaction through an isolated act of violence, but no single bomb or bullet will turn the tide of history and bring us to our goal. Only persistent and consistent propaganda and organisation can create the political consciousness and organisational strength required to bring to a successful conclusion the social revolution in whose cause so many people's heroes have given their lives.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFGHAN REVOLUTION

The revolution which took place in Afghanistan on April 27, 1978, was a revolution undertaken by an oppressed people suffering under a system of feudal reaction which was no longer tolerable. The revolution was carried out under the leadership of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in the interests of the workers and peasants, the progressive clergy and intellectuals, the traders and artisans who comprised the overwhelming bulk of the

population. It was a revolution aimed at destroying the power and privilege of a handful of reactionary despots and opening the road to democracy and social progress in which all could share on a basis of equality.

At the time of the revolution Afghanistan had a population of about 16 million people, with agriculture providing the main source of wealth and employment in the economy. But although the peasants constituted 85% of the population, most of them had little or no land, 70 per cent of the land being in the hands of a tiny clique of 50,000 feudal landlords. Industry contributed only about 3% to the gross national product. Living standards were amongst the lowest in the world, Afghanistan being placed 108th among the 129 least developed countries. In 1975 per capita national income was only 164 dollars a year. 90 per cent of the population were illiterate, and about 2.5 million were nomads, wandering about from place to place. Health and educational facilities were minimal.

Things began to change after the revolution. About 1 million hectares of land have been distributed among the landless and poorer peasantry, and the debts which had been accumulated by the peasantry were remitted by the people's government. Co-operatives and state farms were instituted on a limited basis. Measures were adopted to ease the supply of seeds, credits and fertilisers to the peasantry. A new land law was passed in 1987 in terms of which it was specified that the plots of land received by the landless peasants would become their property only if they cultivated it.

One mentions this point because it is necessary to stress that the basis does not yet exist for the establishment of socialism in Afghanistan. Democracy and social progress are the items at the head of the agenda, not socialism or communism, for which neither the economy nor the people are ready. What took place on April 27, 1978, was a national-democratic, not a communist revolution.

In the process of removing the remnants of feudalism, the revolutionary government made substantial advances in developing the economy. In addition to the agricultural reform, production was boosted in industry, transport, housing construction, and the current five year plan up to March 1991 provides for an increase of no less than 25 per cent in the national income. There have also been great advances in the social sphere. In the health sector the number of doctors has increased by 45 per cent since the revolution and the number of polyclinics and hospitals by 32 per cent. Free medical care is available to everybody. The revolutionary government instituted free and compulsory primary education and in the first months, between May and July 1978, opened up 400 new schools. A literacy campaign was launched which has achieved impressive results. The first trade unions were set up.

The achievements of the Afghan revolution would have been far greater were it not for the attempts made by the local forces of counter-revolution, aided by the imperialists, to turn the clock back. Almost immediately after it was set up, the revolutionary government was confronted by domestic and foreign reaction. The big feudal landlords bitterly opposed the land reform; international capitalism feared that the revolutionary impulse might spread to neighbouring countries. The opposition forces resorted to sabotage and terror tactics with the open encouragement and assistance particularly of Pakistan and the United States.

In December 1978 the revolutionary government signed a treaty of peace and friendship with the Soviet Union which included a provision on mutual assistance in the case of aggression. This treaty was invoked one year later when in December 1979 the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan approached the USSR with the request that it give urgent political, moral and economic aid, including military aid.

In the ensuing years the Soviet Union has been providing all-round assistance to the Afghan revolution. It has been a difficult task, complicated by the fact that in the early period of the revolution the People's Democratic Party under the leadership of Hafizullah Amin followed a sectarian and repressive course which alienated large sections of the population. But in the recent period the PDPA under the leadership of Najibullah, President of the Republic, has followed a policy of national reconciliation which has met with a widespread favourable response both at home and abroad.

In 1987 a new constitution was introduced providing for political pluralism, a mixed economy and a non-aligned position in international affairs. Under the provisions of the constitution a national front has been set up in which the People's Democratic Party has been joined by a number of other parties. President Najibullah has repeatedly appealed to the opposition to join the PDPA in a coalition government.

The April Agreement

All the conditions exist for the ending of all conflict in and around Afghanistan and for the return of the refugees from Pakistan and Iran. On April 14, after six years of negotiation under the auspices of the United Nations, an agreement was reached between Afghanistan and Pakistan which opens the road to peace.

The bourgeois press has interpreted this agreement as "capitulation" by the Soviet Union and a victory for the terrorists because Soviet troops are to be withdrawn from Afghanistan. But a study of the agreement will show that its true meaning is quite different.

It must be stressed that the agreement is between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both sides undertake to refrain from any act of aggression against the other, and not to allow any training, equipping or transit of any mercenaries, terrorist groups, saboteurs or subversive agents from their territory directed against the territory of the other party.

Afghanistan has never undertaken such activities against Pakistan, whereas most of the terrorists operating against the Republic of Afghanistan have been based in and supplied from Pakistan. In terms of the Geneva agreement, all these operations from Pakistan must now cease.

If this agreement is carried out to the letter, and all foreign interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan is ended, it is clear that the terrorists, deprived of their supply of Blowpipes, Stingers and other weapons, will be unable to carry on fighting for long. And it is precisely because this vital undertaking has been made by Pakistan that the Soviet Union has decided that it can withdraw its forces from Afghanistan.

In his keynote statement made on February 8, 1988, President Najibullah, referring to the proposed withdrawal of Soviet troops, said:

> "All patriotic Afghans are duty bound to express their gratitude to the brave sons of the Soviet Union, to those messengers of peace, justice and progress, who in destiny-making moments, devoted their lives and all possibilities for defending the freedom, independence and territorial integrity of our country. No country and people in history have joined hands in co-operation with our people in hard days as the Soviet Union and its people have done."

The United States and the Soviet Union have joined together in issuing a declaration of international guarantee in connection with the Afghanistan-Pakistan agreement, both undertaking to refrain from interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and Pakistan and to respect the commitments contained in the agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The ink had scarcely dried on the Geneva agreement when the United States issued a statement to the UN Secretary General reserving its right to continue to supply arms to the terrorists for as long as the Soviet Union continued to supply the Afghanistan government with military supplies. The US calls this "symmetry".

There is no "symmetry" about this at all. It might be called "symmetry" if the United States were also to send military supplies to the government of Afghanistan, or the Soviet Union were to supply anti-Zia guerrilla bands in Pakistan with AK-47s and missiles. But there is nothing in the Geneva agreement prohibiting the Soviet Union from carrying out its obligations towards Afghanistan in terms of the 1978 military agreement.

On the other hand there is no way the United States can continue to send supplies to the terrorists without violating the Geneva agreement, because those supplies will have to go through Pakistan. And Zia himself says he is going to continue to support the terrorists, though in the same breath he pledges to honour the agreement. His explanation is that the Pakistan-Afghanistan border is very long and he can't patrol all of it!

It is clear that the United States and Pakistan are preparing to sabotage the Geneva agreement and block the road to peace in the region of Afghanistan. World progressive forces must take action to see that the Geneva agreement is carried out to the letter, all fighting stops and Afghanistan is given the opportunity, after long and bitter years of struggle, to proceed on the road of reconstruction and development, democracy and freedom that was opened up by the April 27 revolution of 1978.

HEROINES OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

'It is impossible to list them all, and how many remain nameless? The heroines of the October Revolution were a whole army, and although their names may be forgotten, their selflessness lives on in the very victory of that revolution, in all the gains and achievements now enjoyed by working women in the Soviet Union.

'It is a clear and indisputable fact, without the participation of women, the October Revolution could not have brought the Red Flag to victory.

'Glory to the working women who marched under that Red Banner during the October Revolution. Glory to the October Revolution that liberated women!'

Alexandra Kollontai

ON WORKERISM, SOCIALISM AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY

A contribution to the debate on stages of the revolution

by Toussaint

"We have set the theme for this Congress — 1987: the Mineworkers take Control — in the firm belief that when mineworkers, and for that matter the South African working class take control of their lives at all levels, we will be able to solve the problems facing this country of ours . . . We wish to control our lives on every front. To start this process is to lay the foundations of a new democratic order . . . Either negotiations start with the NUM to begin the process of dismantling the migratory labour system and establish workers' control of the hostels, or the mineworkers seize control." — James Motlatsi, President of the National Union of Mineworkers. 1987.

Towards Workers' Control?

Mineworkers have always blazed the trails of militant action in South Africa, as befits the largest industrial workforce in the largest single industry. It was so with the white miners in the days of their class militancy in 1913 and in 1922. It has been so with the black miners in their turn, in 1946 and 1986. So too today, in the great debates which rage in the ranks of the South African working class and black liberation movements. Motlatsi's proposition of 'workers' control' burst like a fire-cracker on the political scene.

New? Well perhaps not altogether new. Workers' control, as an idea, has been around in the workers' movement for a long time. Around the turn of the century it was a central idea of many trade-union federations in Europe and America, notably the "wobblies" of the American IWW. Even in South Africa it had its formidable proponents, including the grand old man of white trade-unionism, W.H. Bill Andrews. In 1919, on Andrews' advice, striking white municipal engineers and tramwaymen in Johannesburg set up their own "Board of Control" and ran the services themselves until the municipal council capitulated to their demands, the so-called 'Johannesburg Soviet.' And soon after in Durban, a similar "Soviet" of striking municipal skilled workers won its strike by taking "control".

Control, then, is not a new idea. And yet it must have appeared as dramatically startling to the Witwatersrand mineworkers to whom Motlatsi first articulated it. They would appear to have received it as an interesting, militant proposition for dealing with the running sore of compound labour on the mines, and largely passed it over without much consideration as a proposal for a fundamental tactic of the working class in the present South African struggle. Fierce debate on tactics, strategies, long-term and short-term aims has been proceeding in the ranks of the working class and the liberation movements for some years. Positions have been taken up by fontending currents of opinion; and as time goes on those positions become rigid, as though set in slowly drying concrete. It often takes something like Motlatsi's dramatic proposition, thrown suddenly into the congealing mix, to force all opinions to be considered again, from a new starting point.

Theory and Practice

Consider the concept of "workers' control". It cuts sharply across the settled position in the debate between what have come to be known as the "workerists" and the "charterists" or "populists". It takes the debate beyond the arena of "theory", and places before the working class a concrete programme for immediate action. It has the unmistakable merit of being

clear, easy to understand, simple in conception.

But is it realistic? Is it feasible? Can it be achieved? The 'workerist vs populist' debate has to shift the established ground of disputation and reckon with these new, seemingly simple and direct problems. The established ground is well ploughed over: can the working class 'go it alone' to reshape the whole of society on a new basis? Can the trade unions at the shop floor serve as their vehicle in this mission? Is nationalism a distraction from the 'pure' class aims of the working people? And does the national liberation movement therefore not divert the class from its own aims, and sink them in some 'national' struggle for the victory of a mixed alliance of classes? Is the struggle really, in the first place, aimed at 'national liberation'? Or at socialism? And so on. Motlatsi moves the debate away from the theoretical, and focuses it sharply on practical and immediate action.

From Compound to Industry

At the forefront of Comrade Motlatsi's proposal to the Union conference was the matter of compound conditions. His starting point was that control — that is management and administration — of the compounds should be radically improved by way of negotiation between workers and management, or the workers should take over control of the compounds. From this starting point, he developed a general prospect of the extension of workers' control to the industry as a whole, and then — through a spread to other industries — the vision of the workers reshaping society as a whole in a new and better way.

The vision of a workers' controlled social order may be revolutionary as well as visionary; but there is nothing terribly revolutionary in the idea that management and control of compounds might be taken over by the mine workers themselves. It can be argued — and indeed is argued by the mining companies and their political spokespeople — that the mining industry in South Africa cannot survive without the continuation of migratory and contract labour. Though that argument is wholly untenable and unacceptable, it is not necessary here to debate it. What does go almost without saying is that direct company control of the daily management and administration of the compounds themselves is *not* an essential and necessary part of mining's continued profitability.

Mining — and for that matter even the migratory system of labour — is surely totally compatible with a more popular form of administration of the compounds than that developed by several generations of mining companies and their compound managers. The mining companies have clung fiercely

to their harshly authoritarian apparatus; they have refused every demand to devolve any part of management's sole control over conditions of compound life or even catering to anyone; they have upheld the totalitarian regime of compound managers' absolutism against all protest and every proposal for democratisation; they have called in their private and state police against every direct action of the workers to remedy grievances, rather than enter into negotiations which might dilute their dictatorial control over the compounds.

Perhaps the mining companies are persuaded that once they concede anything — anything at all in the closed world of South African mining discipline — the whole structure will erode. They fear that to devolve any particle of control anywhere, even in such areas as off-duty housing, recreation or catering, will commence a slide to the avalanche which brings the whole edifice of migratory labour, colour bars and race discriminations crashing into the abyss. Perhaps. But whatever terrors such devolution of authority may have for them, looked at rationally there is little reason why the workers should not control their own compounds. Rational employers, under pressure would negotiate a transfer of rights from compound managers to workers. Irrational employers — or those so steeped in the time encrusted practices of baasskap as to be unable to break loose — will resist to the end every negotiating opportunity, until ultimately the power of decision will be taken from them in struggle. Workers' control of the compounds *is* possible.

It is also realistic. Whatever problems might have faced workers' attempts to manage compound life in times past, when most mineworkers were undergoing their first experience of urban and industrial conditions of life, no such problems of unfamiliarity with the urban or industrial scene apply today. Today's miners — and their union — have shown themselves capable of far more complicated undertakings than running a compound. They have mastered the far more complex matter of building and running a trade union in the very centre of the minefield of South Africa's race and class confrontations; they have mastered the problems of uniting thousands of people despite their total diversity of cultural background, language and even national allegiance; they have overcome all the divide-and-rule practices of the state and the companies, all the legal obstacles thrown up at every turn by state and company laws, regulations, and strong-arm squads. The existence, strength and prestige of the Mineworkers' Union itself is proof — if proof were needed — that today's miners are more than capable of the comparatively simple tasks of managing their own accommodation,

recreation and catering services even within the compounds. "Workers' control" is the demand that they should be allowed to do so. The call for them to "seize control" should the companies fail to give them that right is a radical call for workers to raise their eyes from the mundane round of daily grievances and protests, and to consider constructing their future for themselves. Of such challenging calls, revolutionary movements are made.

From Industry to Society?

It is not intended here to suggest either that the mine-owners will concede control over the compounds without a struggle, or that the workers can expect to take over such control through negotiation without recourse to struggle or even ultimately "seizure" of control. But the possibility of a negotiated devolution of compound control from mine-owners to workers *is* possible without the revolutionary overthrow of the mine-owners as a group or the capitalists as a class.

But can one extend that possibility to the wider horizons which Comrade Motlatsi's proposition opens up — the vision of workers' control first of the whole mining industry, then of the whole of "their lives on every front." Consider first 'workers' control' of the mining industry. There can be little doubt that miners who have managed the complex tasks of union building in conditions of the greatest difficulty could also learn the skills of managing the industry. It would take time; there are technological and technical skills to be acquired, and skills in accounting, financing, marketing and so on which are outside the present experience of most workers. But all can be learnt — from study and from practical on-the-job experience — as they have been learnt by the present managers. Management skills are learnt, not inherited along with white skins. Learning would take time. In the change-over there might well be uncertainties, fumblings and mistakes — a period of learning, experimentation and confusion which could cause some disruption to the smooth progress of the industry. But in the end, the workers could manage the industry without the present managers; and manage it in their own interests, in their own way, according to their own desires. Or so it would seem, if one is looking only to matters of technique, of expertise and ability.

But management of industry takes place not in a closed experimental cocoon of its own, but in society. "Control" requires more than these technical abilities. It requires also an appropriate society in which to operate. Could workers' seizure of control of the mining industry for instance really survive in today's society? Could it assemble all the resources that make mining possible — labour, power supplies, transport, marketing and so on?

Such matters take the challenge to workers' control far outside the boundaries of the mining properties, and far beyond the technical abilities and skills of the miners. It takes the matter into the whole territory of South Africa and world commerce and trade, into the world-wide territory of finance and credit, into inter-state treaty arrangements over labour recruiting and exchange controls, and so on. The point need not be laboured. To run any industry — and especially one so vast and fundamental to the economic and social basis of society as mining in South Africa — involves the whole fabric of social relations and social activities. Could the mining industry survive without arrangements with neighbouring states concerning the labour and material supplies it is dependent on? Or without settled arrangements in regard to rail and sea transport, port facilities, power supplies, stores of food, machines, materials? Or without settled arrangements with banks for credit and for receipt of payments and exchange of foreign currencies? Or without a manageable system of security for works, workers and finished products?

Can one then think realistically at all about control of the mining industry without thinking simultaneously about control of Escom which supplies its electrical power? Without control of the S.A. Railways and Harbours, which monopolise its main transport links? Without control of the Treasury and the banks which dominate its financial arrangements? Without control of the Diplomatic Corps and Foreign Ministry which supervise its foreign trade treaties and arrangements? Without control of the S.A. and mining company police who supervise security? And so on. The list can be extended to every facet of South African life. And thus to one inevitable conclusion: *there can be no workers' control of the mining industry — nor, for that matter, of any other major branch of our productive resources — without simultaneous workers' control of the whole of society, all its main commercial and industrial undertakings; and above all, without control of the apparatus of state — including the Parliament under which the present capitalist order functions, together with its apparatus of laws, courts, judges, policemen and jailers.*

"Workers' control", clearly, is no simple formula for changing the whole of our lives on every front; nor even of our workplace alone. Its implications extend far beyond the mere taking over of management in a workplace or many workplaces; beyond the taking over of a single industry or even a nationwide network of industries. It is essentially a proposal for the transfer of power from those who now have it in all spheres of industry, the economy and the political life of society, to the working class. Such a transfer cannot hope to be effected by a voluntary surrender of power. It will of necessity — as Motlatsi appears to accept — have to be "seized".

"Workers' control", then, is not — as it may at first appear — an easy alternative to some of the difficult challenges and conflicts over our country's future. It is not a proposition which can be separated off from the country-wide struggles of all classes and groups, and confined in a special sphere which concerns only workers and trade unions. If it is to be taken seriously, it leads directly to the fundamental questions about the way forward, to the debate about the aims of the South African revolutionary movement as a whole, and a revolutionary transfer of power.

Revolution and Socialism

No such debate can fail to confront the prospect of socialism as the real alternative to present-day South African capitalism. This is not because of some arid political theorising drawn from text-books, but reflects the real experience of the South African majority under the detested apartheid state. Living experience teaches that all the injustices, oppressions, social and economic miseries of apartheid have grown and flourished within the economic order of South African capitalism. Theorists can — and do — argue whether racism and apartheid are a necessary part of capitalism, or whether they are merely a racist excrescence spreading like fungus on the capitalist structures. Whatever the rights or wrongs of that particular argument, no one can doubt that apartheid and capitalism have fed upon each other, producing the conditions in which labour has remained plentiful, cheap and coerced, profits have remained high and easily come by, and monopolisation of the country's natural wealth by a small class of private owners has been protected.

It is logical then that whenever talk turns to matters of change, to destroying the system of apartheid, it turns simultaneously to the matter of the future of the capitalist system, and to its replacement by something radically new. 'Freedom' and the end of apartheid have become inextricably interwoven with the need also to end its twin — capitalism. The present generation of freedom fighters in South Africa have come to accept that the struggle against apartheid is intertwined with a struggle against capitalism; and that the overthrow of apartheid raises sharply the question of the future of South African capitalism as well. Can capitalism survive without being propped up by apartheid and national oppression? Should it be allowed to survive even if it can, or should it be fought and if possible ended? And if it is to be ended, how? And what system of society can be built to take its place, how and by whom?

These vital questions thrown up by our own experience of struggle are not answered by experience alone. On these issues, experience of life and struggle needs to be helped forward by political theory.

Since the beginning of this century, advanced thinkers from the revolutionary ranks have been putting forward the vision of "socialism" as a realistic alternative to the system of capitalism. The first advocates of socialism — revolutionaries like Bill Andrews and Ivon Jones around the time of the first world war — came from the labour oriented ranks of the white trade unions of miners, engineers and builders. They seem now like prophets crying in the wilderness, advocating ideas still far ahead of the outlook of the working people to whom they were put. That pioneering role of preaching 'socialism' as a prospect of the future was taken over by the Communist Party from its birth in 1921. For many years, through several generations of workers, its voice too was isolated from the mainstream, seemingly crying in the wilderness. Ideas advance slowly; new concepts require new awareness amongst the people before they can be universally accepted. Socialism in the 1920's — and for the next sixty years — was a slowly growing idea.

But now, when the prospects for the overthrow of the existing order of society seem realistic and realisable "in our lifetime", the idea of socialism has come of age. Everywhere, our people who are carrying on the political struggle, are raising the slogan of 'socialism' as *their* aspiration for the future. The National Union of Mineworkers, for example, whose President spoke for "workers' control", met at their congress under a banner proclaiming "socialism means freedom."

The sentiment behind the slogan is clear enough: that in South Africa, freedom and socialism are organically linked together by the same sinews that bind capitalism and apartheid to each other. But, beyond the sentiment, it is essential to clarify the politics if the desire for socialism and freedom is to be transformed from wish to reality. Is the message that there will be no freedom before socialism? Or, on the contrary, that there will be no socialism without freedom? Or even, perhaps, that socialism *is* freedom and vice versa, each being merely another word for the same thing? In the sharp political crisis which overhangs our country and people at this time, there is no room for confusion or ambiguity on such matters.

"Workerists"

Two main schools of thought on the relationships of freedom to socialism are gradually crystallising out of the debate — the so-called "Populists" (or "Charterists"), and the so-called "Workerists." Neither camp represents a single, precisely defined ideology. "Populists", for example, range from those whose "socialism" extends no further than the Freedom Charter's proposals for changing the ownership of mines, monopolies and land, to the Communists

whose ultimate aim is the public control of *all* the means of production. The camp takes in also a range of social reformers, including those whose socialism is limited to the nationalisation of the "commanding heights" of capitalism, in the manner of many Western European social democratic parties.

Likewise, the ranks of the "workerists" take in "ultra-leftists" who reject freedom and democracy as "bourgeois" red-herrings, and syndicalists who believe in society reconstructed as one big union, created by the workers going it alone; and so on. Yet it must be stressed that all these tendencies within both groups have both freedom *and* socialism as their end goal. The arguments between them relate not to the goals, but to how to achieve them. (There are, admittedly, groups within the country who seek "freedom" and reject the idea of socialism; this article will not attempt to deal with them.)

What then are the areas of agreement and of disagreement between the various tendencies? All are agreed that in order to construct socialism it is necessary to eliminate private ownership of the means of production and private exploitation of wage labour, on which the capitalist system is based. All are agreed that in such an undertaking, the working class must inevitably occupy the central stage in bringing the new social and economic conditions of socialism into being.

But the disagreements are about how that will come about. It is in answer to the question: How?, that the seemingly simple and direct proposal of "Workers' Control" is put forward. Implicit in that proposal is the concept of a trade-union led take-over of management at the workplace; followed by a trade-union led workers' management which reconstructs work practices and social conditions. But that would be "control" at its most simplistic. As argued earlier, more extended consideration of workplace and management to surrounding social and political conditions leads inevitably to more complex and developed versions of how "control" could pass from its starting place in the workplace to its final goal of a socialist society. But all such visions are based on the same premise: that the trade-union movement can lead the workers forward as a spearhead; that spearhead breaks through the capitalist order by direct action at the workplace, which opens the breach through which the direction and control of the whole of society will be achieved, and the construction of the new order of society be commenced.

Not all variants of the "control" or "workerist" ideology ignore — as might be suggested by the summary above — the fact that the wage-workers as a class are only a part, and generally a minority, of the oppressed and exploited population. Some view these others — the housewives and the white-collars, professionals and farmers and students and shopkeepers and so on — as

"camp followers", whose role is only to trail along in the wake of the barn-storming workers; others see them as ineffectual onlookers at the great passage of social change; and still others see them as allies — actual or potential — who will pour through the breach the workers make, and join in the process of remaking the whole of society thereafter. But working class leadership is the essence; and working class leadership which is itself trade-union led.

"Populists"

There are many criticisms of this conception. Some are of a purely practical type: that trade unions live by dividing workers along lines of craft or industry — metal workers from miners from catering workers, etc. — and so are not ideally suited to the task of uniting all workers into a single unity, and still less to uniting all sectors of the oppressed regardless of their class; that the expertise and experience of trade unions lies in defending working conditions of their members against the employers, and not in the far wider fields of social administration, public affairs and politics which lie at the centre of the task of constructing socialism. Other criticisms are of a more fundamental and theoretical type: that trade unions develop the *class* consciousness of their members, but are not specially geared up for or suited to the wider task of developing a real *socialist* consciousness, without which the deliberate construction of a new society cannot succeed; that because they are narrowly based in the workplace only, they cannot operate directly to lead the majority of those who are ready for change but who live and work outside the industrial and workplace ambit of the unions.

The critics of these "workerist" conceptions — who have come to be known as "populists" — also have differences of outlook amongst themselves. They are far from forming a single, solid bloc of ideology, although they have many ideas which are common to all. Central to their concept — and therefore also to their critique of "workerism" — is the belief that if the working class is to lead the broad freedom-socialist movement, it must take its place *within* that movement; it cannot isolate itself as a class outside, in a pure workers-and-unions-only constituency, which other classes and groups cannot enter but are yet expected to follow. So-called "populism" then starts from acceptance of the broad national movement as a necessary part of the front for socialism; and that its strengthening and development do not compete with the cause of socialism but are essential to it. That broad national movement, composed of men and women from all walks of life and all classes, serves the immediate aims and interests of all sectors amongst the oppressed. If the working class is to be the leading force for socialism, it must establish its role by playing a leading part in all the *immediate* struggles, whether of a class or a "national" character.

Such generalised agreement in the "populist" camp does not, however, wipe out all differences amongst them. In detail, there are as many variants of "populism" as of "workerism". There are some, for example, who believe that the limited economic changes proposed in the Freedom Charter (in regard to land, mines and monopolies) themselves constitute "socialism"; and that the working class will automatically float to the top of the broad front because of its numbers, or of its position at the hub of capitalist production. There are others who believe that the present mix of class elements — without any recognisable "leading class" — is all that is needed "for now"; that the Freedom Charter can be achieved within the framework of the capitalist system, and that the working-class leadership only becomes an issue thereafter, when it will have to lead a new march forward to socialism. This concept is properly described as "a two-stage concept" — first fundamental freedom within a system of things more or less as they are; then a second, worker-led stage for the abolition of capitalism and the construction of socialism.

And Communists

The Communist Party has wrestled with the equation of relationships between class and national factors for over 60 years, gradually refining and clarifying its proposals. Drawing on a long historical experience of advocating socialism, it has developed a complex variant of the "populist" concept. Starting not only from the premises of Marxist theory, but also from study of the realities of South African society, the Party affirms that the national liberation struggle and the Freedom Charter are in the *immediate* interests of *all* classes of oppressed and exploited people in South Africa; that they awaken the consciousness of wider masses than is possible for any more narrow class or sectarian movement; and draw them into mass struggle without which social change is unthinkable; that within that broad alliance of classes, the workers have always shown themselves to be the most militant and determined sector with the greatest unity in action, derived from their united experience in the workplace. As working class organisation and unity in the workplace develops the class advances in self-confidence and political maturity, as revealed by the great trade-union campaigns which have shaken South Africa in recent years. Its class consciousness spreads out to support for socialism, which in turn influences all its supporters, fellow-travellers and allies in all the movements of the people.

Thus socialist consciousness spreads, well beyond the restricted ranks of organised trade unionists, and there is everywhere growing support for socialist aims within the broad front. There are some "workerists" who argue that, for that very reason, anything less than socialist goals — anything such as the

changes of the Freedom Charter or simple "national liberation" — becomes almost irrelevant, and a distraction from the real goal of socialism. The Communist Party however, draws totally opposite lessons from the fact that socialism is becoming an ever more important current of belief amongst the people; in fact, it sees that development as partly of its own making and a pay-off for its constant reiteration of socialism as the workers' goal. But it rejects totally the idea that as public support for socialism advances, the importance of the Freedom Charter and the national liberation movement recedes. Freedom, national liberation are the *immediate* goal, not the end of the road. They are a way-station on the road to the socialist goal, worthwhile and valuable and worth fighting for in themselves; but yet only a way-station on the road ahead.

Some critics and commentators describe this Communist Party view as a "two-stage theory". I think mistakenly. It is decidedly *not* the "populist" two-stage theory described above, which sees a first stage ending with national liberation, and only then a second stage of a drive to socialism. The Communist view is both more flexible, and more complex. Paradoxically, it views the dogmatic "two-stage theory" of some *populists* as an outgrowth of fundamentally *workerist* conception: that the national liberation stage is something in which the workers as a class have no real interest; and that the socialist stage will be a workers-alone stage in which other classes have no interest. Workerism and populism, whatever clashes they produce on the ground of daily political activity, are clearly ideologically involved in each other, like two sides of a coin.

The Communists see national liberation as a way-station — not a halt — on the road of human progress whose goal is socialism. It is a way-station which cannot be bypassed; and therefore every socialist has a deep interest in advancing the socialist future by speeding up the advance to that way-station; and in carrying the advance on, beyond it, to the socialist goal. For this reason, the national liberation struggle is as vital to the working class as to all other oppressed — and perhaps even more vital. The Communist concept, then, is of an unbroken path from where we are now, through the way-station of national liberation, to socialism.

Stages and Way-Stations

Critics argue that there must, invevitably, be a halt, a hiatus at the way-station; and that the prospect of an unbroken advance is a mirage; there will, it is argued, inevitably be a halt when all except the socialist working class will drop off before the "second stage." That argument depends on "instinct" on dogma, and not on analysis of the actual position at the time of national liberation since

that lies in the future and cannot be precisely known now. We cannot be guided by seers or prophets. The Communist view is not a prophecy of the future, but something to be worked for. The outcome will turn not on dogma but on "leadership".

In the Communist view, the working class has the vital interest in national liberation as well as militancy, unity and experience to lead the whole national liberation alliance. If it does so successfully, if within that national struggle it establishes its prestige amongst all classes of the oppressed, wins their confidence, and proves to them that it is a trustworthy guide to the road ahead — if that can be done, then the prospect of an unbroken advance from the way-station to socialism becomes possible, without any halt, without any break-up of the liberation front on sectarian lines. Without, in short, "two stages." It is precisely *that* outcome that the Communists seek to bring about, through the development of working class leadership in all the struggles of today. The communist perspective is neither the "immediate socialist" perspective of some workerists who would by-pass national liberation, nor the "two-stage" theory of some populists who would postpone socialism to a later date. Its essential component is that the working class must be enabled to lead the mass struggle from now to the end of the road.

But the Communist view of working-class leadership is not to be equated with trade-union leadership of the struggle. Our experience shows that no single campaign or mass struggle of the national movement embracing all sectors of the oppressed has ever been trade-union led. And for good reason. Politics and the art of bringing about political change are as much a specialist art as organising trade unions or bargaining with employers. It is an art which has to be learnt, through study, through practical trial-and-error, and through experience of both success and failure. Leadership of the working class in the workplace and in their worker-to-boss relationships is exercised by specialists in the art — the trade unions. Correctly so. Leadership of the working class in the wider arena of political life is similarly, in the Communist view, best exercised by specialist political organisation.

Working class leadership of the national movement does not result either from waiting for it to, magically, float to the top; or from separating the class from the broad stream in a pure trade-union led crusade. It will result from the development within the broad movement of a specialised political party of the working class, which participates in the broad movement and yet maintains its special class identity. Such a party will be distinguished from the broad movement not by separateness, nor by peculiarities of immediate aims, but by its total dedication to the cause of *both* national freedom and socialism. It should

aim to draw into its ranks the most dedicated, active and disciplined members of the trade unions, national and community organisations. It should seek to guide the people steadily along the road to socialism by developing its own theoretical understanding of the nature of society and of the politics of the working class. If such a party is to raise the working class to lead not just in the national struggle but beyond, to socialism, its leadership must be won not by its own proclamations not by claiming any special privileged position for itself. It can be won only by its example, and the practical successes it inspires.

How Long the Road

Our country and people are on the march, in a spirit of confidence and militancy never before experienced. The way-station of liberation comes into sight and will surely be reached "in our lifetime". The time for working-class leadership cannot be deferred till then, lest the movement grinds to a halt at the way-station. Working class leadership must be developed *now* to preserve the possibilities of an unbroken advance and an open road from the way-station to the end.

What distance — how many years — separate the way-station from the socialist dream? Lenin, writing on the morrow of the triumph of the 1917 Russian revolution, could well have asked the same question. Already the revolution had put the formal framework of socialism in place; land had been transferred to the peasants, the main means of production — factories, mines, power sources and so on — had been taken out of private hands and made into public property. But the real process of socialist tranformation — of constructing a new basis for all of society, its economy, its institutions and its people, still remained to be completed. Lenin foresaw an extended period of transformation, of unknown duration. The revolution and the taking of state power were the beginning of the process, nowhere near its final accomplishment. Today, more than seventy years on, that process — twice disastrously interrupted and devastated by war — is still not complete. "Perestroika" is an acknowledgement that socialist transfromation is not yet complete.

There is no quick and easy transition. Socialism is not to be regarded as a single act. It is not either a single revolution, a single struggle in which power is won. It is far more complex, long-drawn-out and difficult than changing the management of things-as-they-are. It is the remaking of the world. It starts with the establishment of a new class power; but it does not stop there. Taking class power is like turning on the electricity at the start of the factory day. There is power, but the conversion of raw materials into the finished product has still to

commence, and will not be completed till some time thereafter. How long after depends on how conscious, how alert, how organised, how united and how well led is the working force. And *that* depends not on what is done on the revolutionary day alone, but on what foundation has been laid during the long haul up to the start.

Working class leadership of the national movement is possible. It is desirable. It is the only safeguard that today's broad front can tread an uninterrupted passage, in unity, to the socialist-building of tomorrow. Socialism is the future. But the construction of the road towards it is a task for today. *The* task! That task demands the unity of the socialist vanguard in plotting route and structure. It is time for the debate between "workerist" and "populist" to be resolved and transformed from words into combined action.

TWENTY FIVE YEARS AFTER RIVONIA

by Sicelo Jama

A liberation movement activist who was on Robben Island with Nelson Mandela and the other Rivonia prisoners explains that stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage when revolutionaries fight back.

"Ja, boet! How's life in the cell, ou maat? You was in control of the situation outside and now we is in control of you." Sergeant Scheepers of the security police greeted me one early morning in July 1963 at the Konhga police station. He was in an exceptionally boisterous mood as he kept pacing up and down the torture chamber to the amusement of his colleagues.

"My friend", he called out a little above a whisper, "we have arrested Walter Sisulu and smashed the ANC communist nest to pieces". He bared his yellow teeth, banged the top of his desk with the palm of his hand and shouted "No more ANC! No more that Umkhonto we Sizwe! No more communism and that story of freedom in this country! Stupid black things, you wanted to bite the hand that feeds you. Swine, you can't even make a

wheelbarrow but you want to rule the white man, your baas!"

I did not believe that Walter was arrested and merely treated this bit of intelligence as one of those police ploys to break a detainee. But later in the evening a black uniformed policeman confirmed to me in confidence that indeed the fascist police had found their way to that hither unknown place called Rivonia. There they apprehended the leadership of our movement.

The impact of the arrest was shattering, to put it mildly. It was even worse when it came to light that Nelson Mandela was to join the other leaders as Accused Number 1. The blow was felt across the face of the country. There was a general sense of subdued fear that the fascists were on top of the situation. But there could be no disposition towards surrender to the racial tyranny of apartheid colonialism. The vast masses of our people, even in that bleak hour of their struggle, never lost faith in the ability of their vanguard movement to rise to its feet and once again blaze the trail towards the realisation of its historic mission. From their bitter experience, they understood that the Rivonia arrest and the general imprisonment of the cadres all over the country was nothing beyond a mere temporary ebb of the revolutionary tide.

The flow was to come in due course! On the other hand, the ruling clique in our country and their supporters in the West were so naive as to believe that the Rivonia setback marked the demise of the ANC and its cause. Little did it occur to them that the struggle for freedom and social progress is always and everywhere not born of great minds and leaders but is a product of objective reality in a given situation. Our enemies even believed that the judicial murders of some of our cadres would scare the people away from the revolutionary struggle. In their warped minds they conjured up the idea that the long term imprisonment they imposed on the leadership of the movement and its cadres would lead our people to discard them as has-beens of history, that behind prison walls the leaders would be erased from people's consciousness.

Settling Scores

Robben Island, the fascist clique thought, was the ideal place to deep-freeze their opponents. Here, away from the public eye, they would settle scores with those who had the audacity to lift a finger against the status quo.

"This is prison. You are here to suffer. Ja, you must suffer so that you do not come back again. You must pay the price. Some of you was going to Tanzania. Some of you was going overseas. Now we have sent you overseas free of charge. Thank your lucky stars that you are in a Christian jail and not

in Russia. There you would have long been shot dead!"

So Robben Island was set up as the ideal place to hammer the inmates flat. Those who would be lucky enough to leave the island alive would have to steer clear of political involvement in the bigger prison that is apartheid South Africa.

Indeed, the prison authorities worked with amazing diligence to make life unbearable for their victims, particularly in the period 1963-1973. In so far as they were concerned they were not dealing with human beings at all. They regarded us as "die vuil goed" (dirty rubbish), "swart gat" (black arse), "kaffirs", "koelies" and "hottentots". This refusal to recognise prisoners as human beings was not an accident of our situation. It was and still is the general policy of the racist Pretoria regime. In prison the denial of our humanity, however, was sharper and found concrete expression in practically all aspects of our life in that state of siege in which we were. The bedding, the attire, the diet, medical attention, the type of work we were forced to do — all testified to one thing, that we were subhumans without any claim to life. In this frame of mind, the warders would physically assault us with batons and pickhandles, deliberately expose us to the elements and, when ill, deny us medication. Many inmates contracted all sorts of illnesses as a result of this physical persecution and premeditated exposure to extreme weather conditions. To the amusement of the authorities, some even died as a result.

To ensure that the Island prisoner community was not in any way in communion with the rest of the country and the international community, the prison command denied us access to newspapers. We were not entitled to know what was happening outside the prison walls. All forms of communication with our next of kin and friends was so brutally censored as to make no sense at all. This particular brand of mental torture did not end at the point of cutting off links with the outside world. The authorities, supposed bringers of civilised values to a barbaric people, displayed a callous hostility towards academic education, let alone political discussions which were classed amongst the most heinous of crimes a prisoner could ever commit.

Forms of Torture

With the exception of actual physical abuse, the prison authorities were just as vicious to the Rivonia men on the Island. Persecution took the form of mental torture: heavy censorship of letters, intermittent termination of their study privilege, confinement to single cells, denial of news and general harassment.

In such circumstances as these one may well ask the question: what was it in the fibre of the comrades, in the Rivonia section of the prison as well as in the general section, that sustained them? The answer is simple: THE SPIRIT OF NO SURRENDER! The ANC leadership and membership confronted the prison authorities on the Island just as we had confronted their government before we were locked away. We were not criminals but prisoners of an internal revolutionary war.

From the outset we made it clear to the department of prisons that their concept of rehabilitation was something totally strange and inapplicable to us. On the contrary, it was we who were endowed with the historical mission of rehabilitating our jailers and converting them into real human beings. And since there was such a violent resistance from them to be human, Robben Island could not but be another arena of struggle.

It was a tough battle with heavy casualites on our side, but we knew that surrender or submission would lead to moral decay and political degeneration — a trend that was already discernible in the ranks of the PAC who designated our fight in prison "the pap struggle". Our contention was that we were going to fight the fascist wherever he reared his ugly head. We were not going to be misdirected into believing that the struggle "was outside prison" and that our business in gaol was merely to "suffer, sacrifice and serve".

We launched numerous campaigns of diverse forms for the improvement of prison conditions and the elevation of our status. The most effective weapon we used, albeit with economy, was the hunger strike. This came after a host of other preliminary campaigns such as petitions, day-to-day en masse complaints, go-slows at work and representations to official visitors on the Island. To break the siege, we would also instruct those of us who were due to be released to reveal to the country and the world what we were going through on Robben Island.

This multi-pronged frontal attack confounded the fascists. It had never occurred to them that one day they would have to contend with the type of prisoner who stood tall every inch of the way, who would say "you are not baas". What was to be even more devastating to them were the letters Nelson Mandela wrote to the leaders of the Nationalist Party. These were communications that did not confine themselves to the squalid conditions on the Island, but also addressed such issues as the national convention and the bloody confrontation between the oppressor and the oppressed. It was so inspiring to read these letters and to remember such phrases as: "In the evening of your life (Pelser's), you must resist the temptation to follow the line

of least resistance. For neither you, the Afrikaner, nor I, the African, is capable of predicting the amount of blood that will have to be shed before we eventually come together to discuss and resolve the problems facing our country."

With a leadership of such courage and clarity of mind — a leadership from whose every pore oozed hope of a bright future for our country and people — the general membership could not but be more dedicated and fired to fight on to the last breath even under the worst conditions. It was a leadership which, because of its exemplary conduct and the grandeur of its vision, came to enjoy the respect not only of ANC members but also of the enemy and our detractors in prison.

Political Education

Whilst we faced the objective situation on a daily basis, we did not forget the subjective factor. It was of crucial importance that the membership was fully prepared to continue with the struggle once outside the prison walls. In this respect, political education topped the list of all priorities. We had to know the history of our liberation struggle as well as we knew our own names. At the same time we had to study other peoples' struggles in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. It was said that politics — all of it — was to us what water is to fish. To enhance this aspect of life on the Island, we took it upon ourselves to wipe out illiteracy within our own ranks and upgrade our academic stature in general. This task was accomplished in the face of sharp hostility from the prison authorities who placed every obstacle in our path. But we fought with the ferocity of a cornered bull and the agility of a cat to turn dreary Robben Island into the Makana University it, in fact, came to be.

From 1973 to the year of my release, we saw improvements of tremendous dimensions. There was a relative softening of the attitude of the prison department. The diet improved slightly; medication, contact with next of kin and treatment in general had become more humane. These improvements did not materialise because of a change of heart on the part of the boers. No! On the contrary, they were won as a result of our struggle in prison, our refusal to be deep-frozen, and of course, out of the struggle waged in the former Portuguese colonies and Zimbabwe.

The situation inside and around fascist South Africa had changed dramatically. This period witnessed the sprouting of the militant labour movement and the beginnings of the black consciousness movement. The political lull of the '60's was rapidly receding into the background and militant confrontation resurged on an unprecedented scale. Young men and

women were beginning to go out on to the streets, fists clenched skywards, denouncing apartheid colonialism and demanding the restoration of freedom in our country, the independence of Namibia and peace and social progress in southern Africa. As they were doing so, singing about Nelson Mandela, a man they had never seen, the revolutionary struggle in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola had risen to a level where very few, even within the fascist clique, doubted the inevitable conclusion — the victory of the people!

That is the sort of reality that faced racist South Africa in the latter half of the 70's. And such is the reality that was bound to force a change of strategy and tactics on the part of the racists both inside the country and on Robben Island.

Today, nearly 25 years since Rivonia and the general swoop of the sixties, the situation has not improved in favour of the fascist clique. Contrary to their declared hope that the arrests and repression of the 60's marked the demise of the liberation struggle, the ANC has grown to be recognised worldwide as the sole alternative to the regime in Pretoria. Workers, students, the religious community, rural masses and the youth rally around the Freedom Charter and such outstanding personalities as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi, Andrew Mlangeni, Raymond Mhlaba and many other leaders who have been sent to Robben Island by the fascists. The vast masses of our people would not forget their leaders!

The Release of Mbeki

The recent release from the Island of one of the Rivonia men bears strong testimony to this historical fact. True to type, comrade Govan Mbeki stepped out of the prison gate to become the concrete representation of the resilience of the ANC. Contrary to the expectations of the regime, he stood out to reaffirm his membership of the ANC and the South African Communist Party. This action not only proclaimed the quality of the men who went to prison in 1963-4, it also dovetailed with the mood of defiance that has characterised our people since 1984, that mood whose thrust is utter contempt for the racist regime and its puppet structures. Reception rallies were organised across the country by, among others, young people who were not even born when Govan Mbeki was sent to Robben Island. Indeed, the people have, always and everywhere, stood by their leaders and their vanguard, the ANC, no matter how hard the times.

Inspired by the leadership the African National Congress offers and moved by their own suffering in apartheid South Africa, the oppressed and

democratic masses of our people continuously engage the enemy with more and more feats of heroism to keep the strategic initiative firmly in our hands.

Today, twenty five years since Rivonia, the prospect of a free, united, democratic and non-racial South Africa is extremely bright. This is a vision we share with all the governments and peoples of the independent Southern African states and the entire progressive mankind.

In the Year of United Action for People's Power — Victory is Certain! Amandla!

PERESTROIKA IS WORKING

How do things stand in the Soviet Union today?

In 1987 gross national product grew 3.3 per cent. The growth of the volume of industrial output was 3.8 per cent.

Over the three years from 1985 to 1987 the average annual growth rates were:

national income — 3.3 per cent
gross national product — 3.9 per cent
industrial output — 4.2 per cent
output of consumer goods — 4.7 per cent
gross agricultural output — 1.9 per cent
commissioning of fixed assets — 3.5 per cent
housing — 3.6 per cent
labour productivity — 10 per cent

In a speech on May 7, 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev summed up:

"We have made progress in the output of commodities. progress has also manifested itself in health protection and public education. The creative forces of society have been set in motion.

"The growth is evident. But the shortages are evident too. This means, comrades, that we must have by far more of everything, including the services.

"Such are the realities of *perestroika.* The key to everything is through democratisation, through drawing the people into all matters. The aim of *perestroika* is man and the means of *perestroika* is a mobilisation of the human potential.

"We will press ahead with *perestroika* through that and naturally through the cultural field, through strengthening the spirit of the people".

The quantities of dollars now in non-American hands are so vast that the US Government is no longer in control of its own currency

THE US ECONOMY IN DECLINE

by Phineas Malinga

For any study of the functioning of the capitalist system in the twentieth century, Lenin's *Imperialism* remains the essential starting point. Lenin identified five characteristics of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism:-

"**1.** The concentration of production and capital developed to such a high stage that it created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life.
2. The merging of bank capital with industrial capital and the creation, on the basis of this "financial capital", of a financial oligarchy.
3. The export of capital, which has become extremely important, as distinguished from the export of commodities.
4. The formation of international capitalist monopolies which share the world among themselves.
5. The territorial division of the whole world among the greatest capitalist powers is completed."[1]

Today, in the era of transition from capitalism to socialism, the division of the world described in the fourth and fifth propositions has started to be undone. The first three, however, remain entirely accurate as a description of the capitalist system as it now is. The second and the third are particularly important for the examination of the events which have recently shaken capitalism.

Lenin examined the emergence of finance capital in considerable detail. He recorded the fact that, from the eighteen eighties to the first decade of the twentieth century, the total value of the securities (i.e. both shares in companies and government loans) issued in the capitalist world had trebled. In 1910 it was estimated that the total value of such securities in circulation was 600 billion francs. This was an immense sum by the standards of that time and enabled Lenin to observe that

> "...a few rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital reaches gigantic proportions, occupy a monopolist position. An enormous 'superabundance of capital' has accumulated in the advanced countries."[2]

He went on to point out that this capital was "superabundant" only in the sense that capitalism could find no adequate use for it. If it could have been put to work to raise the standards of living of the masses all over the world, "there could be no talk of a superabundance of capital". The problem was, however, that there were no longer sufficient *profitable* outlets for investment in the countries which had accumulated the capital. The result was, firstly, the export of capital and, secondly, a tendency for loans to governments to become a more important type of investment than the creation of new industries.

This latter tendency was, at the time when Lenin wrote, particularly noticeable in France. Having a mature domestic industrial system and a comparatively limited colonial empire, the French finances were the first to run out of opportunities for productive investment. Therefore they began to specialise in lending to the governments of less developed countries, such as Tsarist Russia, among others. "French imperialism might be termed usury imperialism", Lenin remarked.

Three quarters of a century have gone by. Lenin's 600 billion francs have been multiplied many times. His list of "a few rich countries", which was headed by Great Britain, the United States, France and Germany, is now headed by the same four in a different order, together with Japan. "Usury imperialism" is no longer a peculiarly French phenomenon but has spread throughout the capitalist world. The problem of the "superabundance of capital" (still in the same sense in which Lenin used the term) has not been solved but, on the contrary, has assumed dimensions which now threaten to destabilise the entire system.

For nine and a half months, 1987 seemed a good year for the capitalist system. There were the poor, of course, and the unemployed, but they were not causing much trouble. The rich, meanwhile, were doing very well. Both in the USA and in Britain, right-wing governments had launched successful assaults upon the standard of living of the working class, with the result that company profits increased substantially. France was setting out along the same path. Stock exchange prices reflected this comfortable state of affairs, setting new record levels month after month in New York, Tokyo and London alike. Even left-wing commentators were impressed by the healthy appearance which capitalism presented. For example, Gayle Southworth, writing in the American socialist journal *Frontline*, in August 1987, said

> "In effect, the Reagan administration has successfully negotiated a restructuring of U.S. capitalism... The key economic fact is that much of the structural crisis which confronted the U.S. bourgeoisie in 1981 has been successfully negotiated... Capitalism ... does have a lot more in the way of reserves than many left-wing critiques are willing to acknowledge."[3]

Black Monday

Two months later, on Monday 19 October 1987, the New York stock exchange suffered the greatest one-day fall in its history. Now the "global market" of which the capitalists had been so proud turned into a nightmare. The "global market" depends on the fact that the Tokyo, London and New York markets open in succession and, between them, are open twenty four hours a day. Therefore someone who wants to change dollars into yen, or buy shares in IBM, or take out an option (i.e. place a bet) on the level of the *Financial Times* index next week, can always do it somewhere, without waiting so much as a few hours. For those who make their livings by doing such things, nothing could be better — so long as the markets remained reasonably stable.

In October 1987, however, the crash in New York triggered off a crash in Tokyo, which in turn triggered off a crash in London. Each morning, the traders, instead of coming in to work after a night's respite in which to collect their wits, came in to face a new tale of disaster from the market which was just closing as theirs opened. Panic ensued. The financial press was full of phrases like "free fall" and "meltdown" and comparisons with the great crash of 1929. After two weeks, approximately one third of the paper values of all the securities traded in New York and London had disappeared. Paris was similarly afflicted, Tokyo and Frankfurt not quite so badly.

A Puzzle

Since then, the capitalists have been trying to work out what hit them. So far, the only thing that is clear to them is that the theories of "classical" bourgeois

economics (which had enjoyed a new vogue in the 1980's) have failed to work.

For example, "classical" economics insists strongly upon the "efficiency of markets". The price which the stock exchange puts upon a share represents the consensus of all the opinions of all the people who know anything about the company in question and it must therefore be the right price. The internationalisation of financial dealings and the great increases in their scale in the 1980's seemed to reinforce the evidence in favour of such ideas — until October 1987. But if the same share can be valued at $100 today and at $60 in two weeks' time, what becomes of the idea of "the right price"? Not quite six months after Black Monday, a commentator in the London *Financial Times* wrote,

> "The stock market crash last October has reversed a 30-year intellectual trend which provided the underpinning for many of the 1980's government and corporate initiatives... The sudden falls of between 20 and 40 per cent in world stock markets and the lack of any economic developments to justify them, either at the time or over the subsequent six months, have become impossible to reconcile with the theory that share prices consistently reflect the underlying values of companies... The principle behind the simple form of the efficient market theory — that there is a single 'true' value for the level of share prices — has to be replaced with a view that there is a very wide range of plausible values"[4].

During the same period, a writer in the Paris *Le Monde* was penning a very similar lament about the exchange rates between currencies.

> "The old theory, according to which exchange rates tend to stabilise at a level producing the same purchasing power in different currencies, was based on a restricted view. Currency markets were assumed to balance transactions connected exclusively with the exchange of goods and of real services. Today, the monetary debate is obscured by the existence of enormous balance of payments deficits, but these are the consequence of a monetary system entirely dominated by the movements of capital which it produces... Are the nations ready to re-establish a monetary system of which the main users will again be the producers of goods and services and not the bloated financial infrastructure?"[5]

This writer perhaps did not understand that his final, rhetorical question could be paraphrased as follows: "Can the capitalist nations move back from imperialism to an earlier stage of capitalism?" The answer, of course, is "No". The days when the monetary system served simply to enable goods and services to be exchanged were already over when Lenin identified the role of finance capital and the problem of its superabundance."

Too Much Money In Too Few Hands

There are today astronomical sums of money in the possession of the central banks of the leading capitalist nations and the most important privately owned banks of the same countries. Perhaps fifty institutions in all are the significant players in the game. Their funds are greatly in excess of the sums which can be

placed in profitable, long term investment in new productive facilities. Therefore the banks are continually in search of ways in which to put these funds to use. Broadly speaking, there are two possible solutions. One is to lend money to governments and the other is to try to make speculative profits with it.

In the 1970's, lending to the governments of developing countries was fashionable among the bankers of the leading capitalist countries. The needs of these countries were and are, of course, quite large enough to justify the application of large amounts of money to them. If the capitalist system were capable of putting its accumulated funds to work to ameliorate the conditions of the world's poor, then today as in Lenin's time there would be no need to speak of a superabundance of capital.

But the inefficiencies of capitalism are nowhere more glaring then in its neo-colonial dependencies. Very little of the money lent to developing countries was spent on feeding the hungry, creating new industries or improving agriculture. Vast sums were stolen by corrupt politicans and bureaucrats — who promptly deposited it back in the banks which lent it. Other vast sums were wasted on imported armaments, ill-conceived prestige developments run by foreign capitalists or imported luxury consumer products — which again meant that much of the money found its way back to the banks which lent it. The taxpayers of the borrowing countries were left with nothing but an obligation to pay interest, the amount of which in some cases exceeded the whole of the country's earning power.

The Reagan Years

The scale on which this ruinous game is played has inevitably had to be much reduced. What, then, are the banks to do with their money? The election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States provided the answer for the 1980's.

At the end of the Carter years, the American economy was at a low ebb. From 1969 to 1979, the value of the dollar had fallen from four Deutschmarks to less than two. Many of the older industrial enterprises in the United States, such as steel works and textile factories, had been driven out of business by Japanese or other Asian competitors. Unemployment was high and economic activity sluggish.

At the time of his election, Reagan already had a track record as governor of California. The capitalists knew their man and expected the assault on the working class which in fact took place. Therefore, his election was in itself an event of economic significance. The possibility that America might have become a more attractive home for their money immediately occurred to those

who decide the destination of the vast masses of finance capital, and they began to act upon their thoughts without delay. The dollar began to rise against other currencies within days of Reagan's victory. It then became apparent that Reagan and the bankers could play a wonderful game together.

The Greatest Debtor in History

If a Japanese bank lends money to the U.S. government at a time when there are 150 yen to the dollar and the dollar then goes up to 175 yen, the bank will have made a nice speculative profit in addition to its interest. Therefore other Japanese banks will be keen to lend money to the U.S. government too. Therefore the dollar will go up even farther. Banks will be queuing up to lend money to the U.S. government. If the U.S. government does not want to borrow very much, the process will come to a halt fairly soon. But what if the U.S. government decides to take maximum advantage of this state of affairs?

A massive influx of finance capital can then be engineered. The U.S. government can forget about raising enough money in taxes to cover its expenditure. The U.S.A. as a whole can forget about exporting enough to pay for its imports. The American people can raise their standard of living, partly at the expense of the rest of the world, and the American economy will be greatly stimulated. As for the rest of the world, it is represented in this game, not by its peoples, but by its bankers, who are happy to have found a safe parking place for their surplus funds and to be making speculative currency profits over and above the interest which they charge.

That was the way it went for several years. The exchange rate of the dollar went most of the way back to four Deutschmarks. As our commentator in *Le Monde* rightly perceived, this change had nothing to do with the relative domestic purchasing powers of the dollar and the Deutschmark. It resulted entirely from the flood of finance capital into the U.S.A. Some of this capital went into shares in American companies, thus pushing prices on Wall Street up to dizzy heights. The bulk of it, however, was lent to the U.S. government, which became the biggest debtor in history. In 1987 alone, the U.S. government ran a deficit of $150 billion. The balance of payments deficit of the American economy as a whole grew to an amount of the same order of magnitude.

A Perverse Trend

Now, when a country runs a balance of payments deficit, the natural consequence is for the value of that country's currency to fall, relative to other currencies. Therefore the continual rise in the value of the dollar was a perverse trend, illustrating once again the power of the manipulators of

finance capital, by the sheer weight of money which they command, to override the consequences which the "real economy" (i.e. the production and exchange of goods and services) would normally produce.

A perverse trend cannot, however, go on indefinitely. As the Reagan administration moved into a second term of office, American ministers were beginning to be worried by the success of their conjuring trick. The overvaluation of the dollar was pricing American goods out of the market and making imported goods more and more attractive to American consumers. Therefore the balance of payments deficit was feeding on itself, getting worse with every passing month. Where would it end? The decision was eventually taken that the U.S. government would have to "talk the dollar down".

A market dominated by a relatively small number of participants, each controlling immense sums of money, is inevitably an unstable market. The "classical" theory of markets depends on the activity of very large numbers of individuals, among whom opinion changes only gradually. An oligopolistic market moves more nervously and abruptly, in ways that "classical" theory cannot predict. When the U.S. government let it be publicly known that they considered the value of the dollar to be too high, the capital manipulators all took fright at once. The dollar began to fall rapidly.

Something To Worry About

But now the other capitalist governments became worried. Their first reason for worry was that their exporting industries had done very well out of the American balance of payments deficit. If the prices of Toyotas, Jaguars and Mercedes were going to rise in America, the Americans would buy fewer of them. The second reason for worry was more fundamental. The dollar is not just a national currency. OPEC prices its oil in dollars. Not only Boeing but also Airbus Industrie prices its aircraft in dollars. Governments settle their debts to other governments in dollars. A very large part of the finance capital in the capitalist world is denominated in dollars.

The fact that the Japanese now own more finance capital than the Americans has not altered that fact. A large part of Japanese finance capital is denominated in dollars. This is perhaps the principal new fact about imperialism in the second half of the twentieth century. If Lenin were describing imperialism today, he might add a sixth point to the five characteristics which he listed. The currency of one nation has become the principal denomination of the world's finance capital.

This means that the value of the dollar is a matter of grave concern, not only to American capitalists but also to those of other countries. The

consequences of a collapse in the value of the dollar would be world-wide and incalculable. Knowing this, the governments of the major capitalist countries set themselves the task of slowing down the fall in the dollar's value. Their method of doing so is quite simple: their central banks buy dollars in exchange for yen, pounds, francs, Deutschmarks, etc. It has been calculated[6] that in 1987 the Japanese central bank bought $30 billion, the Bank of England $20 billion and the German Bundesbank $15 billion.

Obviously, these vast transactions produced a number of effects. The most obvious was that they enabled the American balance of payments deficit to continue. Next, they increased the total amount of finance capital in the world and, in particular, the quantity of yen, pounds, etc. in circulation. This extra money was one of the factors which caused the prices of shares and also of land and buildings to rise to unprecedented heights in many countries. Basically, however, the effect of the currency operations of 1987 was to prolong an unstable situation. The solution of the American balance of payments deficit was being postponed and the process of postponement could not go on indefinitely. Therefore nervousness grew among the market operators until, in October 1987, a mere hint that the West German government disagreed with the U.S. government about the way to handle the situation sparked off a panic. Large operators became afraid that prices could not be sustained, tried to sell before the fall and thus caused the fall which they feared.

Contradiction

What will happen next? Are we in for a repeat of the great depression of 1929-32? No two commentators agree on the answer. A prominent American communist summed up his view of the situation as follows:

> "Whether a protracted depression of the order of the 1930's will result is not clear. But one thing is certain — the U.S. economy has stepped more deeply into a period of wrenching adjustment and instability".[7]

That can equally well be said of the imperialist world economy. Instability is the order of the day, to such an extent that the available tools for short or medium-term economic forecasting do not work and the precise ways in which, and times at which, the instability will manifest itself are not predictable. The imperialist world economy can perhaps be compared to one of those modern roll-on, roll-off vehicle ferries which have produced a number of spectacular accidents in recent years. These ships are unstable. They have no internal compartments within which water leaks can be confined. If water gets into the ship, it flows about in unpredictable ways. If a mass of water suddenly flows in one direction, the ship capsizes. Once water

is flowing about inside the ship, capsizing is a probability but nobody can say whether the ship will go to port or starboard, or exactly when it will happen.

In the imperialist world economy, the vast masses of finance capital, flowing uncontrollably about the "global market", are the destabilising factor. They are likely to produce disaster but one cannot say exactly when or how. Depression and inflation are both possible. Trade wars between the major capitalist powers are probable. Economic instability is likely to produce political instability.

The Decline of the USA

Behind all the problems lurks one fact of primordial importance. The position of the United States has become the principal contradiction in the world imperialist system. For about thirty years after the end of World War Two, imperialism was a relatively stable system because it was coherently constructed on the foundation of American dominance. American military power went hand in hand with American economic power. The U.S.A. was generating more finance capital than all the others put together, and exported it on a large scale and financed the deficits of a number of other countries. This led to a steady increase in American ownership of productive assets in other countries and a flow of profits into the U.S.A. The dollar was the world's strongest currency and it was perfectly logical that it should become the main component of the world's finance capital. Other countries accumulated dollar balances to the best of their ability but the bulk of dollars remained firmly in American hands.

Today, many of these things have ceased to be true. The American economy is no longer generating new finance capital on a significant scale but the Japanese and West German economies are. In particular, the Japanese share in world finance capital has been rising inexorably for a number of years and now exceeds the American. As we have already seen, the American economy shows a yawning deficit which the rest of the capitalist world is financing. The American consumer is buying imported goods with borrowed money, while an increasing volume of American productive assets pass into foreign ownership. The dollar still occupies its dominant position but no longer deserves that position; it has ceased to be the most reliable store of value available in the world. The quantities of dollars now in non-American hands are so vast that the U.S. government is no longer in control of its own currency.

The system no longer hangs together. Political and military adjustments to these profound economic changes must come. So far, they have been

inhibited by two factors. Firstly, Japan and West Germany still live in the shadow of their defeat in 1945. Secondly, anti-soviet paranoia has made capitalist governments afraid to envisage any change in their military and political relationships with the U.S.A. Neither of these factors will last forever. Change is on the way. If imperialism were the only system in the world, we should perhaps have to expect a post-American imperialism dominated by Japan. There is, however, another world waiting to take over. The period of extreme instability which is about to succeed the post-war period can become and must become the period of transition to socialism.

South Africa's Position

South Africa is an integral part of the imperialist system and cannot hope to be spared by the turbulence now becoming a regular feature of that system. Unlike the major capitalist countries, South Africa made no substantial recovery from the recession of the early eighties. Economic activity has remained at a low ebb, with the growth of the economy failing to keep pace with the growth of population. Inflation has remained high, so that, whatever happens to the exchange rates between dollars, pounds etc., the rand goes down against them all. In a desperate effort to emulate the performance of other capitalist economies, Botha now tries to scramble on board the privatisation bandwagon and the tax reform bandwagon. These are irrelevancies. It is apartheid which holds South Africa back and will continue to do so. Apartheid causes insoluble economic problems and these in turn will be one of the causes of the downfall of apartheid.

It does not follow, however, that South Africa's economic graph goes downward in a straight line. Several times before in South Africa's history a rise in the gold price has come as a windfall which has enabled the fundamental economic problems of apartheid to be swept under the carpet for a decade or so. Whether this will happen again or not is impossible to forecast at the present time. The market in which the price of gold is daily determined is a market of modest size, concerned largely with the supply of gold to the jewellery trade. The gold reserves of the central banks (which are a component of world finance capital) have for some years been kept on the sidelines, being neither bought nor sold. If any of the major manipulators of finance capital, who are capable of spending hundreds of millions of dollars in the course of a few days, were suddenly to decide to move into, or out of, gold, the gold market would become a new ball game and anything could happen to the price.

The conventional wisdom in recent years has been that investors see gold as a refuge in times of instability and are therefore likely to buy gold if there are

sudden falls in the value of shares, or dollars, or some other alternative investment medium. A rise in the gold price was accordingly expected in October 1987. It happened for a few days but then subsided, leaving those economic commentators who study the gold market to join the ranks of the baffled, whose theories have ceased to work. The idea that gold could provide a safe haven for the financial capital of the world is, in any event, naive. There is not enough gold. An attempt to move into gold all or a major part of the funds now invested in dollars would drive the gold price to astronomical heights, from which it would subsequently crash.

Some people would make fortunes along the way, so that precisely such an attempt may possibly be made. The basic futility of the exercise may, however, deter the financiers from attempting it. South Africa therefore remains at the mercy of unpredictable events in the economy of world imperialism.

What practical conclusions is the South African left to draw from this? Firstly, that the eventual triumph of socialism is assured. Secondly, that many opportunities will arise in the near future for pointing out to the people that capitalism offers them increasing uncertainty and insecurity. The virtues of a rationally planned economy, which it has recently been fashionable to decry, will once again become very attractive. But thirdly, it is no use expecting "The Great Depression" to emerge like a genie from a magic lamp, at a precisely predictable date, to make everything simple for us. Everything is not going to be simple. The road to the end of capitalism is going to be bumpy, for us as well as for them. The difference is that we know where the road leads to in the end.

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FOR A BROAD COALITION OF ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES

How to apply the tactics of the United Front

by Denga

Over the years, the entire democratic movement of our country has amassed a tremendous wealth of experience in the field of organisation and mobilisation. In most cases at different stages of the struggle, when new initiatives were undertaken, the correct chord was struck, bringing the entire orchestra into harmony. The birth of the United Democratic Front was one such development: a creation of the people in struggle. Five years on, new forces and new questions are being thrown up by the struggle.

In many sectors of democratic organisation, the issue of the broadest possible anti-apartheid coalition has well passed the stage of abstract theorisation. The successful September 1987 Conference of white anti-apartheid forces organised by the Five Freedoms Forum; the painstaking efforts of democratic women's organisations to launch a broad national organisation; the endeavour to unite black and democratic teachers — these are some of the practical actions thus far. The resolution of the UDF National Working Committee Conference in May 1987 calling for a national conference of anti-apartheid forces stated:

"Today a broad range of South Africans firmly believe that the Nats must go and have a vision of a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa.....The campaign to isolate the regime on the one hand, and galvanise all those who stand for peace and freedom on the other, continues to be an urgent task".[1]

Concurrently, another tendency among democratic organisations is to tighten structures and deepen their politico-ideological content. On the occasion of its 4th anniversary the UDF adopted the Freedom Charter; and so did COSATU at its 1987 Congress. Is the call for such broad unity merely the dubious defensive mechanism of a democratic movement in retreat?

The efforts to unite all anti-apartheid forces in action against the regime, and even against aspects of its policies and practices, are the product of the heightened level of struggle. In this escalating offensive, the decisiveness of the mass and armed revolt grows with each passing day. At the same time the adversary also acts with viciousness and cunning to avert its downfall. The qualitatively new level of conflict amplifies the combination of factors which make the **deepening and broadening** of organisation a necessity.

Organs of People's Power

From the campaigns which constituted the foundation of the UDF, epoch-making developments have taken place. Among the most important has been the emergence of organs of people's power which involve the broad masses in the running of their affairs. This phenomenon necessarily brought into sharp focus the question of the strategic perspective of the national democratic revolution. Along with the campaigns for people's education, people's culture and so on, the masses themselves have in actual struggle validated the Freedom Charter. The mass democratic movement, in particular those forces which did not then support the Freedom Charter, could not and did not stay aloof.

From the 1983/84 campaigns, new issues have been taken up, all of which accorded and still accord with the process of ungovernability and the emergence of people's committees. In taking up these issues, the mass democratic movement had to adopt programmes, slogans and organisational forms suitable for the new level. Also, the formation of COSATU in 1985, SAYCO in 1987 and other regional and national formations further strengthened the entire mass democratic movement, linking the ardour and revolutionary consistency of an active working class with the zeal and verve of the youth. The process of deepening was not conceived in some dark room but in actual struggle.

However, mammoth as the democratic movement is, breath-taking as some of its feats may be, the reality is that it has not reached the overwhelming majority of its potential constituents: i.e. all those forces objectively interested in the victory of the national democratic revolution. In spite of the subjective state of these forces today, the place of the "unorganised" is in the camp of the organised and active army of struggle. Many among them are "unorganised" in a qualified sense: they are to be found in "apolitical" organisations such as youth and women's clubs and sports bodies; in organisations of the ATASA and UTASA ilk; in churches and religious bodies such as Independent Churches, "established" churches, Hindu and Moslem groups; and in organisations such as NAFCOC which have adopted some anti-apartheid positions but still have to develop active relations with the 'progressive' movement. At the same time there are forces such as Inyandza in the KaNgwane bantustan which are gravitating — if we are to judge by their statements and some joint actions — towards the mass democratic movement.

Organising The Unorganised

Therefore, out of concrete struggle — indeed because of achievements in organisation and mobilisation — the question of reaching out to the widest spectrum of the people stands out in even bolder relief. Various tactics have to be employed to win the multitude of the "unorganised" into struggle. One of the most important is to find common ground with formations which are broadly speaking or potentially anti-apartheid to which many of these forces belong; and act jointly with them: **the fundamental aim being to raise the consciousness of the masses and activate them to become staunch participants in the struggle for national democracy.** The campaign for a broad anti-apartheid coalition should seek to achieve this main purpose.

The crisis of the regime is such that the overwhelming majority of South Africans — irrespective of their social position — view the apartheid system as the basic cause of all the woes afflicting the country. According to the University of Stellenbosch Bureau for Economic Research:

> "Political policy is seriously inhibiting economic growth, say businessmen interviewed in a nationwide survey...68% consider the present political policy to be 'dampening' economic growth, 30% consider it neutral while only 2% consider it to be stimulatory".[2]

The regime has clearly failed to give coherent leadership. Instead it has adopted measures which can only lead the country to further ruin.

While, on the surface, the white election results last year and by-elections this year showed a swing to the right, developments during the campaign and after show the emergence of serious divisions at high levels. The defection of the "New Nats", the formation of the National Democratic Movement which is part of the Five Freedoms Forum broad initiative, the dissension of senior Afrikaner intellectuals, and the Dakar meeting are some of the indicators of this new forceful trend. At the Wits conference last September, where some individuals from big business also participated, the democratic movement adopted the correct approach to this dynamic within the white community. The initiative is pregnant with many possibilities.

In our own experience, at least during the current revolt, we have had to find answers to the problem of taking the struggle to the white areas. This question is made the more pertinent in our struggle because the national democratic revolution entails, above everything else, the defeat of the colonial power which is perceived as "white South Africa". The main lynchpin in the effort to cripple and unseat the colonial power will always be the mass and armed actions of the oppressed and democratic forces, especially black workers. But to make further decisive advances requires the activation of broad sectors of whites in various forms of opposition to the system. In this way we shall not only weaken the fibre of what is otherwise one of "the strong points" of the regime — white support — but also make serious inroads into its state machinery. The campaign for a broad anti-apartheid coalition should also be viewed from this perspective.

Widespread Attacks

The mass democratic movement has been under severe attack. The draconian regulations and actions of the regime and its adjuncts have, of necessity, provoked the ire of a wide spectrum of South Africans. Even those who have only faintly raised their voices against apartheid have not been immune. The attacks on the (former) Barclays Bank management and the "Dakarites" are cases in point. Botha and his generals are drawing the entire country and the subcontinent into more and more chaos. By their deeds they have established themselves as **the enemy of practically "the whole nation"**. In calling for united action against Botha and his clique, the democratic movement is defending and advancing not only its own broad interests, but also those of all who have a sense of anti-apartheid feeling. The campaign for broad coalition aims at uniting all these forces in action against apartheid tyranny.

Having identified some of the reasons which make the task of forming a broad coalition historically important at this stage, the crucial question that follows is, what is the main challenge facing the South African democratic movement today? In the context of the strategic perspective, the primary historical task on the entire front of struggle today is to isolate and decisively weaken the racist regime and create conditions for its removal from power.

There are many concrete issues around which the unity in action "of the nation" against the ruling clique can be forged. The most fundamental is the recognition that apartheid is the root cause of problems in South Africa and the region. In the words of the Dakar declaration,[3] all these forces have to reject "both the ideology and practice of the apartheid system" — racial oppression, denial of basic human rights to the majority, and the theories contrived to support the system. Also to be taken into account are the thousands upon thousands of apartheid laws, regulations and practices: denial of freedom of expression and association; the state of repression and the imprisonment and detention of leaders and activists; aggression in the region and occupation of Namibia etc.

In contrast to these policies, all genuine anti-apartheid forces have a "shared commitment towards...the building of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa". This presupposes "the obligation to act for the achievement of this objective"[4]. The detailed issues are not non-negotiable; the most important thing is that the common denominator should be thrashed out by the participants — actual and potential — without undermining the purpose of unity which is action in pursuit of the primary task of this historical moment.

Possible Partners

At which groups of organisations (outside the 'progressive' fold) is the broad coalition to target itself? Briefly, all organisations and institutions which oppose apartheid or elements of the system but are not — as yet or in principle — prepared to go the whole distance with the progressive forces. These are:

★ forces from the black community organised into formations which are "apolitical", vacillating or only starting to identify with the national democratic camp. In finding common ground with these organisations and institutions, the democratic forces seek to educate their members and ultimately develop them to act in a manner that is consistent with their class and national interests.

★ Genuinely patriotic organisations which pursue some form of democracy or "socialism", but are blinded by misconceptions and incomprehension of the actual social relations and their interrelationships. Among these are to be found trade unions such as NACTU, adherents of so-called Black Consciousness and the host of ultra-left groupings in some areas of the country. We emphasise the word "genuine" for the reason that among these groupings — locally, regionally, nationally or among the affiliates — are to be found habitual disruptors and forces acting in league with the enemy, who do not have the interests of the people at heart. Some of these groups are small cliques of egoistic sectarian individuals to whom the struggle is merely — and tragically — a hobby. This sediment is in principle against alliances, and deserves only to be isolated.

★ individuals and groups within the white community who are breaking with "the ideology and practice of apartheid". In so far as they are moved by the realisation that apartheid is detrimental to the country and its people as a whole, they are pursuing an "own interest" which coincides with that of the struggling masses. They might not agree with everything that the democratic movement stands for or its strategies but they do have sufficient common ground for joint action with the democratic forces.

★ among the latter are forces which have consciously adopted a class stand for social relations which will leave apartheid relations intact eg. PFP officialdom and big business. They are pitted against aspects of apartheid because of its bad management of the economy and political life, and what they perceive as the consequent "threat of revolution". They thus find themselves vacillating between love for lasting stability and a crippling fear of revolutionary democracy. Some of them have gone a long way in taking a stand for "democracy"; others wallow in the belief that the regime — with their support — will avert revolution.

The proper tactics in relation to all these forces, and the latter two in particular, "should consist in *utilising* these vacillations, not ignoring them; utilising them calls for concessions to elements that are turning towards the proletariat — whenever and in the measure that they turn towards the proletariat — in addition to fighting those who turn towards the bourgeoisie".[5]

Anti-apartheid unity, be it among progressive democrats or in a broad coalition, does not imply a monolith of 'South Africans in general'. It is based on actual classes and strata with common, different and sometimes contradictory aims. To quote Le Duan:

"The Front [i.e. National United Front in Vietnam — author] is a unity of opposites which includes various classes in league with each other on the basis of a definite common programme of struggle. That is why one cannot conceive of a classless Front. A principled line requires that one should view and solve all problems related to the front policy from a class stand. There are classes with essentially similar interests; there also exist classes whose interests are linked together only to a certain extent. Each class, for the sake of its own interest and the common interest, joins forces with other classes within the Front. Moreover, the common interest itself is viewed by each class from its own angle".[6]

Main Components

Let us start off with the main motive forces of the revolution; in general black workers, the rural masses, intellectuals and students, the petty-bourgeoisie and even the handful of black capitalists as well as democratic whites who are interested in the creation of national democracy, in the implementation of the Freedom Charter. However, the extent of this interest, as Le Duan points out, accords, in the main, with the class or group interests of each of these forces; their concept of national democracy is also tainted accordingly. Black workers are at the head of these forces: better organised and most consistent in pursuit of thorough-going democracy. Most of these forces recognise the workers as the vanguard and many among them identify with its long-term goal. Others — in particular sections of the propertied strata and of the intelligentsia — are less consistent. But they are interested in, and have the capacity to act for, the attainment of national democracy. All these forces constitute the bedrock of any broader alliances to be forged in struggle.

Conscious and organised sections of these classes and strata are to be found in "their" sectional organisations such as trade unions and students' organisations as well as other democratic structures such as civic, youth and women's organisations, political parties and religious, cultural and sports bodies*. Therefore, while class or sectional organisations form an important part of a front (and ideally all classes and strata should have their organisations), in reality a front or similar formation does not imply a mechanical alliance of "class organisations", but bases itself on the actual organisations and institutions in existence. The science and art of revolutionary practice lies in the ability to discern the class interest behind concrete standpoints and actions of organisations and individuals irrespective of where they originate from. At the same time, revolutionaries

*The ANC is at the head of the national democratic struggle; and the SACP occupies an important place as the vanguard of the working class. Their relationship with the "legal" organisations takes on a variety of forms in keeping with their underground vanguard role.

should strive to unite and strengthen organisations of the most revolutionary force: the working class. Yet this does not mean that trade union unity necessarily has to precede a broader coalition. The same could be said of the other sectors eg., women and teachers. Concrete reality will determine the concrete approach: if and when correctly handled either of the steps will help facilitate the other.

The factors above show that a coalition of anti-apartheid forces is dictated by revolutionary necessity: it is the shortest possible (but not straight) route to the final objective. As Lenin pointed out, a broad alliance "calls for concessions"[5] to prospective allies; a detour on the part of — in our case — the democratic movement. The question is, as Lenin puts it:

> "What would both 'contracting' parties gain by this 'compromise'...?...If *neither* gains anything then the compromise must be recognised as impossible, and nothing more is to be said".[7]

The primary gain for the democratic movement lies in the achievement of what were identified as the primary challenge: to create the conditions for the removal of the regime from power. To reach that stage, "progressive" democrats (and the other contracting parties) are "forced" to find areas of agreement which do not necessarily include all their positions. While we talk of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa, we cannot insist that the broad coalition should adopt the Freedom Charter. While we talk of a programme of action to isolate and confront the ruling clique we do not demand that the coalition undertake general and rent strikes, form organs of people's power and self-defence units or engage (in respect of the vanguard movement) in armed struggle. We will at times find ourselves having to work with some forces within the bantustan system and the racist parliament.

But it is a "compromise" in a qualified sense, for the mass democratic movement in general does not abandon its strategies, forms of struggle or its campaigns. In the final analysis, the democratic movement proceeds from the premise that its positions are correct, and that it is capable of winning over all genuine anti-apartheid forces to those positions. Within the coalition the bottom line is active opposition to the regime on the basis of the programme agreed upon. In addition to joint actions, various sectors of the coalition will have specific tasks and mandates within the programme, in keeping with their specific position. In the words of the Dakar declaration, "different strategies must be used in accordance with the possibilities available to the various forces opposed to the system of apartheid". But also "...in its conduct this struggle must assist in the furtherance both of democratic practice and in the building of a nation of all South Africans..."

When Differences Arise

Yet, in keeping with their class and group interests and with their depth of political understanding, different sectors of a coalition or front are bound to differ on many questions of strategy and tactics. There are forms of active opposition on which sectors of the coalition would not see eye to eye. These cannot be used to weaken or divide the coalition. However, policies and actions which run counter to the letter and spirit of the alliance, which strengthen the ruling clique have to be combatted without reservation, whatever the consequences. In other words unity is not an end in itself.

Therefore, the components of a front do not have to bury their differences. each sector should have the right to retain its independence; the freedom to openly express, and campaign for, its own views and the latitude to pursue its own objectives as long as they do not aim at defeating the ends of the alliance. A component of a front should have the right to confront its counterpart if and when it is of the view that its policies and actions are injurious to the struggle, be they economic, political or ideological. Where necessary such criticism should be conducted openly. Where one component oversteps its mandate or seeks to take advantage of state repression — against its more consistent allies — to make dubious gains, this must be exposed and openly challenged. As Le Duan said:

> "...while one must strive to maintain and strengthen the Front's unity, there must necessarily be a struggle between the viewpoints of the various members of the Front, who represent various classes. One-sided unity, unaccompanied by struggle, in practice leads to the disruption of unity and the liquidation of the Front. If one knows how to conduct a principled struggle, i.e., one that is based on the common political programme and aimed at implementing it, far from breaking up unity and weakening the Front, one will have done the only thing that could strengthen and consolidate the Front".[8]

In addition, the formation of an alliance which includes classes which are otherwise at loggerheads does not imply "class peace". Workers cannot abandon their struggle for a living wage or trade union rights simply because a particular boss or even one in NAFCOC is, broadly-speaking, anti-apartheid. In fact, one way to ascertain the good faith of the latter would be their attitude on such questions.

This does not mean that democratic forces should go out of their way to search for differences and hunt for "hidden agendas". The main fight should be conducted against the main enemy. Within a front the "principled struggle" should be about issues of principle. In this way the democratic movement will be able to steer the coalition along the right course. Further, it will win recognition as the leader by being effective in action in pursuit of

national democracy; genuinely raising and fighting for the common interests be they short- or long-term; being consistently democratic and respectful in dealing with the allies; accounting consistently to the masses and involving them in discussion, decision-making and action; etc. In this regard, a style of work that evinces scheming by 'invisible' cliques is bound to antagonise other forces. On the other hand a democratic style combined with effective struggle will win the respect of all the allies.

Areas of Agreement

Within a broad front, the areas of agreement will become fewer the further one moves from the core. With some of the forces a common approach will be possible only on a few immediate campaigns; with others only independent, parallel action on a specific issue will be possible. Therefore the democratic movement has to identify these various forces and calculate the distance they are able to cover with it. The Campaign for National United Action — involving the UDF, COSATU, NECC and SACC — is one case in point. What is absolutely necessary is that the consistently democratic and active forces, representing the most oppressed and exploited sections, have to strengthen themselves as well as their rapport if they are to play their historic role.

A front is itself a dynamic organism, undergoing organisational and political changes in the process of development. It takes on a concrete historical shape depending on concrete historical tasks and circumstances, An agreement on some principles and on a programme of action does not necessarily mean that a structural relationship — with executive committees, presidents and all — has to emerge. Rather it could herald the beginning of a long process of joint actions and, so to speak, "confidence-building measures" culminating in local, regional and national structures. In the process of struggle, circumstances could so change that the formation of a structured coalition becomes necessary. New forces could join a front after a period; others could have justifiable reasons to insist on a bigger, broader front. In other words, the structural expression of an alliance is not a matter of principle. The principle is that it should serve the desired purpose, involve the masses at all levels, and not lead to weakening of democratic organisations or a coalition of such organisations.

The UDF is such a coalition. Five years on, it remains an important historical force in the political arena. Hand in hand with the democratic union movement — on the basis of permanent local, regional and national

structures — the two organisations can only emerge at the head of the broad anti-apartheid coalition.

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AFRICA
NOTES & COMMENT

By Jabulani Mkhatshwa

SENEGAL: What Manner Of Democracy?

Not so long ago Dakar, the capital of Senegal, captured the attention of the world by hosting a conference that brought together delegations from the ANC and Afrikaans-speaking white academics from South Africa. In his address to the participants, President Abdou Diouf preached a doctrine of political tolerance and national unity, and by that example reaffirmed Senegal's reputation in the media as a democratic country concerned with reconciliation and justice. This pretence of democracy in Senegal's politics, however, was destroyed less than a year later when the Diouf government imprisoned opposition leaders following elections that were characterised by the opposition parties as a tragedy and a farce.

Within 24 hours of the results of the elections being announced, Amath Dansokho and Abdoulaye Wade, respectively the general secretary of the Party of Independence and Labour (PIT) and leader of Senegal's main opposition Democratic Party (PDS), were imprisoned and charged with "incitement to violence and actions aimed at discrediting national institutions". A State of Emergency was declared and a dusk to dawn curfew announced. What was going on?

Senegal has for some time been held up as an example of an African country practising western style democracy at a time when many other African state systems were based on one-party rule. It was not always so. Diouf's predecessor, Leopold Senghor, had presided over as despotic a regime as any until in 1974 he said that the Sengalese political system was "matured enough" to allow for a parliamentary opposition and amended the constitution accordingly, allowing first one, then two and later three opposition parties to function.

Abdou Diouf did not come to power through an election victory but was handed political power in 1981 by the outgoing president Senghor. Diouf placed no limit on the number of political parties, spoke about maintaining a "democratic multi-party system" and called on the opposition parties to help rebuild the national economy and consolidate the country's sovereignty. But there has been a central flaw in Senegal's electoral system which invalidates its claims to democracy.

When the PDS took the first opposition seats in the National Assembly in the 1978 elections, it immediately came into conflict with the ruling Socialist Party (PS) over the question of the electoral code. At times the PDS has threatened not to take part in elections unless the code was changed. This conflict matured over the years, and through successive election campaigns, came to a head during the 1988 elections.

Opposition parties have claimed that they can submit proof that the 1983 elections were rigged. Wade, for example, contested the results of those elections at the Supreme Court, whose judges, however, ruled that they were fair. In his submissions Wade argued that the electoral code makes it easy for any ruling party to cheat at the elections. For example, the code provides for the nomination of polling station chairpersons by the ruling party. Practice showed that these were always nominated from government personnel.

President Diouf dismissed a suggestion from Wade that an international committee of observers should monitor the elections. In his reply to Wade, President Diouf told his party congress that the electoral system in Senegal was based on proportional representation so that most parties could win a seat in the National Assembly. "Had we adopted the simple majority system, the Parti Socialiste would win all seats," said Diouf.

It seems that Diouf made this statement in the belief that no single political party in the country could ever win an election in competition with the PS. Senegalese law prohibits parties from entering into mergers or coalitions for the purpose of presidential and general elections. This law, however, leaves a loophole that allows party members to cast votes for candidates other than

their own. The PIT and PDS took advantage of this loophole when they forged an alliance, with Abdoulaye Wade proposed as the principal opposition candidate. It was this alliance that sent shivers up the spine of Diouf's ruling Socialist Party.

Call For Change

During the election campaign, massive rallies were organised throughout the country under the slogan of "change!" The PIT, for example, organised a huge pre-poll carnival opposite the ruling regime's headquarters. An enthusiastic crowd of supporters chanted the Communist Party's slogans and danced in a procession led by Amath Dansokho and Semou Gueye, both leaders of the PIT. After a two month tour of some 100 villages, Dansokho was able to say:

> "We've had a very large success in the country. Our alliance policy has been a success. The ruling regime is angry with us."

When Diouf was challenged to hold a televised public debate with either Dansokho or Wade, he repeatedly refused. This came as no surprise to the opposition parties alliance, which charged that Diouf's economic policies were the source of the country's economic ills. People's income, particularly that of the peasants, had decreased by 75% since Diouf came to power. Peasants make up 70% of Senegal's 10 million population. Urban wages have also been cut by half since 1983 and 10% of the workers have lost their jobs. Close to 200,000 work-seekers leave the rural areas each year to look for a better life in the capital city Dakar, where they end up overcrowded in shantytowns. Their condition contrasts sharply with that of Diouf, who owns the largest textile company in the country and also has extensive property in France and the United States. During the election campaign Diouf was financially backed by France as well as by certain financial establishments in some Arab countries. Clearly, his defeat by the opposition alliance in the elections would have radically affected French neo-colonial interests in the country.

How socialist is Diouf's Socialist Party? It is socialist only in name. It has privatised the main groundnut industry and has announced its intention to privatise ten more state industries. Most political observers have concluded that this development is due to the pressures by the IMF and the World Bank, whose debt Senegal is failing to pay.

To the mass of the Senegalese people, it was obvious long before the elections that the dice would be loaded in favour of Diouf's Socialist Party. This became particularly clear during the election campaign itself when the mass media were dominated by Diouf's personnel. In some TV programmes, French MPs were shown giving support to Diouf.

Senegal went to the polls on Sunday, 28 February, 1988. Of the 16 opposition parties, 6 offered candidates who challenged the presidency of Diouf. Only a day after the elections a State of Emergency was declared — an exercise that became ironical given the announcement that Diouf's Socialist Party had got 77% of the vote (i.e. 103 seats of the 121 seat parliament), with Diouf re-elected as president.

Heavily armoured cars roamed through the dusty streets of the city and its surrounding townships, and Senegalese soldiers, brandishing rubber truncheons and teargas guns, were positioned in various strategic positions throughout the capital. A commentator in Dakar watched this whole development and, shaking his head, said that this showed how little hope there was of changing governments by elections in Africa. This may be a very cynical comment, but it is certainly an irony that a "popularly" elected government was defended by an army only a day after its election.

The British journalists, David Whitfield and Midge Purcell, reported after their trip to Dakar that one supporter of Diouf's Socialist Party was caught with 1,000 voting cards, whereas in the opposition strongholds, the slums of Dakar, voters complained that they could not get their voting cards. Was it for this reason that Diouf called the PDS-PIT alliance a group of "bandits" who had to be pulled out by the roots?

All charges against Dansokho were later withdrawn while Wade was given a suspended sentence. Whatever the fate of the opposition in the current situation in Senegal, the Communist Party's alliance policy as well as its general experience during this last election campaign has been an important lesson in its march to popular power. The masses of the people have clearly identified it as a champion of its interests — particularly the working class and the peasantry. As Dansokho says:

> "If we struggle for an abstract democracy we will be overthrown — the first priority must be seeds, irrigation, fertilisers, machinery for the peasants and jobs in the towns. The problem is to develop a political power which can manoeuvre intelligently without the strings of neo-colonialism. It is a very complex class struggle... The people may not understand the complicated ideas of Marxism, but they understand very well the policies."

ECONOMIC AID: TILL DEBT DO US PART

African countries have a difficult choice: either they continue to meet external debt obligations or they unilaterally repudiate part or all of their debt repayments. If they choose the first option, they risk diverting their meagre resources away from vital areas of national development, and this

will also result in their being permanent client states to Western imperialist countries and international financial institutions. The second option carries the risk of jeopardising Africa's ability to obtain financial assistance from creditor countries during a period when most of their economies are still trapped within the capitalist economic orbit.

African countries have an external debt totalling an estimated $200 billion. According to Ide Omarou, the Secretary General of the OAU, even this figure could be misleading because it does not reflect net resources extended to Africa in fresh loans. Servicing this debt consumes about 40% of Africa's export earnings. For some countries, like Sudan, Zambia and Madagascar, the percentage of export earnings spent on meeting debt repayments is totally beyond their financial capacity. Sudan spends 204% of her export earnings for the repayment of her debt; Zambia 100% and Madagascar 87%.

Speaking immediately after his election as chairperson of the OAU, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia said that Africa, which continually earns less from exports and pays more for imports, was at "a crossroad of history". Calling for a lasting solution to the debt crisis, he warned that individual approaches to the problem had not been effective. What was needed was a common political approach, for without such joint political action, the imperialist countries would continue to deal with African countries in a manner that favoured them.

The African debt crisis is not purely a financial matter; it has clearly defined political dimensions. After all, the decisions about terms on which to give African countries credits are taken at the highest political levels of Western governments and each time they are based on political considerations.

During its extraordinary debt conference held in Addis Ababa at the end of last year, 1987, the OAU adopted a declaration which called for the suspension of all Africa's external debt service payments for a period of ten years from 1988. It also called for an improvement in the international economic environment with a view to accelerating economic recovery and development through better export prices for African commodities, the removal of protectionist quota and tariff measures which impede the access of Africa's manufactured and semi-finished goods to world markets, as well as the defreezing of African funds in foreign banks.

What has been the response of Africa's creditors to this call? In general there has been no eagerness on the part of the imperialist countries to sympathise with Africa's problems. Their main problem is to obtain profits from Africa in order to subsidise their own economies, even if in the process

Africa is milked to the bones. Even when Britain, Canada and the Nordic countries have agreed to cancel certain amounts of Africa's debt to them (Britain cancelled $2500 million and Canada $729 million), these amounts, on a total continental basis, are very small in comparison with the magnitude of the problem — a problem which, in the final analysis, was created by the very "benevolent" imperialist countries themselves. The United States, France and Canada have flatly refused to accept even a partial repayment of the debt in local currencies. It is a clear case of a relationship that was never honest, a marriage of convenience, motivated by profit seeking on the part of one partner, whose marriage pledge was that the friendly relationship would last "till debt do us part".

The IMF and the World Bank have also refused to reduce interest rates on African government loans. Capital inflows have declined at a rate almost equal to the growth of the external debt. According to a report by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the 19 Western countries, private flow of funds to developing countries fell from $74.3 billion in 1981 to $27.2 billion in 1986.

MOZAMBIQUE: AMNESTY FOR THE MNR BANDITS

The Mozambican People's Assembly has passed a law that grants amnesty to the South African backed MNR bandits if they voluntarily surrender themselves to the auuthorities. The amnesty is valid until 31 December 1988, giving the bandits a full year during which to surrender. This measure is in line with the realisation by the Mozambican government leaders that the majority of people who participate in terror actions for the MNR do so against their will, and if they could find a way out, would immediately come back to their people. This was said by Marcelino Dos Santos, chairperson of the Mozambican People's Assembly, when this measure was adopted:

> "We know that there are many people who are looking for the chance to abandon banditry so that they can become reconciled with their families, return to work, and rejoin society."

Dos Santos made it clear, however, as President Joachim Chissano had said before, that the amnesty is not a substitute for military action against the MNR. The MNR kidnaps people, including children, and forces them to carry out bandit orders if they want to escape mutilation and death. The bandits use children to carry out thefts and to spy on the Mozambican armed forces; young girls are sexually abused in bandit camps. Some of those who

have shown signs of refusal to obey such orders have their ears and fingertips cut off. Health Minister Dr Fernando Vaz confirmed this when he told the Agencia de Informacao de Mozambique (AIM) that some of the children who have been captured by Frelimo have confessed thet they were turned into killers by the MNR superiors who kidnapped them in the first place.

> "They say that if they do not kill, then their superiors will kill them... we are shocked to find children committing murder... speaking as a doctor, and judging from the symptoms observed up to now, I would say that there are children under the influence of drugs."

Information reaching the Mozambican government from the MNR camps also shows that there is a growing state of demoralisation among them. A stream of desertions, including some officers, has been a source of embarrassment for the MNR top leadership. In several of their bases in central Mozambique an attempt is being made to boost their morale by promoting many of them to the rank of "general". Former bandits also attribute the general state of demoralisation to joint combat operations by Tanzanian and Zimbabwean troops who fight side by side with Mozambican soldiers.

The amnesty announcement could therefore not have come at a worse time for the MNR leadership. Since March 1988 scores of MNR bandits and their leaders have taken advantage of the amnesty. In the Manica province, two leaders of MNR surrendered together with 53 other members. Joao José Terere (46), was a reconnaissance commander operating between Inchope (the crossroads between the Beira-Maputo highway, and the road to Zimbabwe) and the Zimbabwean frontier. The second, Modesto Sixpence, had been a deputy to a commander named Mangolende, recently killed by the Mozambican armed forces. Both men testified to increased activity by Mozambican troops and their allies as among the factors that persuaded them to surrender, in addition to the knowledge that if they do so voluntarily, they are guaranteed freedom and protection by the amnesty law. They also spoke of hunger and disease in the MNR camps, and demoralisation at the failure of the MNR to keep its promises of speedy victory.

In Chimoio, two other MNR bandit chiefs surrendered to the Mozambican Red Cross together with some of the people under their leadership. Another group of 150 bandits who had been operating from the Manica province gave themselves up to the authorities. All of those who have surrendered testify to the role of South Africa and Malawi in the provision of arms and logistical support for the MNR. The story is the same in the provinces of Sofala, Tete and Niassa.

In some provinces the process of integrating former bandits into society has advanced phenomenally. For example, in the Massinga district of Inhambane, there is an entire village composed of former members of the MNR. They are working the land, some have been reunited with their families, and no reprisals have been taken against them — though some admit to taking part in ambushes and were doubtlessly responsible for the murder of innocent Mozambicans.

Prisoners of War

Mozambican leaders say that the policy of clemency towards the enemies of the revolution is nothing new in their history. During the war for independence, Frelimo granted captured Portuguese soldiers prisoner of war status. Those in the movement who would have preferred to kill them were soundly defeated in the political struggles within Frelimo in the mid-1960s. Thus, when the agreement ending the war and paving the way for independence was signed between Frelimo and Portugal in 1974, Frelimo handed over a substantial number of prisoners of war. To its shame, the Portuguese army could not produce a single Frelimo prisoner of war.

In many revolutions, including bourgeois revolutions, those who worked for the defeated side were always liable to lose their property or their lives, or at least be chased out of the country. During the 18th century American war of independence, those who made the mistake of supporting the British monarchy rather than George Washington, or those in France who supported Louis XVI instead of the French Revolution, often ended up with their heads separated from their bodies. Frelimo, on the other hand, restrained itself from such practice. Indeed, after independence, it did draw up a list of those Mozambicans who belonged to the Portuguese secret service, the PIDE/DGS, or the elite units of the colonial army, but they were neither put on trial nor shot. Their photos were displayed at their workplaces so that their colleagues might be warned of their shady past, and they were deprived of political rights for seven years.

In 1982, however, at a lengthy meeting in Maputo between Frelimo Party leadership and many hundreds of the former collaborators, the slate was wiped clean. Their political rights were restored, the photos came down, and they were all to be considered as fellow citizens, not as collaborators. This did not mean that the Frelimo party had forgotten what had happened under colonialism, but it was prepared to forgive those Mozambicans who had been used by the Salazar and Caetano regimes.

Similarly, the amnesty decreed by the People's Assembly does not mark a change of attitude on the part of the Frelimo Party leadership to the war fought by the apartheid regime against the people of Mozambique. Frelimo's clemency demonstrates a willingness on the part of a matured revolutionary government to show mercy to all those Mozambicans whom the Pretoria regime has been using as its tools.

The Mozambican People's Assembly thus declared itself willing to pardon the most barbaric crimes: the massacre of hospital patients, including newborn babies and pregnant women in the town of Homoine in July 1987; the burning of houses or buses, with their occupants or passengers still inside. Under the 1979 security legislation those who were guilty of such crimes were to face the death sentence.

The MNR maintains its grip on its recruits by fear. Standard bandit recruitment is based on the kidnapping of peasant boys from villages or homesteads. They are then given military training for a period of six months, provided with a gun and sent out to commit some horrible crime of violence. They are told that it is useless to consider running away because "Frelimo will kill you if you give yourself up". The amnesty removes that fear.

As the news of the amnesty reaches the MNR camps through various channels — by radio, word of mouth and even leaflets — the situation begins to change as more and more people come back to their original homes. Hunger in the camps and other difficult conditions produced by the intensifying war create favourable conditions for the elimination of the MNR bandits.

Yet it must be said that the main bulwark of MNR activity, and the sole source of its existence, is the apartheid regime. Not until the apartheid regime is overthrown can the situation in Mozambique return to normal.

THEORY AND PRACTICE — Part 2

OUR STRATEGY FOR DEFEATING S.A. COLONIALISM

By Ben Molapo[1]

In the first part of this article (published in *The African Communist*, no. 113) we argued that the concept of colonialism of a special type (CST) is integrally related to the general body of Marxist-Leninist theory. In particular, we related this concept to the historical materialist theory of the nation. We then considered why CST, a particular form of bourgeois domination, had emerged historically in South Africa. We concluded the first part by outlining the essential features of CST. We characterised it as a form of bourgeois domination in which the black majority of South Africa is separated, fragmented and subordinated in a variety of ways (economically, politically, socially, culturally), while at the same time being included within the fabric of a relatively advanced capitalist society. This simultaneous exclusion and inclusion, related to the colonial form of domination on the one hand, and the social forces of capitalist production on the other, constitutes the contradictory essence of CST.

In this second instalment on CST we will attempt to illustrate the enormous fruitfulness of this concept for our strategic grasp of the current situation. Far from being outmoded, or faded, it provides us with the theoretical weapons to develop a concrete analysis of the South African struggle.

The Emergence of a Black Bourgeoisie

One of the most repeated criticisms of the CST analysis is that it supposedly fails to take adequate account of the emergence of new classes and strata within the camp of the black oppressed, that it erroneously regards all blacks as part of the people's camp.[2]

It is certainly true that there have been significant class developments in the last decade amongst blacks, including the emergence of various entrepreneurial/bourgeois strata. However, it is the *opponents* of the CST analysis who lack the theoretical concepts to explain adequately these developments. For this reason their political guidelines are confused.

Generally speaking, there are in fact two or (depending on how you draw the line) three distinct black bourgeois strata. On the one hand there is an emergent bourgeois stratum that depends for its capital accumulation more or less entirely on its position within the collaborative structures of apartheid — community councils, Bantustan governments, management committees, etc. This particular stratum enriches itself, often through fraud and corruption, using its access to collaborative political structures to allocate funds, land and other resources for personal gain. This stratum is generally distinct from the black bourgeois strata that are emerging (i) through township based commercial and service activities. These activities begin often as informal family-based operations — stores, taxi-fleets, beauty parlours, soccer clubs, etc, and sometimes expand into small-scale capitalist enterprises.

(ii) through the professional path — doctors, lawyers, accountants, promoted by the large capitalist corporations on to their boards of directors, or accumulating sufficient funds of their own by way of their professional activities, and then launching themselves into business. These last two strata (represented, for instance, by NAFCOC) tend to identify more readily with the broad national liberation movement. But they are, indeed, recruitable into collaborative structures.

However, politically and theoretically it is important to make this general distinction between a corrupt, collaborative bureaucratic black bourgeois stratum whose very existence depends upon the perpetuation of apartheid, and the latter strata which have their horizons (albeit bourgeois horizons) restricted severely by national oppression (Group Areas, cultural disadvantages, etc.). In regard to these latter strata in particular there is a real political battle for allegiance. Those mechanical 'Marxists' who label the black bourgeoisie as a whole as the 'enemy', lump the Sebes, NAFCOC members and the Motlanas all into one heap, and therefore abandon the

struggle for allegiance.

Obviously, when making general distinctions between different strata, as we have just done, we are drawing straight lines on to what is really a fluid, developing situation. We are not saying that the particular strata we have distinguished are permanently separate. We need to assess and develop our understanding of these class processes in an ongoing way. However, rather than being defensive, let us turn the issue around. Is it really possible to account scientifically for the emergent, collaborative bureaucratic bourgeoisie without having an understanding of the particular, CST form of domination in our country, of which these elements are the direct products? They are not simply bourgeois, their characteristics cannot simply be deduced from a narrow economic textbook approach.

The Tactics and Strategies of our Struggle

The practical fruitfulness of the CST approach is not limited to this, in fact, secondary question of our struggle. The CST approach, like no other, illuminates all our major tactics and strategies, strengths and strategic weaknesses. We speak of the 'four pillars' of our struggle (the international, the mass democratic, the underground, and the armed struggle) — on each of these fronts the CST analysis serves to explain the reality we confront and to guide our revolutionary activity. Without it we disarm ourselves.

On the international front of struggle, it is the *colonial* character of the apartheid regime that marks it out as uniquely illegitimate. The regime is fundamentally in violation of international law as it has evolved in the post-2nd World War period. It is no accident that the regime, and its imperialist allies, constantly try to undercut the colonial specification of South African white minority rule. There is a constant juridico-political and ideological struggle to portray the regime as a fully independent, legitimate state, albeit with certain "regrettable" blemishes; to portray South Africa as an African country with typical "developmental" problems, a country combining the "first world and the third". In short, the attempt is to portray our struggle as a civil rights struggle within the framework of the existing system, and the regime itself as the principal agent of the needed "reforms". What is at stake is the very status of our struggle as a fully-fledged national liberation struggle, with all that it implies.

Our struggle for international solidarity and for the complete isolation of the regime turns around the colonial character of the apartheid regime. This regime is not just another authoritarian or even fascist government — one among all too many in the world today. No, the South African apartheid

regime is uniquely illegitimate. Our recourse to armed struggle, and the international support we receive for this recourse, are directly linked to this colonial illegitimacy.

Those ultra-leftists and others who wish to throw away the concept of CST on the grounds that South Africa is a capitalist country (as if CST and capitalism were incompatible) play straight into the hands of the imperialists and the apartheid regime in our struggle on the international plane.

However, to argue that it is useful for the international struggle to describe the oppression in South Africa as colonialism of a special type is not, of course, to clinch the argument. Unless CST is indeed an accurate, objective portrayal of the reality in our country, then we are simply jumping on to concepts for pragmatic reasons. Let us now relate the CST approach more fundamentally to the great wave of semi-insurrectionary struggles, the combination of mass democratic, underground and armed struggles within our country over the last period.

Boycotts and CST

One of the major features of our struggle in the last period has been the widespread use of the mass boycott. There have been election boycotts, schools and university boycotts, boycotts of cultural and sports venues, canteen boycotts in hostels, consumer boycotts of both specific products in support of trade union struggles, and against white commerce in general, at least one newspaper boycott, rent and rates boycotts on a national scale (costing the regime an estimated one billion rand), bus boycotts. Within production there have been the equivalent of the boycott — strikes, both specific industrial strikes, as well as several mass national political stayaways. Nowhere else in the world will you find such a widespread, continuous use of the boycott weapon on so many fronts simultaneously. It is no accident, however, that the struggling masses of our country have deployed this weapon — it is one of the most obvious tactics of an included-excluded majority oppressed by CST on the terrain of a relatively advanced capitalist economy.

The boycott is a weapon through which our people use the leverage of their inferior inclusion (as students, workers, consumers, voters for dummy colonial institutions), and the organisational base of their collective exclusion as blacks (within gutter education institutions, bush colleges, hostels, townships, etc.) to inflict blows against the ruling bloc. However, precisely because of the special type of colonialism in place, because of the integral inclusion of our people within the fabric of a single relatively advanced

capitalist economy, an unlimited boycott in many sites is not possible. (This limitation does not apply to rent boycotts, obviously, nor to an indefinite boycott of dummy political institutions.)

For instance, a completely independent commercial network under popular control is simply not possible in the present situation. For this reason an indefinite, general consumer boycott is not a viable strategy. This is not to say that such a boycott, for limited aims and for a definite period, has not already shown great possibilities. The 1985 NECC national conference drew similar conclusions regarding education boycotts.

Rudimentary Organs of People's Power

Since late 1984 our struggle has seen a watershed development — the emergence of rudimentary organs of people's power (street committees, village committees, defence committees, neighbourhood health care groups, people's education structures). It is true that our ability to sustain these structures in the face of massive state repression is uneven. But in townships and villages throughout our country the oppressed masses have discovered for themselves and operated for periods of weeks, months, sometimes years at a time the future, grassroots organs of a new democratic South Africa. However short-lived the structures have sometimes been, the experience of expelling the agents of their oppression from the township, of taking democratic control of the streets, of removing serious crime almost completely, has been invaluable. Despite the state of emergency, wherever the space is won in struggle, these rudimentary organs still keep bobbing up again.

Once more it is the CST approach that offers the best general guideline to understanding the character and significance of these rudimentary organs of people's power. Our own national liberation struggle has resemblances to, as well as differences from the conventional liberation struggle against colonialism. Like others, our national democratic struggle is a revolutionary struggle, it is a struggle to remove the existing state structures and replace them with authentic structures of self-determination. Like other national liberation struggles, ours is not a civil rights struggle to win more democratic concessions within the existing system. As with other national liberation struggles, we cannot wait for full liberation before beginning the process of self-government. Wherever we push back the racist colonial ruling bloc, wherever we create pockets of ungovernability, our people have been compelled to develop rudimentary democratic organs of popular power. This is not an academic choice based in some theory. It is a concrete necessity

in order to solve the basic problems of organising, defending and consolidating.

However, in our circumstances these developments are happening *primarily* in townships (both urban and rural), rather than in the classic, remote liberated countryside zones – inaccessible jungles, mountain ranges, amongst isolated peasant communities. In most national liberation struggles the liberation forces begin to build their first rudimentary organs of popular power (clinics, defence committees, village councils, schools) in the remote, inaccessible corners of underdeveloped, third world countries. In these struggles it is the peasantry that conceals, clothes, feeds and supplies the greater part of the person power for the people's army. In most progressive national liberation struggles this century, while the proletariat has been the *leading* class force, the peasantry has been the *main* class force. The objective class reality in South Africa is different. Here the peasantry has been decimated as a class force, while there is a large, numerically preponderant working class.

Emergent dual power structures are, of course, not only a feature of the liberated zones in the typical anti-colonial and anti-imperial national liberation struggles of the 20th century. Dual power structures are a feature of many developing revolutionary situations. Among the classic examples of dual power structures are the city communes in France in 1871 (studied closely by Marx, Engels and Lenin) and the soviets of 1905 and 1917.

In South Africa the rudimentary people's power structures, although occurring in the context of a national liberation struggle, are marked by some strong resemblances to the French city communes and the Russian working class soviets. This resemblance has everything to do with the largely urban character of these structures, and, in the Russian case, with the class domination of the proletariat within them. However, our own rudimentary organs of people's power have a particular character. One key to understanding this particularity is to consider the South African township, the major site of our organs of popular power, as a specific product of CST.

CST and the Township

As recently as the early 1970s our military perspectives were still governed by the more traditional pattern of national liberation struggles. This perspective was not just a case of uncritically copying other situations. The perspective was influenced by the great heroic struggles of the South African peasantry in the 1950s and early 1960s (in places like Sekhukhuneland and Pondoland). But since at least 1976, like all serious revolutionaries, we have had to learn

from the masses themselves. We have come to see the township (both urban and rural) as our primary (but not of course exclusive) organisational focus — the township as the mass revolutionary base.

Once again, to understand the township we need to have recourse to the CST approach. The black township in our country is the direct and very specific product of CST. In the first part of this century the rural reserves were the major site for the reproduction of labour power for the leading sectors of the capitalist economy. With the virtual collapse of peasant agriculture in these areas, it is the township that has been developed as the major social mechanism for the residential inclusion-exclusion and reproduction of the greater part of the South African proletariat. These townships are located both within the Bantustans and, as segregated group areas, within "white" urban and rural South Africa.

The South African black township bears a certain resemblance to other residential settlements of oppressed groups, but it also has specific features. Like the proletarian red belt suburbs of some West and South European cities (Turin, Paris, etc.), with their own rich revolutionary traditions, the South African township is deliberately distanced from the main commercial, political and administrative centres of the city or town that it services. Like the red belt suburbs the South African township, generally, is largely proletarian in class composition. However, unlike the red belt suburbs, the township is a racial entity, its inhabitants are defined primarily by race rather than by class. For this reason the township includes a greater diversity of social classes and strata than a red belt suburb.

This difference, together with the greater cultural distance between the township and the ruling bloc, has significant political and military consequences. In the first place, the township is foreign terrain for the white ruling bloc. To control and administer the township it requires a special apparatus depending, in its lower echelons, on lackeys and puppets of all kinds. This collaborative apparatus is, precisely, one of the regime's most vulnerable points. In the last period, the slogan of ungovernability referred most specifically to the elimination of these collaborative structures from the township.

Given the presence of a variety of strata, the township, despite its general impoverishment, has been able under the right circumstances to exert its control over resources, services and networks that would be inaccessible to a more uniformly proletarian suburb. The consumer boycott against white businesses, which had an enormous political impact, particularly in the Karoo and Eastern Cape, was possible to sustain for a period of time precisely

because of the presence of a small trading and entrepreneurial stratum within the township, and because of the cultural separateness and solidarity of the township. Similarly, in townships where people's power structures made the most advances in 1985-6, groupings like taxi-drivers were brought into popular structures. The transport resources they owned became available for political and even, at times, military work on a roster basis.

The South African township is also different in significant ways from the US ghetto, with which it is sometimes compared. The ghetto is typically located within a decaying part of the inner city, home of ethnic minorities and recent immigrants. It is often dominated economically by the informal and service sectors. The closest South African parallel would be the now destroyed District Six. The South African township, although including a variety of classes and strata, is dominated by the industrial proletariat. The township, in fact, is the base from within which the South African working class has begun to exert its organised leadership over other oppressed classes and strata (the black petty bourgeoisie, the emergent black bourgeoisie, professionals, students, youth, etc.).

Although US ghettoes, for instance, have been the focus of some extremely explosive uprisings in the last 30 years, the class composition and the ethnic minority character of their populations distinguish their uprisings from the potentially more organised, sustained and strategically critical role of the South African township in the overall struggle against oppression and exploitation.

Squatter Camps

Finally, the South African township bears certain obvious resemblances to the sprawling squatter camps of many underdeveloped third world societies. The *barrios* of South America would be one example with their tens of thousands of working and unemployed people, many forced off the land and pouring into industrial and commercial centres in a desperate search for jobs. However, there is one major difference, the *barrios* are the more or less spontaneous organic constructions of their inhabitants, located generally on the very edges of the town or city. The South African township, by contrast, is typically the deliberate construction of the apartheid regime's CST domination, planned and sited to maximise and streamline the simultaneous inclusion-exclusion of our people. The township is usually built on flat ground, to a geometric grid pattern, with space between matchbox houses and key roads wide enough for military convoys. Surveillance from the air and ground is simple, with sealing off, and

containment possibilities and the lines of fire all carefully researched and maximised. The township is also deliberately cut off from the city or town centre, (the focus of political, administrative and financial power) by freeways and networks of rail lines.

Of course, there are notable exceptions – Crossroads, more like the South American *barrios*, was for periods of time inaccessible to the regime. Its compact squatter camp character made it impossible for the SAP and SADF to patrol in armoured vehicles, and its level of organisation and militancy (for several years at least) made it too dangerous for them to patrol on foot. Short of major military action (and here they were constrained by local and international solidarity) the only way in which Crossroads could be defeated without suffering unacceptable levels of casualties was from the inside, by the action of mercenaries and death squads. This, as we know, the regime finally succeeded in doing, at least temporarily, in 1986.

Crossroads is one of the few South African exceptions that proves the rule about the general, militarily planned pattern of urban black settlement. In the last several years there has been an unparalleled level of militancy and semi-insurrectionary struggle going on in South Africa's townships. For days, weeks, months at a time the regime has lost its ability to rule in localities just 12 kilometres away from the Union Buildings in Pretoria, 10 kilometres away from Parliament in Cape Town, just 15 kilometres away from the headquarters of the Anglo-American Corporation or Jan Smuts International Airport.

Such a relatively high level of struggle on the very doorsteps of the central organs of power would, generally, have produced significant changes in most countries of the world. But in South Africa, as a direct result of CST, and the particular strategic features of the township, this has not been so. CST has created the possibility of the township as a mass revolutionary base, by packing together in impoverished conditions a culturally distinct majority. It has also organised matters, however, in such a way that our struggles of the last ten years have, largely, been contained *within* these townships.

Overcoming our Major Strategic Weakness

Understanding and highlighting the specific colonial inclusion/exclusion of our people enables us to put our fingers more emphatically on the major strategic weakness of our struggles to date, and the reason for this weakness. In our recent agitational propaganda we have begun to address this problem. In particular, we have been underlining the importance of 'Carrying the war to the white areas'. As a general slogan this is not incorrect, but it remains

vague and confusing. In fact, the regime has been quick to exploit the vagueness. The SATV has been suggesting that the ANC and MK are bent upon launching the armed struggle against white schools and residential areas. In this way they hope to terrify wavering whites into continued support for apartheid.

We must, indeed, take seriously the task of carrying our struggle out of its general containment within the townships, not by ignoring the townships, but by using them as our mass revolutionary bases, as our springboards for this task. This means, above all, directing the struggle much more substantially at the commercial, communications, productive and administrative networks of the ruling bloc. We need to direct our blows in such a way that we increasingly disrupt, paralyse and confuse the enemy in his own base. But what does that actually mean? It means several things.

In the first place, everything we have so far said should underline the absolutely crucial role of the black working class in our struggle. Ironically, the CST analysis is sometimes accused of side-lining the working class, of being 'populist' in its orientation. Nothing could be further from the truth. If anything, the CST approach underlines more substantially than any other the absolutely central role the black working class must play in our struggle.

The South African working class has all the classic features that are underlined by Marxism-Leninism. It is the one class which, because of its numbers, collective discipline and strategic position in capitalist production, has the capacity to carry the revolution through to its fullest conclusions. However, over and above this, in South Africa the black proletariat is also the one significant social group amongst the oppressed majority that is daily transported into the very centres of economic power, and on whom economic wealth finally rests.

This strategic fact must be grasped more clearly. The mobilisation, organisation, political education and insurrectionary capacity of our working class must be enhanced. The industrial centre must feature more centrally in our political and military planning.

In the last period there have been some developments that point to a growing awareness of this. We have seen, for instance, the deployment of the factory occupation (the *siyalala*) tactic which, unlike the traditional strike which generally sees the dispersal of the strikers back to the township, poses more directly, questions about worker control over the means of production. Through community solidarity with the *siyalala* (the bringing of blankets and food, for instance) the township and its civic structures are brought to the factory, the isolation and containment of the township starts to be reversed.

We have also seen the increasing combination of strategies and organisational levels focussed around industrial action. The 1987 SATS strike offers an outstanding example – while the railway and airport workers mounted an heroic, trade union-based struggle, the youth of the townships burnt out large numbers of SATS trains with homemade petrol bombs, and MK cadres blasted rail lines and signalling equipment with high explosives. Here again worker struggles, centred in the first instance on point of production grievances, combined with supportive actions from other sectors, carried our struggle beyond the townships. Indeed in this particular case we can see how, once we spread our struggle into the key power networks of the ruling bloc we can rapidly dislocate the enemy's manoeuvrability. In the course of the SATS strike factories as far afield as Durban and Cape Town (where there was little direct action) were badly disrupted by shortages of supplies. This, of course, was hushed up by the apartheid regime, which desperately hopes that we will not learn from our own victories.

When considering the question of carrying the struggle into the power centres of the ruling bloc, another important feature of our working class must be noted. The organisation of Coloured and Indian workers into progressive COSATU trade unions has generally lagged behind the organisation of African workers. There are many reasons why this must be corrected, not least because of the strategic situation of many Coloured and Indian working class townships. In the Western Cape, for instance, there are several significant working class Coloured townships that are located, literally, in amongst factories. In the Western Cape uprisings in the latter part of 1985 it was these areas that presented particular problems for the SAP and SADF. The ability of the security forces to simply seal off and contain these townships was impeded by the presence within them of white-owned capitalist firms. These factories were also more easily attacked during this period.

Town and City Centres

When we speak of carrying our struggle into the power centres of the ruling bloc, we mean also that we must give much more attention to the town and city centres, the focus of administration, communications and consumer networks. In the last few years we have shown an ability to assemble up to 70,000 people, marching under the banners of the ANC and SACP. But once more these mass rallies have been confined generally to the townships. True, there have been some forays into town centres. During the SATS and NUM strikes workers assembled in and around their trade union offices. In 1985 squads of youth militants in the Transvaal would travel into the

Johannesburg central business district at midday on a Friday and make lightning stoning strikes at shops before dispersing into the crowds. These last actions caused significant disruptions, and the SAP experienced some difficulty in preventing these actions.

Is it possible to assemble large numbers of people in town and city centres? We need to think more carefully about how to make use of the cover of thousands of workers and shoppers coming into town. This means launching city based actions at times when this social cover is maximised. We must build up the skills and confidence of our militants, developing their ability to operate in town centres. Our youth militants know their township streets very well, and naturally gravitate to these. But we need also to build up a streetwise, city-based revolutionary knowledge as well. Our militants must learn how to use the cover of the city, where security forces are inhibited from firing wildly by the presence of white-owned department stores and white shoppers. We must learn the art, not just of the burning tyre barricade in the township street, but the barricade of the city centre traffic jam, caused by the simultaneous sabotaging of key traffic lights all over the city, or the stalling of a hijacked car or bus at a key intersection at rush-hour.

In short, we need to be thinking much more thoroughly in insurrectionary terms. We need to be thinking of all the vulnerable networks of the town and city — its rail lines, traffic lights, its phone cables, its freeways, its commercial banks. We need to be thinking of *combined* actions — industrial strikes, mass rallies, sabotage actions right across the city. All of this will not be possible to mount at a single stroke. We need to build experience, confidence and organisation at a mass level.

One further qualification must be added. Although we have underlined the strategic significance of the town and city centre, this does not mean that rural areas have no revolutionary significance. Our ability to mount, supply and win insurrectionary struggles in the urban areas depends to some extent on the degree to which we have stretched and pinned down enemy forces throughout our country. In our general revolutionary strategy, the national liberation movement correctly attaches considerable importance to political work and armed struggle in the rural areas.

Conclusion

We have used the CST approach to highlight and explain the major strategic weakness of our struggle in the last few years. What we have been saying, however, points also to our major strategic strength. In reply to the critics of his two states of emergency, PW Botha in 1985 and 1986 kept warning

ominously that the states of emergency were only a small part of his repressive arsenal. "So far", he kept repeating, "we have only lifted our little finger."

In a sense, P W Botha is not wrong. Although thousands of our people have been gunned down, and 40 000 have been detained, the regime can be said not to have unleashed its full fire-power on our townships. The regime has not used artillery, fighter bombers, naval gunnery or rocket launchers on our townships. But we should have no doubt about its *physical* capacity to do these things. There is billions of rands worth of damage in southern Angola, flattened villages, clinics, factories, bridges that tesify to the apartheid regime's military capacity. But what PW Botha is not mentioning when he lifts up his little finger is the key strategic difference between villages in Angola and townships in South Africa. It is one thing to annihilate Angolan communities, it is another to flatten Soweto, or Kwazekele. For these latter places, like hundreds of other South African townships, house the very work-force that labours in the factories, mines and farms that feed, clothe, fund, equip and transport the SADF and SAP. And here we return to the central contradiction of CST.

It is no accident that, whatever the difficulties facing our struggle, in the ranks of relatively advanced capitalist countries, South Africa is one of the weakest links. All the characteristic contradictions of bourgeois rule are sharpened and intensified in our country by the presence of a colonially oppressed majority within the very fabric of a capitalist mode of production.

NOTES

1. This article is dedicated to the memory of our comrade David Rabkin who, shortly before his tragic death, asked a simple but profound question: "What happens if we assemble ten thousand, one hundred thousand, a million people in the streets of a South African city centre?"
2. See, for instance, P. Hudson and M. Sarakinsky, "Class Interests and Politics : The Case of the Urban African Bourgeoisie", *South African Review*, No. 3, 1986.

"HE FOUGHT BACK LIKE AN ARMY OF WARRIORS"

A Tribute to a Communist Fighter Killed in Battle

By Ex-Prisoner

Comrade Shadrick Maphumulo, known as Matthew in exile, was born in the heart of Zululand, the home of his great ancestors Chaka and Dingaan.

Like the thousands of young Africans who were deprived of elementary education in our country he was forced to come to the city of Durban to seek work. As he roamed the city he heard the voice of SACTU which was then organising the unemployed. Shadrick quickly realised the need to join both SACTU and the ANC. He soon learned that these organisations did not only fight for the right to work but they also provided a new kind of education. They taught that the people, and especially the black working class, are the makers of history. In this 'special Congress school' Shadrick was educated and drew inspiration.

Comrade Shadrick was loved and respected by young and old for his modesty and simplicity. He defended the politics and morality of the movement and, long before *glasnost* and *perestroika* were heard of, he pushed for greater openness.

His hatred of the system and his commitment and dedication to the struggle soon brought him to the attention of the intelligence officers of MK. He was allocated to one of the Durban units of MK and one of the acts of sabotage for which he was responsible was on the offices of *Die Nataller*, the Nationalist Party paper of Natal.

When the mass arrests took place in 1963 the Natal Region Command was badly hit and comrade Shadrick was arrested under the 90-day law. In February,

1964, together with 17 other comrades, including Billy Nair and Curnick Ndlovu, he was brought to trial and heavy sentences were handed down.

He continued the fight, even inside prison. He never allowed himself to be provoked, either by sadistic warders or by the members of the PAC. He was a warrior of a special type and his political maturity was sharper even than the spear that he carried. He received his political education from Harry Gwala, now ill with a terminal disease and serving a life sentence. He had a deep respect for the Communist Party, recognising that true freedom for South Africa would be possible only with socialism.

Armed with the politics of Congress and the science of Marxism-Leninism, comrade Shadrick argued patiently with friend and foe alike. He had a very special gift as a teacher — he never ran out of energy. He even argued with the prison warders on a variety of issues. He managed somehow to make them less vindictive and cruel in their treatment.

He, together with four other comrades, was released in February, 1974. He was banished to Zululand. To my surprise I suddenly found him in Durban. I asked him, "What the hell are you doing here?" He replied, "Well, you know me. We must not give the Boers any chance. We must fight them tooth and nail." Once again he worked tirelessly to organise the underground. He would never submit to blackmail or intimidation. He had become steeled in struggle. And struggle was his life.

There was one problem with comrade Shadrick. He underestimated the enemy. And we must remember — it is not the enemy of the 50's and 60's. They too have come a long way. And it didn't take long for the enemy to pick him up. He was severely tortured but, as there was insufficient evidence, he was released. He left the country soon after.

There are not many who possess the gifts of this gallant son of our motherland. He was always able to argue and to show the correct path. He fought against all forms of disunity, particularly against narrow nationalism and regionalism.

This giant warrior was finally tracked down by the criminals from across the border, who tried to kidnap him. He fought back like an army of warriors — but the enemy's guns were more powerful.

Yes, Shadrick has left us, together with hundreds of others. He won many over to the side of the revolution, even enemy agents. His dream of freedom and socialism is growing louder and clearer by the day. We hear the cries from our workers and youth.

Viva Shadrick!
Viva the alliance of the ANC-SACP!
A luta continua!

DOCUMENTS

FIDEL CASTRO ON HUMAN RIGHTS

In the course of an interview earlier this year with Maria Shriver of the United States NBC television network, Cuban President Fidel Castro was questioned about Cuba's record in the sphere of human rights.

Maria Shriver, who is a niece of Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy, put it to President Castro that "there are people who have spent time in your jails, who have gone out, who all say that they have been tortured, that they have been mistreated". Here is Castro's indignant reply:

"Who said that? Talk to the people, because millions of citizens in this country are the best witness. Ask the worker, ask the peasant, ask the university student, ask the intellectual, ask them if there has ever been an assassination here, a missing person, someone who's been tortured. That's a lie! And the repetition of a lie doesn't make it true. That was a fascist principle, resorted to by the US propaganda machinery against us, repeating, repeating and repeating infamous lies.

"The people are our witness, and it is an insult to the Cuban people to speak about torture in this country because our people would never stand for it.....

"No government has made greater contributions to the human rights of its citizens than our country. Just by reducing to 13.2 the previous infant mortality rate of 60 out of every 1,000 live births, our country has saved the lives of over 300,000 children. Life expectancy, which used to be 55 years, has increased to almost 75 years. In Cuba there is no illiteracy, there are no children without school, no adolescents without school; there is health care for every citizen; there isn't a person who doesn't have the same opportunities as the rest have to study and improve himself.

"We haven't only helped our own people. Over 2,000 Cuban health workers are working in 30 Third World countries. We have 24,000 scholarship students from over 80 Third World countries. That means that we have worked not only for ourselves.

"In Cuba you don't find beggars or barefoot children or destitute or dispossessed people. In this country you won't find any gambling or prostitution or drugs.

"When Western countries have freed their societies of all these evils and all those things that humiliate women; when they have freed themselves from racial discrimination; when they have freed themselves from the discrimination against women; when they have freed themselves from all that, then let them speak of human rights.

"And I say that in Cuba the police, the forces of law and order, have never broken up a demonstration. Every day you see that in the United States, in England, in Spain, in France, in Italy, in West Germany, they are repressing workers on strike, pacifists, demonstrators. Not once in 30 years has tear gas been used against the people; not once in 30 years has a single shot been fired against the people; there has never been a single blow, a single rubber bullet, a single dog. And we see that every day in Spain, in France, in Italy, in England, in West Germany, in the United States.

"When you do away with tear gas, beatings, dogs, when you do away with water jets, when you do away with repression, then you can speak about human rights. None of that has ever happened in Cuba, not even once. I believe there is greater respect here for human rights than in so-called 'democratic societies'.

"When you stop pillaging the Third World, selling higher and buying cheaper; when 120,000 children no longer die of hunger and lack of medication in the Third World — 120,000 every three days — then let the Western countries come and speak of human rights! Because right now I don't think they have any right to speak of human rights....

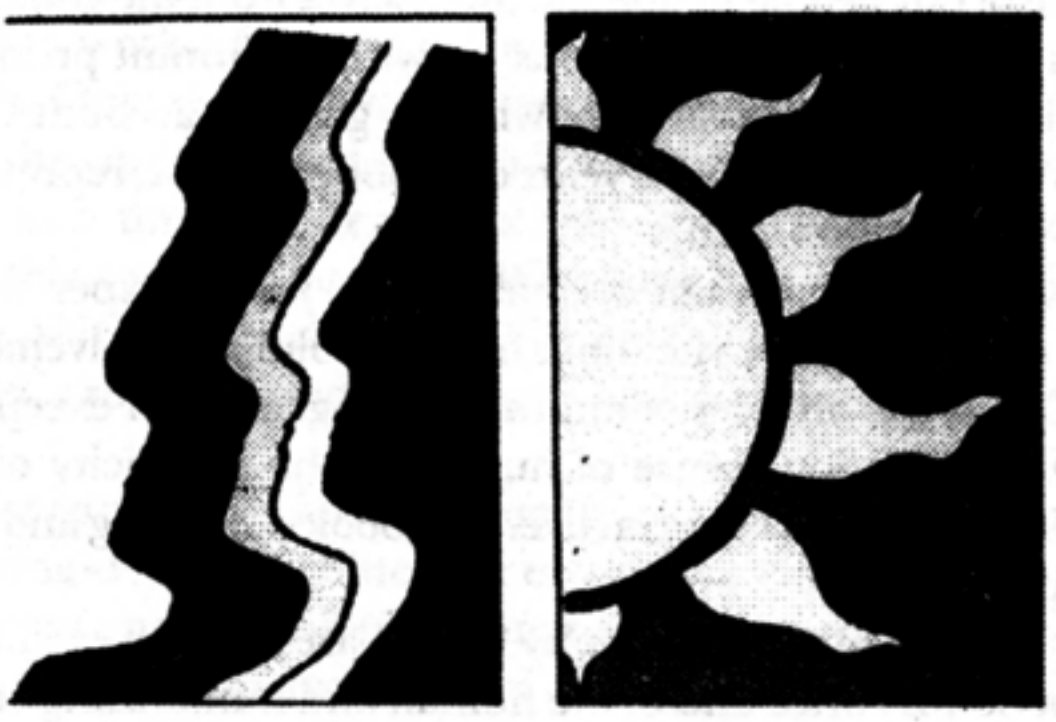
"The French Revolution referred to three great things: liberty, equality and fraternity, but was never able to implement the idea of equality or fraternity.

"The socialist revolution supplements the ideas of liberty of the bourgeois liberal revolution because along with liberty it promotes the ideas of equality and fraternity among men. That is, the socialist revolution goes far beyond the values that the capitalist society attained or attempted to attain.

"Capitalist society was a great advance over feudalism and feudalism was a great advance over slavery. I think that socialism is a great advance over capitalism; it is a more egalitarian, humane and fraternal society. That is the way I see our system.

"We believe in man. If you do not believe in man you must be a capitalist; if you believe in man you may be a socialist. If you think that man is an animal that moves only out of fear or because a carrot is dangled in front of him, you can never be a socialist."

— *Granma*, March 13, 1988



A FREEDOM FIGHTER'S STORY

My Fight Against Apartheid, by Michael Dingake.
(Kliptown Books, London, 1987. Price £5.00)

The struggle of our people to liberate themselves from the chains of colonial slavery and racial discrimination has spawned a vibrant prison literature. Michael Dingake's autobiography with its graphic account of his arrest, torture and imprisonment for 15 years on Robben Island, represents the very best of this category of writing.

The book is far more than a catalogue of prison experiences. In this fascinating biography the writer links his own political involvement with that of the ANC and the broader community. Dingake is an exceptionally fine writer with a marvellous sense of humour. The simplicity of his writing makes his life story alive and attractive. The book is rivetting and once started cannot be put down.

He uses the form of autobiography to lay bare the true essence of the hell that is racist South Africa and of the human and humanising content of the revolutionary struggle led by the ANC.

In the first part of the book his description of life in a village in Bechuanaland (now Botswana), early education, formal at school and informal in society at large, is moving and informative. Early in his life disaster strikes, he is compelled to leave the world of education and find a job. This takes him to South Africa and brings him closer to the realities of life as a worker and a resident of segregated African townships.

Dingake's description of life in Sophiatown and Alexandra gives the reader an indelible impression of how people not only survived but lived, despite the horrific consequences of racism, the pass laws and, to a lesser extent, of black gangsterism. Alexandra was, as Dingake points out, "not only a seedbed of social crime, it was also a seedbed of political revolution. It was logical. Its squalor, acute unemployment, overpopulation and dereliction by civic authority epitomised the disproportionate share of racial oppression it bore." (p.49) Alexandra was "not all crime and politics." There existed, as he points out, "an expanse of grey area populated by the majority who hankered after life, simple, jolly and unencumbered by man's inhumanity to man." (p 55)

His story of joining the ANC, maturing politically and serving in the legal and underground structures, from the lowest to the highest, sheds light on important episodes of our resistance history. With candour and genuine modesty he traces his own political involvement and development in the ANC which, then as now, leads the struggle for national liberation. His representation of how the 1960 State of Emergency compelled ANC leaders and activists to learn the art and skills of working under conditions of illegality is realistic and enlightening.

Dangers of the Underground

"Underground work," Dingake writes, "is hard, demanding and pregnant with hazards. Only the truly dedicated, selfless and disciplined cadres are suitable for the underground." (p59) Those comrades who were similarly involved at that time can testify to the candid way in which Dingake approaches this complex question. Without exaggerating he shows that it was only the ANC and its ally the SACP which had the capacity to organise underground structures and to launch and sustain armed revolutionary struggle.

The change to the latter form of struggle, as he points out, "brought a new spirit of 'derring-do' and readiness for extreme sacrifices." But the successful sabotage operations of 1962-63 created extreme over-confidence with its dangerous corollaries of recklessness and complacency. Regions, areas, streets and cells, through their structures, exhorted the membership to observe the elementary rules of security: "change venues of meetings, be punctual at meetings, don't discuss your role in the organisation with other members of the organisation who are not working directly with you, be careful whom you talk to and what you say, etc." However, the non-observance of the rules was "the result of emotional fervour overwhelming common sense, and the mutual trust generated among the membership by

the wave of spectacular achievements of MK. The optimistic side of the mood was good. The incipient complacency and recklessness produced by such a mood however was dangerous." (p76).

Chapter 3 contains a vivid account of his kidnap in Rhodesia, interrogation, torture and trial. The Labour government in Britain — still legally responsible for Rhodesian affairs — failed to take up his case with the necessary energy and drive. Had they done so Dingake could have been released and spared the horrific ordeal of torture and imprisonment. The torment of this phase of his life is recounted dispassionately and spiced with wit and humour.

His torturers used blatant and vicious anti-communism to break his resistance. He was told that white communists such as Bram Fischer, Joe Slovo and Michael Harmel were using "blacks as their tools" and as "stooges". Swanepoel, one of the notorious torturers, told him: "Our fight is against white communists and Russian imperialism. That we shall not tolerate." (p116) For Dingake this crude anti-communism "was a shameless effrontery" to his intelligence and political principles and he let Swanepoel know it.

Throughout this physical and mental ordeal he remained true to his principles. The fear and the excruciating pain induced by torture confirmed Dingake's belief that the struggle is against a system which dehumanises the victim as well as the aggressor. He recounts with a marvellous sense of balance an incident that took place while he was strung up by his handcuffed arms with his feet barely touching the ground. Silas, a black policeman, tapped hard on his knuckles with a stick and pushed the handcuffs back into position "if they appeared to be sliding/inching down." A tea-maker, himself like Dingake also a Motswana, walks in and scorns and derides Dingake. He tells Dingake that if he (Dingake) does not speak he will become biltong (dried meat). For Dingake the anaesthetic to the pain and torture and the derision of the black tea-maker is the response of a white warder. The white warder, shocked at the sight of Dingake, beats a hasty retreat from the torture chamber. For Dingake, if there was a white warder "who could appear shocked on beholdhing police torture, then there was a glimpse of hope; South Africa and the human race might still be redeemed in spite of centuries of oppression." (p154)

On Robben Island

The description of his life on Robben Island should help to intensify the campaign for the release of all political prisoners and detainees. Free of

rancour and bitterness he describes how the political prisoners overcome all odds to preserve their dignity and humanity and their resolve never to submit to racist tyranny.

"Political prisoners are a hardy lot. The motivation to struggle against odds is strong. The knowledge that one is fighting for a universal principle of human dignity and that progressive and right-thinking humanity is behind one works miracles towards counteracting overwhelming depression. This psychological attitude makes each political prisoner ready for extreme personal sacrifice in the interests of his colleagues." (p179)

For political prisoners, letters and photographs of friends are a life-line. Before personal contact was allowed prisoners and visitors could communicate only under the most difficult conditions. In his personal case he was refused visits from his wife throughout the 15 years of his imprisonment. But Dingake could never be broken. His resilience and fortitude can be judged by the fact that he obtained three degrees whilst in prison.

His description of life on Robben Island gives further insight into the courage and formidable leadership qualities of Nelson Mandela. Dingake writes: "Nelson Mandela is articulate, confident, factual, assertive and persuasive . . . He was a great inspiration in our campaign for improvements in gaol.

"He has amazing stamina for discussion, too . . . In discussion he is a wonderful listener . . . His capacity to retain what he hears made him an excellent reporter after interviews with authorities. He could be detailed not only in the substance of the point made, but in reporting expressions and innuendos of the participants . . .

"One of Nelson's great virtues is his simplicity. Like all the leaders of the ANC there is no image of cultism around him . . . in gaol Nelson sought no personal privileges and participated fully in all common duties in the section." (p219, 224, 225).

In 1981, after 15 years of imprisonment, Dingake was released. His happiness and joy were marred only by the sadness of leaving behind all his comrades whom he knows he will miss.

He received a hero's welcome in Botswana. The people of South Africa and Botswana hold Michael Dingake in the highest esteem as a distinguished, fearless and modest revolutionary. His contribution to the struggle for a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa is recorded in this autobiography which should be read by all concerned with the struggle to eliminate the apartheid regime.

Azad

THE RELIGIOUS CALL TO LIBERATION

Jesus and the Holy Cows: The Message of Jesus for Today's World, by Cedric Mayson (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1987. Price £6.95)
The Churches and Racism: A Black South African Perspective, by Zolile Mbali (London: SCM Press. Price £9.50)

Both defenders of apartheid and some of its most determined opponents (Revs. Allan Boesak and Frank Chikane, for example) appeal to Christian values in support of their endeavours. The latter argue, with justice that the gospel-message is irreconcilably opposed to apartheid. Like the proverbial devil, the apartheid regime and its apologists quote the letter of scripture in order to destroy its living spirit.

The theological apologists of apartheid stand in a time hallowed tradition, though. Jesus taught the good news that we can and must liberate ourselves from the oppressive structures of our world and build just structures in their stead. But his message of liberation has, from at least the time of Constantine (the Roman Emperor from 306-337 who made Christianity the official religion of the empire) onwards, been systematically distorted by the ruling powers and the church structures which served their interests. The gospel of popular liberation was transmogrified into the ideology of the people's oppressors. But the real message of Jesus, the call to liberation, emerges tacitly wherever oppression is challenged, in the struggles of Christians, Muslims, Jews and communists alike. It warrants overt recognition.

This thesis — the liberating gospel of Jesus, its misappropriation by those it threatened, and its re-emergence in the struggle for liberation — is at the heart of Cedric Mayson's book, *Jesus and the Holy Cows*. Mayson seeks to expose and smash the idolatrous icons with which oppressive structures have veiled the liberating message of Jesus. He calls these fetishistic images "holy cows", and urges us to expel them. His book is decidedly unscholarly — it reads more like a thriller than a theological tract and includes a fictional prelude, interlude and "postlude" about the liberation struggle in South Africa. Mayson's thesis is preached rather than argued, in an accessible, popular and irreverent tone which reads well. The book successfully communicates Mayson's enthusiasm for the subject and for the struggle he urges. It challenges readers to question much received wisdom and actively to involve themselves in the liberation struggle. But it will shock and scandalise many pious Christians, not a few of whom *are* committed to the liberation struggle and critical of "status-quo" theology.

I agree with Mayson that idolatrous abuses of theology need to be attacked; and find the message of liberation and a *degree* of iconoclasm laudable. However, the excessive iconoclasm of Mayson's book decidedly annoyed me. Mayson is too willing to abandon many traditional Christian doctrines to the forces of reaction. It might be argued that a skewed stick sometimes needs to be bent the other way, and that this is what Mayson is doing; but I fear he bends it to breaking point. Doctrines like the divinity of Christ and the image of Christ as king have been misused in the interests of oppressive ruling classes. They are, properly understood, symbols of the power of the poor and the oppressed and are profoundly subversive of the plans and pretensions of the Caesars of our world. Simply to reject them, as Mayson appears to do, is to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Countering Racism

Zolile Mbali's *The Churches and Racism* chronicles and discusses the World Council of Churches Programme to Counter Racism. The PCR, an attempt on the part of a body representative of Protestant Christianity to return to the early Christian "option for the poor and oppressed", supports the ANC and SWAPO morally and materially and gave similar support to the Patriotic Front in Smith's Rhodesia. Mbali uses South Africa as a touchstone. He gives a succinct portrait of apartheid, a history of the PCR and reactions to it, and then discusses issues raised by these reactions. These include non-violence, status quo theology, anti-communism and the disinvestment debate. Mbali forcefully urges the view that theology should be practised contextually, rather than in abstraction from concrete situations.

In contrast to Mayson's book, Mbali's is scholarly in tone. It is a valuable source of information about the history of the PCR, the controversy surrounding it and the reaction of the South African churches in particular. Mbali's argument would be strengthened by greater attention to the class dimension of the struggle in South Africa. He points to the connection between apartheid and profits in South Africa, but does not exploit fully this insight in his examination of theological differences. He tends to be over-economical in his presentation of material not directly involved in the PCR debate.

No one familiar with the Kairos Document, for example, can fail to note its influence on Mbali's thinking: his critique of *"status quo* theology" is closely related to the Kairos Document's critique of "state theology". But Mbali does not make connections like this explicit for the sake of less well-informed readers. He devotes two paragraphs to overt discussion of the Kairos

Document, giving an admirably taut precis, but does not set it against the background of the intense mobilisation against apartheid of the past few years and the 1985 State of Emergency to which the Kairos Document was a theological response.

Mbali also appears to assume that all his readers will be aware of the massive support enjoyed by the ANC in South Africa, together with the UDF and the Freedom Charter which lies at the heart of the struggle. Many readers will know these things, but it may have been worth making the book a bit longer in order to give more background information to readers who might not have read anything else about South Africa.

For all that, Mbali packs more hard information into his relatively short book than do many other bulkier tomes. It will be of value to anyone interested in the uneasy relationship between apartheid and Christian theology in South Africa, and will hopefully serve to aid and inspire further research in this important area.

S.G.

SEX AND SOCIETY

Male Daughters, Female Husbands — Gender and Sex in an African Society, Ifi Amadiume, (Zed Books, London 1987)

Third World, Second Sex Vol. 2, ed. Miranda Davies, (Zed Books; London 1987)

Where do the two related sciences of ethnography and anthropology end, and where does sociology begin? The demarcation is artificial, and arises from the imperialist origin of these disciplines. Anthropologists and ethnographers were associated with colonisers, and the colonised were the subject of their study; sociologists studied society at home.

After World War II, when movements for national self-determination were gaining strength, some British anthropologists themselves began to believe they were being used to manipulate populations for the benefit of the colonial powers that employed them, and to express doubts about the morality of what they were doing. Be that as it may, and whatever the historical basis of anthropology, it now has an existence and a momentum of

its own; and anthropologists everywhere seem to agree that their important task is to record and analyse processes of social change now taking place in the societies they study. Contact with other societies is a powerful agent of such change, and contact in the colonial relationship of dominance and subordination must be the most powerful agent of all.

Male daughters, Female Husbands is a solidly researched ethnographic work within this tradition, in that Ifi Amadiume is a London-trained anthropologist, her field work was done in Africa, and she uses informants from the older generation to give a picture of the past, to compare with the present. The difference is that her study was done among her own people.

In her introduction to the book, she describes her indignation at the ethnocentrism of anthropologists in London, who could perceive other societies, and interpret other people's ways and concepts, only in terms of their own. She returned to her home among the Nnobi of Nigeria, and examined their complex balance between male and female power. The terms 'male daughter' and 'female husband' refer to status, and she is indignant when European feminists interpret them to refer to sexuality. Colonial administrators, she says, never understood the concepts or the balance, and legislated continually in favour of male power, removing the female checks on it, thereby destroying the balance.

The other book reveiwed here, *Third World, Second Sex 2,* raises another question. Exactly what is the 'Third World'? The countries lumped together in this category range from the oil-rich to the desert-poor; vastly different in their relationship with imperialism, degree of development, type of economy and political organisation, history, culture, religion, the only thing they all have in common is the fact that they are not in Europe or North America. The notion of the 'Third World' is a construct in the minds of those whose thinking was shaped in the metropolitan countries. The term is meaningless, but it is still misleading. It suggests that all these countries together form a kind of single, independent entity. It ignores — and so diverts attention from — the relationships these countries have with the western countries: the debts and the interest, the exploitation of natural resources, the labour-intensive, ecologically dangerous industries established by the multinationals.

Founded in this hotch-potch theory, *Third World, Second Sex 2* is a mixed bag. The interviews and articles selected for it deal with (for example) the legal disabilities of women in Algeria, the role of women as participants in the liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia, prostitution in Central America, battered wives in Brazil and Thailand.

Also the level of political analysis is uneven. At one end of the scale, the Algerian informant is impressive. She quotes from the Koran to show that the Family Code, restrictive to women, is not wholly based in Islamic law; she claims that female unemployment in Algeria is a consequence of the growth of the private sector in the Algerian economy, and that this is the real reason why women there are being driven back into a position of childlike dependence. At the other end of this scale, we find interviews that are almost purely anecdotal, like that with the women who counsel battered wives in Brazil.

Dr Amadiume writes with some anger about what she calls the 'cultural imperialism' of European women anthropologists. She says they project their own position and their own rebellion on to the rest of the world, and often set out to give instruction in women's rights to women from other countries. She complains of their 'haphazard' methods, and says they 'collapse the whole of Third World women into one book.' Miranda Davies' two-volume compilation must be the kind of book she is talking about.

Joanna

THE PEACE-TIME WAR CRIMINALS

"Forced Removal — the Division, Segregation and Control of the People of South Africa", by Elaine Unterhalter, (International Defence and Aid Fund, London 1987)

The author, who was born and raised in South Africa, is now in the Department of Sociology at the University of Essex, England. Her book is a well-researched and detailed account of forced removals in our country. In the Introduction, the author states that her book "attempts to analyse forced removals in the context of apartheid, but does not take apartheid itself to be a simple unchanging practice... Major political and economic changes have occurred... Under the guise of a single policy, different policies have been developed to meet changing demands". The book is organized into chapters dealing with the history of removals, urban, rural and other aspects.

The suffering endured by our people through the policy of forced removals is enormous. The Nationalist government has been responsible for implementing the largest forced removals in peacetime, involving 3.5 to 4 million people between the 1950s and 1980s (depending on the source of information). Yet these figures deal only with large-scale removals of

communities; they do not include the effects on individuals and families flowing from the pass laws, endorsing out, etc. Various types of legislation were introduced over the years by the apartheid regime, to enforce segregation, always saving the better land for the whites, the worst for the blacks. The main pieces of legislation were the 1913 Land Act, the 1923 Native (Urban Areas) Act, and the Group Areas Act. These attempted to provide enough cheap black labour to run the mines and industries of the country, but also to provide labour on the farms, which initially provided the bulk of the Nationalist Party's support. The Bantustan policy was part of this programme, at the same time pretending to give "self-government" to the blacks, while dividing in order to rule.

In the 1970s, there was a slowing of the economy, increased oil prices, and massive strikes by black workers trying to increase their wages to catch up with inflation. This led to increased automation, increased demand for semi-skilled workers, as well as unemployment. The Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions attempted to regulate "influx control" by limiting the growth of the urban population, controlling the allocation of labour to various sectors of the economy, and controlling the physical location of unemployed Africans. The removal of the pass laws in 1986 simply replaced a job as the criterion for blacks entering the urban areas, with housing availability. With a housing shortage outside the bantustans estimated at over 600,000 houses in 1986 (p 75), the pass laws are effectively in place as much as before the "reforms". And the disruptions to black family life are as severe. The extreme distances blacks have to travel to and from work often mean that workers must rise at 3 am, finally returning home only at 9 pm.

The promise made by Botha in 1986 to stop forced removals has not been fulfilled. The slowdown in the rate at which they occur is due partly to the cost of the removals to the Government; partly to the decision in 1984 by the Supreme Court that the government cannot evict tenants on the basis of the Group Areas Act; and partly to the political cost. The current policy is to rely on "elected representatives" (in the municipal councils and the Bantustans) to do the Government's dirty work for it; and on "market forces" (such as the poor availability of housing). Over 99% of blacks are ineligible for the mortgage payments needed to own houses (p 126). Rent increases of 50% in the face of wage increases of only 17% (averages) led to rent boycotts and squatter camps being formed as the people tried to solve the housing crisis in whatever way they could. The government's response was to bulldoze down communities like Crossroads.

The book is not primarily concerned with the response of our people to the forced removals, but the extent of this response certainly comes through: the refusal to participate in municipal councils, the rent and bus boycotts, the opposition to moving from places like Crossroads, the grassroots organisations established to assist the hundreds of thousands of displaced people.

Elaine Unterhalter writes clearly, and her book is a very useful source of information with many tables and references.

P.S.

ZULU PIONEERS IN WORLD SPORT

Meilenweit bis Marathon (Mile to Marathon), by Waldemar Cierpinski (double Olympic Marathon Gold Medallist) Volker Kluge. Publishers: Sportverlag Berlin/GDR.

Like a breath of fresh air this book is not tainted with the cosmetic glamour of commercialised ballyhoo, high pressure advertising and the glitter of big money which seems to tarnish so much of the writing in the capitalist countries about the ever growing popularity and mass participation in long distance running — particularly the marathon. Covering many fields of running the book shows the social value and pleasure derived from mass sports participation as well as its contribution to world class performances at top level. Above all the book is marked by a clear anti-racist/anti-colonialist and inernationalist approach.

My heart swelled with pride and joy when coming to the part "African Victors". It leads off with the performance of two trailblazers in the development of our own anti-racist democratic/liberatory sports movement. The two trailblazers were Zulu workers employed at an international fair in St. Louis which was linked to the 1904 Olympics. Though I had previous knowledge of the efforts of our two fellow countrymen at that time I was delighted to see a photogaph of them shortly before the start — nos. 34 and 35. I was not aware that such a photograph existed — surely a must for our records.

With racist arrogance official circles announced our two trailblazers as "The Kaffirs Lentauw and Yamasini". This epic and dramatic marathon ran

in blazing heat is now a matter of history. Lentauw ran a very good 9th. He would have done better had he not been disturbed by a vicious dog in the last mile of the run. Yamasini came a creditable 12th. 17 days before the St. Louis Olympics Lentauw came second in a mile race behind the Indian Black-White Bear with Youssouf Hana of Syria taking the third position. Official US circles described this event as "Anthropologist Day", and maintained that the competitions were to test the athletic abilities of "wild tribes".

The founder of the modern Olympic movement Pierre de Coubertin strongly protested at this racist arrogance which he described as "embarrassing". He wrote that the insulting masquerades at St. Louis would one day be exposed for the rubbish that they were and that the black, red and yellow peoples would show just how well they could run, jump and throw.

And just 24 years later, the authors write, Pierre de Coubertin's words proved themselves when in 1928 at the Amsterdam Olympics Algeria's Boghéra El Quafi took the marathon gold. But this was the time of the colonial era and the honour went to France, not to Algeria. In 1956 at Melbourne the Olympic honours in the marathon again went to France though it was O'Kacha Alain Mimoun of Algeria who won the event.

The break-up of the imperialist system of colonialism at the same time released Africa's running potential. African runners are today very much to the fore in the international arena. International events without African participation are unthinkable. The book devotes a lot of space to Ethiopia's great and Africa's never to be forgotten hero and double Olympic gold medallist, the late Abebe Bikila.

In addition to useful statistics, health/training hints and attractive photographs, the book has short biographies, much information about the GDR's mass running movement and titbits like Ruth Rothfarb who ran her first marathon at the age of 81 in Miami and the Greek Dimitris Jordanidis who first covered the 26 mile stretch at the age of 96 and two years later at 98 repeated the feat.

Though addressing itself to the GDR public *Mile to Marathon* can be read and enjoyed anywhere, by non-runners included. It is to be hoped that the publishers will bring this book out in other languages for it has much to offer the world.

Arnold Selby, Berlin, German Democratic Republic

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PERESTROIKA AND GLASNOST FOR SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLUTIONARIES

From Dubula Makanda

Dear Editor,

The victory of the October Revolution of 1917 heralded the epoch of the transition of capitalism to socialism on a world scale. Since then the world revolutionary movement has grown quantatively and qualitatively. It is incontestable that socialism has done more to satisfy the spiritual and material needs of people than any previous socio-economic formation. But the building of a socialist society is not a smooth and straight road. The vices of capitalism are a heavy legacy. It takes painstaking ideological and organisational work to erase this legacy.

In the Soviet Union, apart from objective difficulties, there have been subjective shortcomings which have had the effect of slowing down the rate of development of socialist construction. The Soviet Union has recognised these weaknesses and shortcomings and is taking energetic steps to correct them. Thus *perestroika* and *glasnost. Perestroika* is a creative development of Leninism designed to resolve the pressing problems of enhancing socialist development in which the creative initiative of the masses will be renewed by democratising the economic mechanisms and boosting socialist democracy.

Although we operate under totally different conditions, we can usefully learn many lessons from the way our Soviet comrades are applying the principles of *perestroika* and *glasnost.*

South African revolutionaries are fighting for a decisive and victorious consummation of the national democratic revolution as a guarantor of our speedy advance to a socialist SA. Since the historic Vaal stayaway in September 1984, our country has been locked in combat between the forces of reaction headed by Botha's junta and the liberation forces led by the ANC. Our people are making enormous sacrifices, displaying boundless heroism and resilience. The situation demands of us that we enhance the subjective factor of the revolution.

By the subjective factor of the revolution, Lenin had in mind 'the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary action strong enough to destroy the government which never even in times of crisis falls if it is not toppled over'. First and foremost the vanguard party must act as a monolithic force united by a common programme. It must organise the working class, and transform it into a revolutionary class, unite its ranks and harness the masses of the working people into the struggle for revolutionary change under the leadership of the working class.

The South African revolution has vanguard fighters organised in the ANC and the SACP. They are seasoned fighters armed with revolutionary theory and have led our struggle to the threshold of victory. To rise to the historic challenges and lead millions of our people in the decisive fight for people's power, above all, means that we must enhance the vanguard activity of the liberation front led by the ANC. We can no longer afford to ignore old problems that we have left unsolved in our advance to people's power.

It is no exaggeration to assert that these shortcomings have robbed us of the historic opportunity to make optimum use of the maturing revolutionary situation. Mindful of the clandestine nature of our revolutionary activities, we should strive to develop (a) inner democracy within our organisations, ensuring that the entire membership is consciously involved in the

formulation of policy and its implementation. There should be regular briefings and accountability on the actual unfolding and prosecution of the struggle. This will undoubtedly reinforce a sense of responsibility, singleness of will, mutual trust and united action. (b) proper balance of the interacting, mutually reinforcing principles of democratic centralism. We should wage a ceaseless struggle against bureaucracy, administrative style of leadership and lack of respect for people.

Collective leadership is a tested principle of revolutionary organisations. It is a reliable barrier against the emergence of a cult of personality. It keeps in check creeping careerists and self seekers. We should not compromise with relapses to tribalism, regionalism, chauvinism, opportunism and other backward vices. Collective leadership ensures the cohesion of the revolutionary movement as a monolithic force.

It is of vital importance to ensure that the alliance as a whole functions as a healthy organism. One of its pressing tasks is the strengthening of SACTU. This is crucial not only for the growth of the labour movement, but also for enhancing the leading role of our working class in the national democratic revolution. Our actual strength on the ground is not commensurate with the growth of the strike movement inside the country.

Criticism and self-criticism guarantee the healthy development of an organisation. No one should be above criticism.

The selection, education and deployment of cadres underpins the successful accomplishment of any social undertaking. It assumes exceptional importance in the prosecution of a revolution and building of a new society. Deployment of cadres should take due account of their personal qualities politically, professionally and as displayed in actual experience. Cadres should display boundless hatred of the enemy, patriotism and devotion to the cause of the revolution.

Another aspect of cadre policy is the combination of the old guard and the youth. We should constantly rejuvenate the movement by injecting fresh blood at various echelons of leadership. Favourable conditions should be created enabling the youth to assimilate experiences from the old guard. Likewise the old guard should be receptive to the new thinking.

Rotation of cadres is a reliable barrier against routine and stagnation, individualism, favouritism and other unhealthy tendencies. We must mould fighters who are welded into a monolithic force by iron discipline. It is such a body of professional revolutionaries, shaped in the Leninist mould, that can lead our people to the seizure of power.

The call made by the NEC of the ANC on the occasion of the 76th anniversary of the ANC, 'YEAR OF UNITED ACTION FOR PEOPLE'S POWER' is a battle order first and foremost to the vanguard itself. Acting as a united force, we must discharge our historic responsibility to our people by uniting all the anti-apartheid and patriotic forces into a mighty army of liberation. On the battle ground, under the noses of the fascists, we must consolidate our forces, defend our revolutionary gains, intensify the struggle on all fronts and advance as a united force to people's power.

Long live the liberation alliance!
Long live the ANC!
Long live the SACP!
Long live SACTU!
IHLOMILE!

OLIVER STONE'S PLATOON

From Owen Ben Sichone,
St. Edmund's College, Cambridge

Dear Editor,
Whereas in these days of glasnost it is fashionable to argue for the sake of it, and whereas I totally sympathize with the views A. Romero expressed in his letter to you in AC113 concerning narrow-mindedness, I think ML's film review in AC111 is not an example of such an approach.

As I understand it, ML's thesis is that the two films he was reviewing were each reflecting the cultures that produced them. ML's emphasis was on the different attitudes to war in socialist and imperialist cultures. I would add that there is even a difference between Russian culture and American culture, irrespective of their different social-economic systems, but that's another point.

I have not seem Elim Klimov's *Come and See,* but I have seen *Platoon.*

According to ML, "The morality of Americans being in Vietnam never crops up". Also, "*Platoon*, hailed by some as a welcome antidote to *Rambo*, does not even manage to be genuinely anti-war". These are my impressions as well. I know Oliver Stone is not the regular American film maker specialising in "red scare" productions, and I can even accept that he was sincere when he told *Granma*: "The Vietnam war was lost before it was begun, it was lost after World War 2 when Ho Chi Minh came up with a solution; we rejected it and aligned ourselves with the French colonialists. We were morally wrong and that is why we lost the war." But that is not what he said in *Platoon*.

In *Platoon*, the message is "We lost in Vietnam because we were fighting each other". It follows that "if we can stop fighting each other in Central America, Southern Africa and the Middle East, we shall win". True this may not be Oliver Stone's own personal view, but that is what he said in his film and that is what his culture expected him to say.

If I may ask Romero, since he appears to accept everything Oliver Stone was quoted as saying in *Granma*, did the Americans side with the French in Vietnam or replace them? What about Angola? No sooner do the Angolan people defeat the Portuguese than they have to face America. Everywhere the European imperialists have had to leave, the Americans have taken over, at least temporarily. So to me, America's war against Vietnam was morally wrong not because it sided with the French colonialists but because it sought to impose American imperialism. America, as they say, has no allies, only interests. If Oliver Stone does not see this simple fact, how on earth can he convey it in his films? If the Vietnamese people are gooks, how can Americans feel guilty about killing them? Even those who may feel that the war was wrong have not admitted that America owes Vietnam for the suffering it caused and its long term effects. It is unAmerican to think such thoughts.

THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE UNITED STATES

From Ken Biggs, Prague

Dear Editor,
Azad is certainly right to criticise Rupert Lewis's book on Marcus Garvey for its account of relations between Garvey and the Communist Party in the United States in the period 1919 to 1927 (AC 113).

But it is not simply a matter of superficiality, as Azad claims. Rupert Lewis argues, for example, that the serious weaknesses in the CPUSA's work among Blacks in the 1920s were compounded by "advocacy of a 'Black Belt' recommended by the Comintern whereby certain southern states would be reserved for Blacks." (page 136) This is a caricature of the US party's position, which in fact comes very close to saying that the CPUSA and Comintern supported segregation.

Only last year this same allegation was made by a certain US congressman who was trying to discredit the US party and the Soviet Union in the Black community as part of his personal contribution to the anti-Soviet campaign being run by various anti-disarmament interests. As a result the CPUSA issued a statement, published in the *People's Daily World* on 25 April, which said that the party "has always stood for the right of Black people to equal political representation" and that its inclusion in its programme before 1959 of recognition of "the right of Afro-Americans to form a separate state in the area of Black majority if they so choose" at no time implied that the party itself advocated separatism. This was of course essentially the same approach to self-determination as the Bolshevik Party's in Russia.

It is worth quoting the CPUSA's resolution of October 1928, adopted after the Comintern's 6th Congress, because it shows (a) that the party regarded the *central* issue of struggle as the fight for equality, and not advocacy of a separate state, and (b) that the influence of the progressive aspects of Garvey's thought was to be found in the developing anti-racist stance of the US Communists — which conflicts with the portrayal in Rupert Lewis's book of the CPUSA as a sectarian party.

> "While continuing and intensifying the struggle under the slogan of full social and political equality for the Negroes, *which must remain the central slogan of our Party for*

work among the masses, the Party openly and unreservedly comes out for the right of Negroes to self-determination in the southern states, where the Negroes form a majority of the population...

"The Negro question in the United States must be treated in its relation to the Negro question and struggles in other parts of the world. The negro race everywhere is an oppressed race. Whether it is a minority (USA etc), majority (South Africa), or inhabits a so-called independent state (Liberia etc), the negroes are oppressed by imperialism. Thus a common tie of interest is established for the revolutionary struggle of race and national liberation from imperialist domination of the Negroes in various parts of the world." (KB's stress and quoted from William Z Foster: *The Negro People in American History,* International Publishers, New York 1953, page 461)

Clearly the US Communists had advanced from the reductionist position on racism which had been typical of even the Industrial Workers of the World, the "Wobblies", the most progressive of the CP's antecedents. Race was no longer explained solely in economic terms (the "vulgar Marxism" from which Marx dissociated himself). Instead an analysis was developed (inspired by the work of Lenin and Stalin) which related it to the national and colonial question, and which required that special attention be given to "the negro question", including support for special organisational forms. *Revolutionary* pan-Africanism (as distinct from the reactionary, separatist type) was recognised as an important ally in the struggle against imperialism, which helps to explain why at the end of his life the greatest figure in progressive pan-Africanism, W E B DuBois, could feel able to join the Communist Party USA.

Acknowledging A Right

The adoption of the *right* of self-determination for Black Americans in fact represented an acknowledgment by the CPUSA that Garveyism had positive as well as negative aspects. This was apparent in the comment of the Black American Communist, Harry Haywood, who did so much to persuade the Comintern to come out for the right of self-determination: "the nationalism reflected in the Garvey movement... was an indigenous product, arising from the soil of Black super-exploitation and oppression in the United States." (Harry Haywood: *Black Bolshevik*, page 229) A decade earlier Cyril Briggs of the revolutionary organisation the African Blood Brotherhood had also argued for the right of self-determination.

Of Garvey"s eventual accommodation with the Ku Klux Klan, which was symbolic of his drift away from his earlier militancy, Rupert Lewis has very little to say. What he does say is unenlightened: "The fact is that the possibilities open to the Garveyites (of resisting the KKK) in the 1920's were few." He sides with Garvey's widow in reproaching the Left at

the UNIA's 1924 convention for calling on Garvey "to denounce the Ku Klux Klan in strong terms that would have amounted to a declaration of war." (page 87)

But a few years earlier the afore-mentioned African Blood Brotherhood, comprising a membership of between two and three thousand organised in 56 branches, did not shrink from taking up such a position. Its programme included, for example, armed self-defence against the Klan: see Philip S Foner's *Organised Labor and the Black Workers 1619-1973*, International Publishers 1976, page 159. The difference between the ABB and Garvey's UNIA was that the former had an uncompromising commitment to the struggle for black rights, which took many of its leaders, including Briggs, into the CPUSA, whereas the Garveyite leadership increasingly retreated from earlier progressive positions. Rupert Lewis denies this, but he doesn't show it not to have been the case. Isn't it a fact that Garvey eventually spoke of the USA as "a white man's country" and said that Africa was similarly "a black man's country" and that the Black workers were ill-advised to "interfere" in the US in the same way that whites should stay out of Africa?

Defending The Indefensible

In presenting much unknown information about Garvey's post-1927 activities in Jamaica Rupert Lewis's book is very valuable, but to defend his role in the US during the last six or seven years of his residence there is surely to attempt to defend the indefensible.

One final point. For Azad to call the Jamaican poet Claude McKay a "political fighter" is a bit over the top. Even while attending the Fourth Congress of the Comintern (as an individual observer, not a delegate) he refused any such role, as he makes clear in his autobiography, *A Long Way From Home*. His baiting of the Black US delegate, Otto Huiswood, because of his light complexion, was quite contemptible and the act of a dilettante rather than a fighter. He ended his life, of course, as a vehement anti-communist, and Rupert Lewis himself expresses support for Garvey's criticism of McKay's "bohemianism, his rootlessness, and the (poor) quality of his relationship to the Black struggle." (pages 250-1)

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