



Journal of the African National Congress

# Mayibuyeye

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## ANC National Consultative Conference: the real issues



**MK commander  
Sphiwe Nyanda speaks  
about Operation Vula**

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● The road to a new constitution - is consensus  
possible? ● A home for all the youth  
● The broad patriotic front ● Draft economic policy  
● Campaigning against the violence

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**M**AYIBUYE goes to press as preparations for the ANC National Consultative Conference reach fever pitch. Before we knew it, the bug had also caught up with us.

This is understandable. Along with February 2, the release of Nelson Mandela and the ANC/government summits, the conference ranks high among the epoch-making events that this fateful year has witnessed.

Issues of fundamental importance to the future of our country will be tabled for discussion and debate at the conference.

The ANC faces the challenge of transforming itself into a strong mass organisation. On its shoulders rests the difficult task of charting a vi-

able road out of the crisis facing our country. The people are ready to fulfil their historic mission. The ANC has to forge them into a powerful force capable of realising the just and peaceful future for which they aspire.

These tasks are not contradictory. For, a strong, active and fighting ANC is the most reliable guarantor of peaceful, fundamental transformation.

Whether or not the conference will meet the expectations of members, supporters and society at large, depends on the active participation of members within the basic structures of the ANC, the branches. But the National Preparatory Committee and the leadership in general bear the responsibility of facilitating this process. Where there are weaknesses, it is not too late to mend.

MAYIBUYE joins millions of our people in wel-

coming the delegate-of-honour at the conference, President OR Tambo. As he touches down after 30 years in exile, another knell will have sounded on the decaying system of apartheid. There is no better reception we can offer him than a well-organised and productive conference.

The Consultative Conference comes at the close of an eventful year. We have stepped into the 90s at the threshold of great transformations.

We cannot wait for the twilight of the decade before the deed is done.

1990 had its darker side: the big and small coffins lining the gaping holes into the bowels of the earth; the deeds of frustration by those who look forward to the past; unfulfilled promises two Minutes

later; and ANC/SACP-bashing from even the most unexpected quarters.

But it had its lighter side too, the most central being the vigorous and open debate that South African society – including the ANC – have to get used to. There were also the bloodied noses of those who stirred the Vula hornets' nest. We are all learning our lessons, and hopefully we will be better South Africans next year.

1991 promises to be even more contradictory and exciting. We all face the task of ensuring that this unpredictability of a vibrant era becomes the chemistry for a peaceful explosion of fundamental change. This depends not on the integrity or otherwise of a few men. The masses in political motion remain the key.

We wish our readers and all South Africans a safe and happy festive season.

# Preparing for the peaceful explosion

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## Talk about talks

Dear comrades

I am writing this letter to solve some problems.

Could you explain the difference between talks-about-talks and negotiations because most people say talks and negotiations is the same thing.

Who has been placing pressure for the talks-about-talks and negotiations and what has been achieved from this?

*MM, Grahamstown*

**Ed:** The aim of talks-about-talks is to achieve conditions under which negotiations can occur. Negotiations will primarily be about the future constitution of the country. But before this, the parties will have to negotiate about the structures and rules that will govern the transitional process.

The ANC demands the creation of a proper atmosphere in which negotiations can be held. These conditions are still to be met by the government: the release of all political prisoners, removal of repressive legislation and others. Without this, organisations opposed to apartheid will not be free to carry out their political work.

The talks have resulted in certain commitments and actions on the part of the government. But many new problems have arisen such as the killings in the townships. This shows that talks or negotiations on their own are not enough. We all must take part in mass action to achieve our demands.

Once the ANC is satisfied that these conditions have been met we will enter into negotiations. The ANC has launched discussions on the type of constitution we want for a future South Africa. This issue of *Mayibuye* looks at some of these questions. Join your local ANC branch and take active part in these discussions.

## Right to defence

Dear comrades

South Africa is a black state and it was taken from us by force. The pillars of apartheid still exist in most black townships.

The ANC is speaking about a ceasefire whereas the SAP and SADF are continuing to kill our people. It is your right to defend the



Write to:  
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**MARSHALLTOWN 2107**

South Africans from the hands of the intruders yet you have suspended the armed struggle.

*MED, Sibasa*

**Ed:** In the last issue of *Mayibuye* we dealt with the position of the ANC on violence and negotiations. In this issue we also look at how the democratic movement should respond. Military self-defence is a central aspect of our security. Political organisation and mobilisation is another.

## This prison is hell

Dear Comrades,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the prisoners of Bavianspoort Prison....

**Ed:** *Mayibuye* referred the letter, which exposes the terrible conditions in this prison to NICRO (South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders). They responded thus:

The abuse of prisoners is an issue of great concern to NICRO. We frequently receive complaints of abuse similar to those described in the Bavianspoort Prison letter...

NICRO is prepared to do the following:

1. The Director and Senior Social Worker of NICRO will visit the Head of Bavianspoort Prison and voice our concerns regarding complaints of abuse.

2. We will notify Prison Headquarters of the above concerns and request a response from them.

3. We will request a judge to visit the prison for an inspection, preferably an unannounced visit.

We at NICRO believe very strongly that some form of ac-

tion must be taken to protect prisoners from all forms of abuse...Prisoners have few rights, and the rights they do have are generally not regarded as sacred by the Prisons Service...

## Rural areas

Dear Comrades

My request is for you to consider the people in the rural areas who do not understand your organisation. We want to know what does your organisation fight for and what is the role of the rural people in that fight.

I am a resident of Shongoane in North Western Transvaal whose residents (most of them illiterate, a few matriculated and very few professionals) are swimming in a pool of confusion. When one tells them about the struggle for a democratic society or a progressive organisations they become so terrified.

The other problem is our nearest town Ellisras, which still practises apartheid like 20 years ago. Since people of Shongoane and Seleka (the two tribes are next to each other) do not even know anything about consumer boycotts, protest marches or defiance campaigns. The conservatives in this town still treat blacks in the 'baas-kaffir' fashion.

Newspapers such as Sowetan or Star are not allowed to be sold and there is still discrimination against blacks in some of the shops in the town. Please help the poor community out of darkness.

*MMS, Mahwelereng.*

**Ed:** *Mayibuye* thanks you for your letter which helps to expose the activities of these rabid racists.

We agree with you that when people do not know their rights and are severely repressed, they are afraid to fight the oppressors. A good organiser is one who does not look down upon them, but tries to reach out to them in a manner they will appreciate. At the same time, while illiteracy is an inhibiting factor, it does not mean that people can only struggle when they are educated. Far from it. Political literacy is acquired in struggle.

We advise you to contact the Northern Transvaal region of the ANC (address at the back of this issue), or your nearest ANC branch. ♦

## Peace and freedom now

THE ANC's PWV region will launch a campaign of non-violent mass action under the slogan, "Peace and Freedom Now!", with marches in Pretoria and Johannesburg on December 6.

The region is consulting its allies about other forms of action to back demands for:

- the release of all political prisoners and detainees, the granting of indemnity to exiles and the suspension of political trials before Christmas,
- the establishment of an Interim Government, and
- the reintegration of Bophuthatswana into South Africa.

## Women's League Conference

INSUFFICIENT progress in the establishment of ANC Women's League (ANCWL) branches has forced the League to postpone its national conference. The conference was due to have been held from October 25-28.

Almost 300 branches have been formed, but there is a lack of uniformity amongst the regions. Border and the Eastern Cape account for most branches formed so far.

A campaign around the Women's Charter is planned as part of the process of building the organisation.

The ANCWL Task Force will consult with the different regions



**ANC leaders at the East London funeral of ANC NEC member Francis Meli. His death last month is a tragic loss for the entire democratic movement.**

about the timing of the national conference.

## PAC to negotiate?

THE PAC has denied that it has held talks with the government.

Well-placed sources claimed that both the PAC and Azapo held exploratory meetings with the government in the past weeks.

This apparent shift in position comes in the wake of the untimely death of PAC leader Zeph Mothopeng (right), who died of illness on October 23.

The organisation will debate its position on negotiations at its national conference planned for early December.

## Nampak strike ends

SOME 6 000 Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union

(Ppwawu) members ended their two-month-long strike this week.

This follows the refusal of Nampak, which is part of the giant Barlow Rand, to consider their demand for centralised bargaining.

Intervention from Cosatu leadership secured the reinstatement of 1 000 workers dismissed during the strike.

However, Barlow Rand once again proved its determination to prevent centralised bargaining and thus to weaken the collective strength of trade unions.

## Away with councillors

THE Civic Associations of Southern Transvaal (Cast) has intensified its campaign to remove councillors, end power cuts and establish single, non-racial councils.

This is despite the fact that mass marches in different parts of the region on November 17 were met with bannings, arrests and police brutality. Two people died in Johannesburg during battles with police.

Cast is presently discussing a stayaway in support of its demands and to protest against the state's response to its peaceful campaign.

## Workers' Charter Conference

COSATU is to go all out to involve its allies, Nactu and other trade unions in the process of drawing up a Workers' Charter.

This was resolved at the federation's Workers' Charter Conference in mid-November.

The federation also resolved that the right to strike and the right of trade unions to organise freely should be enshrined in a new constitution.

The federation plans to adopt the Workers' Charter in July next year. ♦



# Grappling with the real issues

**F**rom 14 to 16 December, fundamental questions relating to the future of our country and the sub-continent will be under scrutiny by elected representatives of over 400 ANC branches from throughout the country.

This is the first national conference of the ANC within South Africa since 1959. After its banning, the movement held two consultative conferences – the first in Morogoro, Tanzania, in 1969 and the last in Kabwe, Zambia, in 1985. Though designated as "consultative" because only external structures took part, these conferences charted the path which has brought us to the stage at which we are today.

Initially, the movement had planned to have a fully-fledged national conference this December. However, at its meeting in October, the NEC/ILC decided to postpone the national conference to June 1991. The actual month and dates are to be ratified by the consultative conference.

The decision to go ahead with a consultative conference was motivated by the fact that there are many urgent issues which need the attention of the movement at the highest possible level.

Negotiations – or at least talks about negotiations – are proceeding apace. Already, since

**In mid December over 1 000 delegates will assemble in Johannesburg for the ANC National Consultative Conference – the first inside the country since 1959. MAYIBUYE looks at some of the critical issues facing the conference.**

February 2, many critical developments have taken place. There is a real possibility that we will enter new and decisive stages early next year. To review all these developments and take bold decisions about the future requires mandated representatives from the lowest to the highest organs of the movement.

## INTERIM GOVERNMENT

This will cover issues such as the broad parameters within which our negotiators have to operate, including relevant campaigns around the Interim Government, Constituent Assembly and other issues. Work is also under way to set out the constitutional platform of the movement. This has to be conducted

with deliberate speed but on the basis of maximum consultation.

While the Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines serve as a basis for this, there is also the drive to achieve the widest possible national consensus. The conference will have to review this work and give the necessary guidelines to the constitutional experts.

At the international level, the movement has made major breakthroughs with the achievement of world consensus reflected in the UN Declaration and the September General Assembly resolution. However, with developments in eastern Europe, the anti-imperialist camp has been weakened. There is also a tendency among western countries and some African govern-



**ANC deputy president Nelson Mandela greets president Oliver Tambo. Tambo will return to South Africa on December 14.**

ments to weaken the all-round isolation of the apartheid regime. The conference is charged with the task of working out a programme to respond adequately to this new situation.

All these issues hinge around the basic question of the strategy and tactics that the ANC needs to adopt for the current period. The approach of the regime and its allies has drastically changed; and our old formulations are not always helpful.

Since February 2, the leadership has taken bold tactical and at times strategic decisions. The Groote Schuur and Pretoria meetings with the government, the unilateral suspension of armed actions, response to violence in the PWV and Natal and the approach to bantustan leaders are but some of the issues.

While these decisions were necessitated by concrete conditions, there is the problem that our tactical shifts are not properly contextualised. The danger is that the movement could find

itself lacking a uniform approach and thus confusing our members and supporters.

Members of the ANC are broadly agreed that the present situation is a victory accruing out of the multi-pronged struggle waged over the years. Apartheid is in deep crisis. But, while we have defined the agenda for the present stage, the balance of forces is always shifting, and the strategic initiative could slip from our hands.

### **LEGITIMACY**

The regime is actively pursuing a political strategy aimed at regaining legitimacy in the eyes of the people and undermining the national liberation content of the struggle. The attempts to form political alliances around the Nationalist Party and the use of violence to disorganise and weaken the opposition are some of the weapons in its arsenal.

What are the implications of

this situation on our Strategy and Tactics?

We have all along defined South African society as Colonialism of a Special Type. A number of laws underpinning apartheid colonialism have been abolished and the regime has made many declarations of intent about moving to a new society. It is necessary to examine whether the essence of the system has changed, requiring new definitions on our part.

These developments impact upon the ruling class and its white mass base. Old alliances have somewhat collapsed, and some forces within big business and the white community in general have accepted the need for fundamental transformation, though they would differ with us on detail. Do our old definitions still hold? Can we talk in terms of new tactical partners, and would this necessitate a reformulation of our positions regarding the ruling class?

Since the mid-80s, we have



**A delegate makes a point at the recent regional conference of the ANC in the Western Cape**

characterised the crisis of apartheid as deep-rooted and irreversible. Quite clearly, the steps taken by the government constitute an attempt, under pressure, to minimise the impact of this crisis on itself.

On a number of occasions, the democratic movement has found itself on the defensive, and actually tailing behind the government. A clear understanding of the current phase will help the movement exercise leadership and utilise its strengths much more effectively.

This relates to the organisation and mobilisation of all the classes and strata which stand to gain from fundamental transformation. We have in the past identified these forces and sought to galvanise them from the underground. The strengthening of the ANC and building of alliances has been central. This approach needs to be examined in the light of the new situation. Not least is the question of the tripartite alliance with the SACP and now Cosatu under the situation of legality.

### **THE RULING CLASS**

Our definition of South African society and the nature of the ruling class will determine whether we still see the struggle as a national democratic revolution, the main content of which is the liberation of the black people, and Africans in particular. Or would we, in the context of negotiations, talk about reform as our approach?

It could be argued that most of the above issues are straightforward and would not require much rethinking on the part of the movement. The Consultative Conference needs to pronounce on this.

For it is on the basis of agreement on these issues that Conference will have to deal with the thorny questions about forms of struggle and the forms of transfer of power envisaged. The crucial issue in this regard is: have we entered negotiations as a tactic or as a strategy? In other words, given the changes

**Continued on Page 8**





**The participants in the first round of talks between the ANC and the government. The national consultative conference will have to consider the question of whether we enter negotiations as a tactic or as a strategy.**

Three basic reasons have been given for the postponement of the conference. Firstly, the state of organisation of the movement still leaves much to be desired.

The ANC is a liberation movement representing the interests of the overwhelming majority of South Africans. It enjoys support among millions of our people. However, the actual membership of the movement, numbering about 200 000, does not reflect this mass support. A host of objective and subjective reasons are responsible for this (See article on page 19).

It was, therefore, felt that, for the ANC to go to a national conference excluding scores of thousands who are ANC, but through no fault of their own have not as yet acquired membership, would be less than representative. Further, thousands of ANC members who carried the burden over the years are still in exile or in prison.

The NEC decided to give priority in the coming months to organisation, and the return of exiles and prisoners and their full integration into ANC structures.

Secondly, the state of political work within the movement needs much strengthening. A large percentage of members are new in the ANC. While most of them have borne the brunt of mass struggles and acquired tremendous experience in MDM formations, a lot still needs to be done to educate members in the political policies and organisational principles of the ANC.

It is fundamental that, both in the preparatory process and at conference itself, members should make informed decisions

about issues that affect the future of the movement and the country as a whole.

Thirdly, reports from the regions and the national preparatory committee indicated that the state of preparations for the conference was not up to the mark. Structures and members had not been sufficiently involved in the preparations for a fully-fledged national conference.

The NEC/ILC meeting decided to strengthen the NPC; and regions have been called upon to take more active part in conference preparations. Basic documents have been sent out for discussion.

## **Why was the national conference postponed?**



**ANC NEC members at the last National Consultative Conference in Kabwe in 1985.**

since February 2, do we see a negotiated transfer of power as the most probable outcome of the present phase?

This is the crux of the matter. In the past, we defined the struggle as a protracted people's war in which partial and general uprisings would play an important role. This was to culminate in seizure of power in which the armed element would be crucial.

In relation to negotiations, the old formulation ran thus: to pursue protracted people's war and go into negotiations if the option presents itself.

Today we have moved into negotiations politics, and in our statements we say categorically that we will consider the option of seizure of power only if negotiations fail.

This is an important shift which must be clearly grasped. It will most certainly affect the manner in which we deploy our human and material resources and conduct our day-to-day work. Above all, it impacts upon the balance among "the pillars of struggle": armed, mass, underground and international mobilisation.

While it is given, that negotiated transformation will require some form of compulsion – to ensure that the other side negotiates in good faith – the balance

among forms of struggle cannot be the same as in a protracted people's war.

How then do we build our forces under present conditions? Is the underground still necessary? Does the suspension of armed actions mean that we do not build MK? How do we utilise mass organisation and mass action as the central pillar in the current phase?

### **SELF DEFENCE**

Related to this is the problem of vigilante and police violence. Political and military self-defence has to be worked out. At the same time, we are faced with the question whether we can allow the regime to negotiate while it is waging war against the oppressed.

These and many other issues of strategy will be high on the agenda. But strategic pronouncements will be meaningless if they are not backed up by a clear programme of action. It is for this reason that all layers of the movement see the coming event as a "fighting conference"; a conference which will work out a programme to empower the ANC and the masses for a resolution of the crisis in our country.

It is generally agreed that "ne-

gotiations politics" should not demobilise our forces. The tasks of building the ANC into a powerful mass organisation and galvanising the people around national and local issues remains central. Whether or not the process of peaceful transformation yields the desired result relies primarily on the fulfilment of these tasks.

The National Organising Committee will present a report on progress and problems in the building of the ANC. A synthesis of experiences from the ground will be crucial in ensuring that the target the movement has set itself, both in terms of numbers and quality of membership, is achieved. Conference will also have to consider the question whether the structures operating now, and the deployment of cadres from the highest to the lowest levels, are appropriate given the priorities we have set ourselves.

These are some of the issues that will be uppermost in delegates' minds as they converge on the venue of conference.

The delegates will be representing not simply their branches, but the mass of the oppressed and other anti-apartheid forces. They will be deliberating on issues that affect the nation as a whole. ♦

# Discuss, discuss, discuss...

The following issues on Strategy and Tactics are among the most crucial for discussion:

## 1. Nature of South African society:

- Can we still characterise it as Colonialism of a Special Type?
- Is the politics of national liberation versus apartheid still relevant?

## 2. The ruling class:

- Who constitutes the South African ruling class?
- How do contradictions manifest themselves within the ruling class today?
- Do we envisage having tactical partners from elements within the ruling class, for eg., big business?
- What strategies is the government/NP pursuing today?

## 3. Crisis of the

## apartheid system:

- How does FW de Klerk's approach to the crisis differ from that of PW Botha – what are the advantages and disadvantages for us?
- Is the crisis of the apartheid system "deep and irreversible"?
- In negotiations, do we rely on the "integrity" of the other side?

## 4. Character of the struggle:

- Is our struggle still a National Democratic Revolution? Are we simply pursuing reforms?
- What are the contradictions that this struggle seeks to resolve?
- In formulating our constitutional platform, do we put forward a "Freedom Charter constitution" or one that is broad and general but will enable us to implement

## the Freedom Charter?

- Is national consensus possible?

## 5. The motive forces:

- Which are the main forces that we should mobilise for change?
- What alliances should the ANC build today, and what issues should these alliances take up?
- How does the state seek to divide the forces for change?

## 6. Forms of struggle:

- Have we entered negotiations as a tactic or as a strategy for the transfer of power?
- Do we still envisage seizure of power by armed and/or mass struggle?
- Is the process irreversible?
- How do we approach the "four pillars" today?
- How do negotiations relate to mass action? ◆

## Representation at the National Consultative Conference

The National Preparatory Committee has sent out proposals to the regions and branches about representation to the NCC.

### INTERNAL REGIONS

Each branch has been allocated two representatives. Further, branches which have membership exceeding 1 000 will be granted one more representative.

Where there is an elected Regional Executive Committee (REC), the chairperson and secretary will be invited. In the case of regions where there is no elected REC, the convenor of the region will attend.

### EXTERNAL REGIONS

All areas outside of Africa will be represented by one delegate each. Within Africa

there will be a maximum of three delegates per region. MK establishments will be treated as separate regions and will be allocated three per camp.

All Chief Representatives will attend as delegates.

These recommendations have been discussed by the branches, and some changes have been proposed. For example, there is a feeling that, given the importance of the issues under discussion, all REC members should be allowed to attend; and departments should also be allocated a representative each.

The NPC has forwarded these recommendations to the NEC, and there is general agreement that the proposals will be positively considered. ◆



**MK  
commander  
Sphiwe  
Nyanda: 'We  
received  
our orders  
from the  
leadership  
of the ANC.'**

**In its submission in court and in deliberate leakages to the media, the regime has sought to distort the nature of Operation Vula, its successes and setbacks. In this exclusive interview, Sphiwe Nyanda, one of the senior operatives of this underground unit, sets the record straight.**

# The facts behind the fiction

**MAYIBUYE: How has your family received you after your release on bail?**

**SIPHIWE NYANDA:** Well, I get the impression from my parents that they are proud of me, of what I have done.

**Would you say that your work in the underground has contributed to reaching the current phase of struggle?**

A great deal. The underground, of which I was part, contributed to the pressures on the government to institute the changes we see now.

'Operation Vula' must not be seen as a separate operation. It was part of the ANC's efforts to build a stronger underground. The different pillars of the revolution – mass action, armed struggle, underground work and international isolation – are all responsible for the changes.

**The government has been trying to create the impression that it was an SACP operation.**

The regime likes to divide our forces, to create the impression that there are moderates and radicals in the ANC. They know from the documents found that it was an ANC operation. They know our structures were reporting to OR (Tambo). When he became ill we were reporting to Alfred Nzo.

The regime is trying to create the impression that Party radicals want to derail negotiations. They are deliberately lying about this.

**Was the SACP's Tongaat Conference linked to Operation Vula?**

The link was incidental in the sense that Mac Maharaj and I, who were involved in Operation Vula, attended the Tongaat Conference, which was a meeting of the Party. There is no connection between the two.

**Is it true that a Comrade Joe at the Tongaat Conference stated that the SACP was not bound by the**

**agreements between the ANC and the government?**

This isn't true. In fact, I am the Joe referred to in the document.

What I said was that the ANC was signing an agreement with the government to suspend armed actions. But the AWB, Inkatha, etcetera were not bound by this agreement. Thus we have to retain the capacity to defend ourselves against attacks from these forces. In any event, this was a personal view. The resolutions of the Conference speak for themselves, and they had the status of recommendations to the Central Committee.

**Has this statement proven to be true?**

Yes, it has been borne out by recent events, especially the carnage in the Reef. This took place immediately after the ANC had suspended armed actions.

From what I heard while in detention, people were calling upon the ANC to arm them. People could not understand how the agreement with the government should affect their capacity to defend themselves.

I would believe that the violence was inspired by elements within the security forces. Death squads have been roaming around. These come from within the security forces. Vlok meets the AWB and they agree on how best it should organise itself. When we want to defend ourselves, then he screams that we want to create private armies.

**Do you see a need for an underground in the transitional period?**

The underground is important from a strategic perspective. We cannot say that the changes instituted are irreversible. We cannot say that there will not be a right-wing backlash. Within the De Klerk administration, there are forces who want to destroy the ANC, and to reverse the current process. The fact that there are death squads on the prowl also calls for us to maintain the underground.

We won't emasculate ourselves by surrendering to the enemy. The regime is calling upon

us to abandon strikes and other mass actions. It wants to interpret the Pretoria agreement to the liking of its own constituency.

**How was Operation Vula discovered?**

I came into the country in July 1988. We knew it was going to be a major and difficult operation. There was no guarantee that we would survive forever. But we managed to survive for two years. This should not mean that the arrests were justified.

The police are refusing to acknowledge that they have two comrades in their custody who were arrested before the swoop on July 5. We can only surmise that they got the information of our whereabouts from these comrades since the places they swooped on were known to them.

One should add that perhaps we tended to relax after February 2 when the ANC was unbanned. For example, we could have acted much more swiftly after discovering that some of our comrades were missing.

**Was Operation Vula meant to concentrate on Durban only?**

It was initially aimed for Natal and Transvaal. It was envisaged that at some later stage it would expand to other areas.

**How did it differ from previous projects?**

The approach was not to unduly differentiate between combat and political work. Our primary concern was carrying out underground political work on the ground. This was to provide us with the capacity to organise MK structures with specialisation in combat, intelligence, etc. Thus our main purpose was a strong political underground.

In the past only middle layer cadres were sent. Once the cadres were inside the country they found difficulty in making major decisions on behalf of the movement. There was thus a lot of shuttling to and from Lusaka and other areas to keep in touch with the leadership.

In this case, a senior member of the NEC was sent in. The advantage of having a person like Mac Maharaj was that we had leadership in contact with the ground. We didn't have to seek a second opinion on every issue from Lusaka.

**Did Operation Vula succeed in covering all the areas of specialisation?**

We were only beginning to create viable military structures. We were getting the personnel requested. Comrades who had just come into the country in February were to concentrate on that area of work.

At the political level we were very well organised. In Southern Natal we had created political structures in all the townships. We had strong propaganda units. In fact, we carried out a lot of propaganda work.

The ANC presence was definitely felt. We participated actively in all campaigns - for Peace in Natal, defiance etc. We had developed a fully-fledged underground leadership.

**Did the ANC underground play a role in the work of mass democratic structures?**

This was one of its main achievements. Some of our committees dealt directly with this while others concentrated on different areas.

**Some people have criticised the Vula operatives for stockpiling weapons while there are all these killings going on in Natal.**

We did not have the capacity to start acting. We were still organising units and stockpiling. We were aware of the problems being faced at the hands of the warlords. By February 2 we were still engaged in identifying people who could be brought into MK to take part in combat activity. Already some progress had been made in this regard, though one cannot go into details.

The approach then was to train units and then supply them with material. We were



**Joe Slovo welcomes Mac Maharaj at Jan Smuts Airport, Johannesburg, after Maharaj was released on bail in the Operation Vula trial.**

trying to respond as speedily as possible. We could not be expected to simply "arm the masses" as it were.

**But there is a popular sentiment that MK should arm the masses.**

I don't know where this comes from; where this has happened in other struggles.

People must not have the impression that we have access to a huge arsenal of arms.

Even if we had some capacity, we could not distribute weapons to all and sundry. Weapons without organisation are meaningless.

**There appears to have been a large number of foreigners involved in the Operation.**

You must bear in mind that the regime is trying to create the impression that this whole thing was controlled by and involved whites and Indians only. They have not publicised the African involvement in the Operation. The release of Jabu Sithole, who was arrested along with us, contributes to that picture.

They have cited Joe Slovo and other whites as the co-conspirators. They have deliberately not mentioned the rest of the ANC leadership involved in this. The foreigners were very peripheral to the actual project.

**What about the "high standard of living" enjoyed by the Vula operatives.?**

Ronnie Kasrils has already dealt with this in his interview in New Nation. Do you consider a TV/video as a high standard of living? A house needs curtains and furniture to make sure that we do not arouse suspicion. Allegations about expensive whisky and clothes are false.

In fact, one of the policemen hinted to me that when he went to one of the houses occupied by one of the women comrades, he gained the impression that she was a very dedicated woman who lived modestly. He did not find things like lipstick, nail polish and other such cosmetics.

**The police claim that they have now smashed the entire underground machinery. Is this true?**

In my bail application, the prosecutor opposed it on the basis that they have only discovered 10% of the underground; that I would go abroad with the help of the remaining machinery.

**Did Operation Vula aim to derail the negotiations process?**

We received our orders from the leadership of the ANC. The ANC had been publicly stating that the armed struggle goes on and the underground will continue.

We were carrying out orders. There is nothing strange in the fact that we continued after February 2. The ANC was and still is committed to the underground and I believe it should continue doing so.

What the regime has not said is that Mac was arrested with a document in his hand-writing which was the NEC draft resolution on the suspension of armed actions. The same comrade is now being accused of derailing the negotiations process.

The Vula operatives were also party to the suspension of armed actions. In my paper to the Tongaat Conference, where I am quoted as Comrade Joe, I was arguing that the ANC would have to offer suspension of the armed struggle – of course with certain conditions.

**What is your assessment of the negotiations process thus far?**

We are being tried despite the Pretoria Minute. This signifies a breach of faith by the government. There are people whom it is preparing to release from prison while it is sending others to prison for the same actions.

There are many obstacles still to be removed by the government. Yet it is placing new obstacles. The sooner the negotiations process gets underway the better. ♦

# Is consensus possible on a future constitution?

**T**he African National Congress is engaged in a process which could lead to a negotiated settlement. The outcome of this settlement should be the creation of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The OAU Harare Declaration outlines the broad principles which should underpin the constitution of a democratic South Africa (See box on Page 15). Agreement on such principles should form the basis of the whole negotiations process.

At the Pretoria summit between the ANC and the government, it was agreed that the way was open "to proceed to negotiations on a new constitution". Against the background of various agreements contained in the Pretoria Minute, the two parties agreed to start "exploratory talks" in this regard.

Has consensus been reached on the shape of the new constitution? Is consensus possible?

There is a degree of agreement, at any rate verbally, on the need to dismantle apartheid. But there clearly is not yet agreement on the goal of negotiations – on the nature of the new post-apartheid South Africa. Consequently, there is not yet consensus on the main char-

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**At the Pretoria meeting in August, the ANC and the government agreed to start exploratory talks on a future constitution. What is the ANC's approach to constitution-making? Is consensus possible?**

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acter of a future constitution.

The democratic movement's broad conception of a new constitution can be found in the Harare Declaration referred to above, as well as in earlier formulations contained in the Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines.

## **COMMON VOTERS' ROLL**

At the centre of the ANC's approach is commitment to a genuinely democratic constitution, based on universal suffrage on a common voters' roll. Full effect must be given to the will of the people. The ANC wants a constitution in which the people do govern, and their power is not diluted by artificial schemes which prevent the redressing of the wrongs of apartheid.

On the side of the regime –

mainly through statements of De Klerk and Viljoen – what comes through is an attempt to qualify the impact of popular will. This would be effected via a veto mechanism. Their reference to a Bill of Rights includes a conception which substantially limits the power of a future government with regard to a wide array of social issues, beyond conventional civil rights.

In their reference to "group rights", representatives of the government cite legitimate issues such as the protection of cultural, religious and language rights. But they go further to propose measures that will, in the main, protect the privilege of whites and the wealthy. The President's Council is even bold enough to suggest division along ethnic lines.

The protection of wealth

through a Bill of Rights was articulated by Viljoen recently, when he referred to the need for protection against "excessive taxation". Of course everyone is against excessive taxation. But to seek to entrench this in a constitution is to tie a future government to a mechanism that underpins the interests of the excessively wealthy, at the expense of the excessively poor.

Certainly, the starting point of the ANC in constitution-making cannot be sectarian. The ANC is not a political party serving simply the goals of the ANC. It is simultaneously the guardian of national goals and interests. We do not, therefore, seek an ANC constitution but a South African constitution.

This means that we will not try to impose a constitution, even through majority representation in a Constituent Assembly. It is essential that, within reasonable limits, even the minority is won over to a common conception of a new constitution, a constitution to which all South Africans pay allegiance.

### **CONSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES**

That is why the ANC has submitted its Constitutional Guidelines for discussion among the people of South Africa. Within the framework of general democratic principles, the ANC is open as to the means to achieve popular government.

The Constitutional Committee of the ANC is involved in a process of working out detailed policy positions of the ANC on various issues (See interview with Zola Skweyiya on page 16). The Discussion Document on Economic Policy and the resolutions of the Local Government and Land Conferences, are some of the documents sent out for discussion and amendment.

It is necessary for the ANC and the rest of the democratic movement to consciously embark on a campaign involving a wide range of people to systematically collate the people's demands and to assess how divergent interests can be reconciled, where practi-





## Principles for a future constitution?

In its Statement of Principles, the Organisation of African Unity (Harare) Declaration reiterates the position of the South African liberation movement that the new constitutional order should be based on the following principles:

- South Africa shall become a united, democratic and non-racial state.
- All its people shall enjoy common and equal citizenship and nationality, regardless of race, colour, sex or creed.
- All its people have the right to participate in the government and administration of the country on the basis of a universal suffrage, exercised through one-person, one-vote, under a common voters' roll.
- All shall have the right to form and join any political party of their

choice, provided that this is not in furtherance of racism.

- All shall enjoy universally-recognised human rights, freedoms and civil liberties, protected under an entrenched Bill of Rights.
- South Africa shall have a new legal system which shall guarantee equality before the law.
- South Africa shall have an independent and non-racial judiciary.
- There shall be created an economic order which shall promote and advance the well-being of all South Africans.
- A democratic South Africa shall respect the rights, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and pursue a policy of peace, friendship and mutually beneficial co-operation with all peoples. ◆

cally possible.

Out of this process, an ANC platform representing the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people will be worked out.

This process cannot be confined to the constitution as such. It also has to take on board the development of sectoral charters. These charters are meant to deal partly with constitutional questions, but mainly with specific issues of concern to workers, the media, artists, students, teachers and others. The subject matter of these charters will form part of a future consti-

tution, supplementary legislation or the norms regulating relations within specific sectors, in the process of building a democratic society.

Those involved in the development of such charters are not only ANC members. A wide array of organisations and interested individuals are taking part. But is the range of forces wide enough? Is it sufficient to involve only members of Cosatu, the Association of Democratic Journalists, the Congress of SA Writers and others in drawing up the respective charters? If the aim, understandably, is to

start within the ranks, when and how do we broaden these encounters?

### MANY DIFFERENCES

It would, however, be wishful thinking to believe that everyone will agree on everything. The fact remains that there still is not and may not easily be agreement on or even acceptance of a constitution which is consistently non-racial and democratic. It is a fallacy to expect all differences to be resolved purely through discussion at the negotiating table.

Clearly, some forces in big business will shudder at the mere mention of an economic policy that serves the interests of the people. The Nationalist Party will do all it can to retain the privileges of the white community. There are those who will demand a boerestaat and bantustans.

This basic conflict cannot be resolved. There is no point in the kind of "consensus" which leaves the majority of the people still denied their fundamental rights. In any case, this would not be consensus.

The starting point should be the realisation of the root causes of the conflict in our country. If the aim of the negotiations exercise is to remove these causes – as it should be – it must then follow that consensus does not imply a compromise between apartheid and democracy. Rather it means taking into account the variety of interests and fears in working out details on how genuine democracy can be realised.

Precisely because the government and its allies will seek to introduce modified apartheid, it is necessary that the masses build their forces and assert their demands in action. A variety of campaigns around the basic demands of the democratic and patriotic forces will be crucial in strengthening the hand of the negotiators.

All patriots must work together to establish consensus around the first democratic constitution this country has ever known. To this end we must ACT jointly. ◆

**Zola Skweyiya**

**MAYIBUYE: Who makes up the Constitutional Committee of the ANC?**

**ZOLA SKWEYIYA:** It was originally composed of all the people who worked in the Legal Department of the ANC outside the country. At the time it was chaired by Professor Jack Simons, and I was his deputy. In addition to the comrades based in Lusaka, there were others in London, Maputo and other areas.

With the unbanning of the ANC it was felt that we should involve by all means the legal profession inside South Africa. Consultations were held with the internal leadership and, as a result we have among us Pius Langa, Dallah Omar, Fink Hayson and others.

**MAYIBUYE: Are they all members of the ANC or are they representing other organisations?**

**ZS:** All of them are members of the ANC.

**MAYIBUYE: What relations does the Committee have with other organisations?**

**ZS:** This is an ANC Constitutional Committee. But, since we came back, we have tried to have a firm relationship, especially with COSATU and the SACP. And we are hoping that our relationship with COSATU will be regulated from the tripartite co-ordination structure.

This, however, is not working to the satisfaction of the Constitutional Committee. We are definitely not satisfied with this.

Recently we decided to go directly to COSATU without having to go via Sauer Street (ANC/HQ). We also want to build personal relationships with individuals within COSATU concerned with constitutional questions.

**MAYIBUYE: The Constitutional Committee seems to be quite busy thrashing out the constitutional platform of the ANC. What processes does this entail?**

**ZS:** Especially after coming back to South Africa, we found

# The road to a new constitution

## **MAYIBUYE spoke to ANC Constitutional Committee head Zola Skweyiya about the challenges facing the committee in working out the constitutional platform of the ANC and its allies**

that there are many questions being raised by our people. Some of these questions fall directly under the auspices of the Constitutional Committee.

We had no clear policy on local government. We felt very strongly that this policy cannot be devised over the heads of the people. The same question was raised in relation to the land. The Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines speak in general terms on these issues.

**MAYIBUYE: What has been done to meet this challenge?**

**ZS:** What we did was to set up an ANC Local Government Committee. In discussions with the MDM and other forces earlier on in Harare, it came out quite clearly that there were many problems regarding local government that needed to be addressed. As far as the regime is concerned, they might be prepared to concede certain things

at national level, but they want to retain these at local level.

Therefore, it was urgent and imperative for the ANC to work out very clearly its detailed position on this question.

We also had to spell out very clearly the relationship between ANC structures and the civics. We also had to determine the relationship between national negotiations and negotiations at local level. We felt that it would be to the disadvantage of our own people if we did not have a common national policy. This has come out very clearly in the tactics of the TPA in its negotiations with civics in different localities.

We are also working very hard to establish Land Committees in various localities, as substructures of the ANC National Land Commission. As you are aware, the policies that the government is putting across mean that our demand for land will not be met. They are not prepared to give up

the core of the agricultural farming land.

The removal, merely, of the Land Acts means that blacks can only continue scratching at the periphery. Therefore, a clear and detailed policy on the part of the ANC is necessary.

**MAYIBUYE: What other issues are receiving this kind of attention?**

**ZS:** We've been looking at electoral systems for the future. We are having a seminar soon on this issue – as we did with local government and the land. Later – in the next two to three months – we'll have seminars on the gender question (including the family and children), on the issue of the need or otherwise of a constitutional court and on transitional mechanisms.

On all these questions, we are also studying the experiences of countries such as Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, Algeria, Zimbabwe, India, Britain, the US and Sweden.

We are working on different options for a constitution, for instance, looking at whether South Africa needs a second chamber or whether we have to follow the example of African countries with a unitary chamber of parliament. We are also looking at the issue of minority rights, and at the broad demand of the ANC for a Constituent Assembly and the Interim Government.

**MAYIBUYE: What about labour issues and the economy?**

**ZS:** We have commissions looking into all these questions. The main commissions are on the framework and structure of the constitution, labour, women, family, electoral systems, local government, the land and judi-

cial systems.

**MAYIBUYE: Who takes part in these commissions and seminars?**

**ZS:** The seminars held thus far were not very broad. They were mostly a starting point to formulate basic ANC approaches. Next year we shall be going very broad to involve almost everyone.

**MAYIBUYE: What about processes underway such as the Workers' Charter campaign?**

**ZS:** We are having consultations with COSATU, and intend to have a number of meetings with them, especially before their big conference in mid-November. We intend to discuss everything with them, so that they should not only focus on labour and economic issues. Their outlook should be reflected in everything we are doing.

The problem is that, understandably, they are more interested in the issue of a Workers' Charter simply as workers. But they do not look at it in the broader sense as South Africans, as citizens of South Africa. Their involvement should definitely be broader: whether it is such questions as women and children, COSATU should give answers, because every worker is interested in these issues.

**MAYIBUYE: Would this apply to the charters of other sectors?**

**ZS:** What worries us is that the whole question is left to the Constitutional Committee. We find it very difficult to penetrate deep into the membership of the movement and into the public in general.

We are looking forward to a situation in which regions organise conferences on all constitutional questions.

**MAYIBUYE: How long do you think it will take for the Constitutional Committee to work out the platform of the ANC?**

**ZS:** We are trying to consult as much as possible. It would not be difficult for the ANC to work

out a blueprint on its own. But our approach is that the product should be seen, not as an ANC constitution, but as a South African constitution. This is where the problem is.

What we might as well do, to facilitate discussion, can be to work out various constitutional options and present them to our people for discussion. But we are quite certain that we have to conduct our work speedily, so that we do not find ourselves, like in other colonial situations, having to respond to what has been handed down from the colonisers. At the same time, we have to ensure that our people participate.

**MAYIBUYE: How does this process relate to the "exploratory talks" with the government on constitutional questions?**

**ZS:** The "exploratory talks" were agreed upon at the August summit between the ANC and the government. These talks aim to explore areas of agreement and disagreement between the ANC and the government – the two major parties in negotiations.

On the other hand, what the Constitutional Committee is doing is to undertake more systematically what the government has been doing over the past five years. First of all, we do not have the personnel and resources that they have. We have to try over a period of about five months to work out details of our own positions.

They have got their own positions. They have got a team of more than 40 people who are working on this whole question; and they have got certain universities that are doing research for them, not only in South Africa but also internationally. We are busy working out our own positions.

With the "exploratory talks" we hope we can establish clearly what their thinking is.

Personally, I think these exploratory talks should not be confined to the government or the Nationalist Party. I am of the opinion that we should have

such talks with other anti-apartheid organisations. We have to talk to the PAC and other organisations. We should try to reach out to all citizens.

**MAYIBUYE: Do you think consensus can be reached on this?**

**ZS:** Let me be optimistic. I think the principles in the Harare Declaration constitute what all South Africans want, particularly the blacks. I do not see any major differences emerging in our consultation with the anti-apartheid forces.

Why we start with the regime, is simply because we have to convince them that these principles constitute the most reasonable foundation for the resolution of the crisis facing our country.

**MAYIBUYE: Have the "exploratory talks" with the government started; if so, what has transpired in the meetings held?**

**ZS:** They have not started. But there has been an "exploratory" meeting to prepare for a meeting, to find a suitable date.

**MAYIBUYE: Was a date agreed upon?**

**ZS:** No.

**MAYIBUYE: The Pretoria Minute gives the impression that these talks were to continue as obstacles to full-scale negotiations were being cleared. Why is there a delay?**

**ZS:** In Pretoria it was agreed that the process of removal of obstacles and exploratory talks would take place simultaneously. But this would not mean that negotiations have started – before the government fulfils the demands contained in the Harare Declaration.

At this juncture, we definitely need to gauge where the other side stands on constitutional questions. But these exploratory talks should also be conducted with other relevant parties.

At the same time, if there are major blockages in the clearing of obstacles, this will definitely affect the exploratory talks. ♦

**ANC organisers from different regions met in November to assess the state of the organisation. The seed has been sown. The task now is to ensure that it grows into a mighty ANC.**

**'W**as the great drive to launch branches a bubble, or was it a seed?" This, said a delegate to the Eastern Cape ANC regional conference, was the real question. Regional organisers of the ANC met in November to review progress and chart the way forward.

The workshop, convened by the ANC National Organising Committee, identified many areas which were making it difficult to draw in members and to establish dynamic regional and branch structures. A key problem affecting our entire country is the violence, which has gripped almost every township.

This violence comes in various forms and is perpetrated by a variety of forces. These forces share one aim: to weaken the ANC and to limit its growth. In situations of violence, not only is it difficult for organisers to move about freely, they have also had membership forms and fees confiscated.

The following were cited as the elements contributing to the creation of tension, fear and violent situations in our townships: state security forces, repressive bantustan structures, vigilantes, agent provocateurs, right-wing forces, gangsters and unguided cadres.

Organisers have to contend daily with the power which right-wing and reactionary forces wield. This can be seen in the difficulty in obtaining offices or cases of civil servants being dismissed when it is discovered that they have joined the ANC.

### **SUBJECTIVE PROBLEMS**

Whilst the process of establishing the ANC is a political one, there are many administrative tasks which have to be met so that we can have a well-oiled machinery at our disposal. The

# **Nurturing the seed**

lack of sufficient human and material resources has meant that the administrative side of our work has suffered.

At the same time, through our weaknesses, we have contributed to the slow pace at which our organisation is developing. Firstly, many local structures have tried to exercise leadership as the ANC without earning it. Members in branch and regional bodies have distanced themselves from other organisations like the civics, church, youth and women's structures, thinking that the name of the ANC is sufficient to gain support for our positions.

The good name of the ANC was achieved through long and hard years of courageous struggle. The ANC earned its title of leader of the people. And it has to continue earning it – at national, regional and local level and in every struggle of our people.

To do this, we must avoid the distinction between organising for the ANC and providing leadership. It is in the process of working politically with our communities that we will be able to strengthen our organisation.

The problem of poor education – especially among our elders – means that we must be able to communicate in a way that can be understood by all our people. Organisers at the workshop insisted that we must provide translations for all our major publications.

The media committee of the Eastern Cape Region will be re-

corded all major ANC documents on cassette after they have been translated. Workers at certain paper factories have been organising themselves into *MAYIBUYE* discussion groups so that those who are literate can explain the content to those who cannot read.

### **GUIDE TO ORGANISING**

The workshop identified four principles we must bear in mind when organising:

Firstly, our structures must be active and democratic. Organisers pointed out that there is a tendency to recruit members, launch the branch and then have no idea what activity to engage in after that. Given all the problems our people are facing, there can be no excuse for this state of affairs.

A branch can engage in anything from political education, leaflet distribution, to cultural activities as long as they contribute to developing our people's understanding and organisation. Also, it will be the task of the branch executive to make sure that they are consulting and directing the members all the time.

Secondly, mass participation in struggle and campaigns must be encouraged at all times. We must learn from past experiences that organisations were strongest when they involved our people in action and when decisions were taken on the ba-

**Continued on Page 21**

# ANC in die kol

**Recently, the ANC launched its branch in Pretoria Central. Afrikaans revolutionary songs and dances from the adjacent townships added flavour to the historic occasion.**

**O**n the evening of Thursday 18 October the ANC officially established itself in the capital of conservative South Africa. The launch of the Pretoria Central Branch, which currently consists of 102 mainly Afrikaans-speaking white members, was a happy occasion. It was attended by approximately 250 people including comrades from Mamelodi and Soshanguve.

The launch began with an opening address by "Terror" Lekota who remembered that the first time he came to Pretoria he was not allowed onto the platform at the station. The second and third times were when he had been arrested. This time, he said, was the first time he would relax and he was greatly pleased that the efforts of the past were finally bearing fruit.

## FIRST DUTIES

Amongst the first duties of the new Branch members, Terror said, would be to acknowledge their personal role in creating a democratic South Africa. Constant discussion, debate and involvement in formulating the policies of the Movement were necessary to ensure a true grassroots democracy.

The keynote address was given by NEC member Steve Tshwete who stressed the importance of non-racialism to the ANC. If it ever became necessary, he said, the ANC would sooner shed some of its membership compromise on this principle.

The ANC had to live and lead on the ground, Cde Tshwete



**ABOVE: Steve Tshwete and other guests congratulating members of the newly-elected branch executive committee. BELOW: Signing up new members at the launch.**



said. To do so all branches had to provide input to the leadership so that the views of the people were expressed in the process of negotiations.

This meant that all members were to engage in discussions about the political and economic future of the country with as wide a range of people as possible, including those who did not agree with the positions of the Movement.

In the elections to the ten-person Branch Executive Committee more women were voted in than men. "At last!" said an observer.

The new Executive resolved to

address the issue of the returning exiles as a priority, and called on the membership to volunteer their services with regard to accommodation, employment, counselling and transport. Also high on the agenda would be to reach out to more white workers in Pretoria. Support of the anti-conscription campaign would be important as the military draft was a problem facing a number of potential members.

The meeting ended on a high note with the singing of a revolutionary song in Afrikaans – a song which we are sure we will hear more often throughout the country! ♦

sis of the broadest consultation. The Mass Defiance Campaign last year is a clear example of bringing in the maximum number of people into action.

Thirdly, we must have a dynamic recruitment plan. We cannot wait for our people to come to the ANC; the ANC must go out to the people. ANC organisers must visit people at their homes, their places of work and recreation – any part of our township must be seen as a potential recruitment area. Activists within a township must be able to pass on contacts they have developed or potential recruits to the relevant branches.

Fourthly, we must be able to direct all the support the ANC enjoys. This is not an easy task since the ANC enjoys support from so many different quarters:

Afrikaans-speaking whites, entertainers, traditional leaders, police, and so forth. The different regions must draw up a Programme of Action which takes into account the specific conditions of the various sectors. The sectoral struggles must be linked to national issues.

In working out an approach to organising, the workshop concluded that recruitment and building of membership must be linked to active campaigns. These campaigns must be linked to the needs and interests of the people. The campaigns must not simply focus on mobilisation – they must be aimed at building structures at the national, regional and local levels. Organisational work must be integral to political issues at the various levels.

The workshop stated that relations between the ANC and bantustan and traditional leaders must aim to build rather than undermine ANC structures.

It also pointed out that self-defence is a right not limited to the use of arms, but also involving organisation, discipline and guided militancy.

### **ROLE OF ORGANISERS**

Recruitment is a responsibility of all ANC members – the organiser of a branch or a region must oversee the process. This means that the organiser must provide members with training on how to recruit.

The training has to cover areas like why people should join the ANC. Organisers point out that people would rather join the civic because it is doing something concrete while the ANC is discussing abstract policy questions. An organiser from the Natal South Coast reported that a rural community asked him whether the ANC will provide them with water.

This already shows the difficult position an ANC organiser is placed in: we cannot make promises which we may not be able to deliver. At the same time, we can make the political struggle we are leading concrete by involving ourselves as ANC members in the day-to-day problems of the people. Not only will this display the concern of the ANC for people's problems – it will make it easier for us to link their problems with political demands.

The manner in which we address this problem underlines the fact that recruitment is not a technical issue: it is a political one which has to be seen in relation to the political questions of the day.

Because people have supported the ANC for so long, they feel entitled to join the ANC without paying a fee. This, some organisers say, has slowed down the process of joining the ANC. However it displays the extent to which people have continued to hold the ANC dear during a time when the ANC could not have a

## **Border region launches**

The Border Regional Conference, held on 13 October was attended by about 700 delegates from 61 branches. It was marked by intense discussions on organisational questions.

The secretary's and organiser's reports came under particular scrutiny. In discussion delegates expressed the need for branches to be visited by executive members. The problem of communication between branches, the regional executive committee and the national head office was the subject of two resolutions.

The resolutions recommended that "branches in particular areas should form ANC zones to serve as links between such branches and the regional office" and that "there should be a proper process of consultation and accountability between the NEC and the grassroots".

The organiser's report raised the liveliest discussion on the strengthening of the ANC. Recommendations made included the need for training in organisational skills and the development of a regional organisational strategy.

The situation in the rural areas was of particular concern to the Border Region. One of the eight resolutions adopted noted that rural areas, in particular in bantustans, have become flashpoints of resistance. It called for the ANC to develop leadership from that section of our people.

The meeting resolved to strengthen relations between all MDM and ANC structures on the ground.

The implications of the Grootte Schuur and Pretoria Minutes were examined. It was pointed out that the Minutes are regarded with seriousness by the ANC, and their breach would have grave consequences for the peace process.

The conference called for the government to display its bona fides by ending all detentions and to abolish repressive legislation.

The conference strongly demanded the release of all political prisoners. It also passed a resolution calling upon the government "to stop dragging its feet if it is serious about peace" and allow the free return of exiles.



**Jakes Gerwel, a delegate at the Western Cape ANC Regional Conference making a point**

legal, public presence.

Organisers at the workshop agreed that some measure of flexibility must be displayed in the payment of membership fees. For example, a person could fill in the application form and be allowed to pay the fees later, whereupon the membership card will be issued.

After recruitment, the establishment and development of branches is another task of organisers. We need to build our structures in such a way that the entire organisation is adapted to the requirements of the moment. This can only be achieved by structures at the branch level being allowed to take the initiatives required to meet local challenges.

A bureaucratic form of centralism will destroy the creativity needed. It is usually the product of an unhealthy passivity from

below and undemocratic practises from above.

Regional organisers have to be in regular contact with the branches. This contact must not arise at times of crisis – it has to be regular and ongoing. This will enable the branches and the organisers to be able to monitor the development of any issue or struggle and consistently give leadership.

### **ALLIANCES**

Organisers at regional and local levels need to develop solid relations with fraternal organisations – the SACP, Cosatu, UDF, and civics. This relationship can only result in the further strengthening of ANC structures and improvement in the quality of our work.

Up to this stage, alliances have been limited to the national

leadership. This "paper alliance", as some of the organisers described it, is not understood at regional and branch levels. There has been no joint planning or implementation of campaigns.

The alliance needs to be correctly interpreted on the ground as one which is led by the ANC. Regional leaders of the different organisations need to sit down and work out a joint programme of action for their region. Questions like the proper use of our resources can be thrashed out at this level.

The devotion of our people to the ANC and to the struggle provides the fertile soil upon which the ANC shall be built. The seed has been laid. Through hard work, we shall ensure that the seed grows into a mighty ANC. The quality of our harvest shall be reflected in the fruits of freedom. ♦





Singing during a break at the Southern Natal conference

## Regions chart the way forward

**'W**e have struggled for more than thirty years for this moment." This statement, made by a delegate to the Eastern Cape regional conference, captured the excitement with which ANC members in different regions entered their conferences.

Eight ANC regional conferences have been held over the past few weeks, giving branch representatives the chance to chart the way forward in the building of the ANC. Issues around the organisation and policies of the ANC and a programme of mass action dominated all the regional conferences. An approach to organising the rural areas was high on the agenda.

At the Southern Orange Free State regional conference, the problem of incorporating the elderly within the various democratic structures was addressed. It was noted with concern that very few middle-aged or elderly people had become involved.

The Transkei conference solved the problems that existed between the appointed ANC interim regional leadership and the local democratic structures. Elections were held and a new regional executive committee

voted in.

In the PWV Region, a series of regional conferences were held: a consultative conference to prepare for the regional conference, the actual regional conference, and a resolutions conference where a programme of action and resolutions were adopted.

The Western Cape regional conference concentrated, amongst other issues, on resolving the question of distribution between the rural and urban areas. Problems which had emerged from press reports about divisions in leadership structures were addressed in an open manner.

The Eastern Cape conference was blessed by the presence of such stalwarts as Govan Mbeki and Raymond Mhlaba. It mainly grappled with the problem of the best organisational approach to ensure maximum participation of membership in the activities of the ANC.

As *Mayibuye* went to press, the Midlands and Northern Transvaal regions were gearing themselves for their conferences. The discussions and resolutions taken will enrich the coming National Consultative Conference. ♦

### Southern Natal

"The struggle for national liberation can be won and lost in the killing fields of Natal." The Southern Natal regional conference opened with these words from patriots on Robben Island. And it was with an understanding of this responsibility that delegates got down to the issues which faced them at the conference.

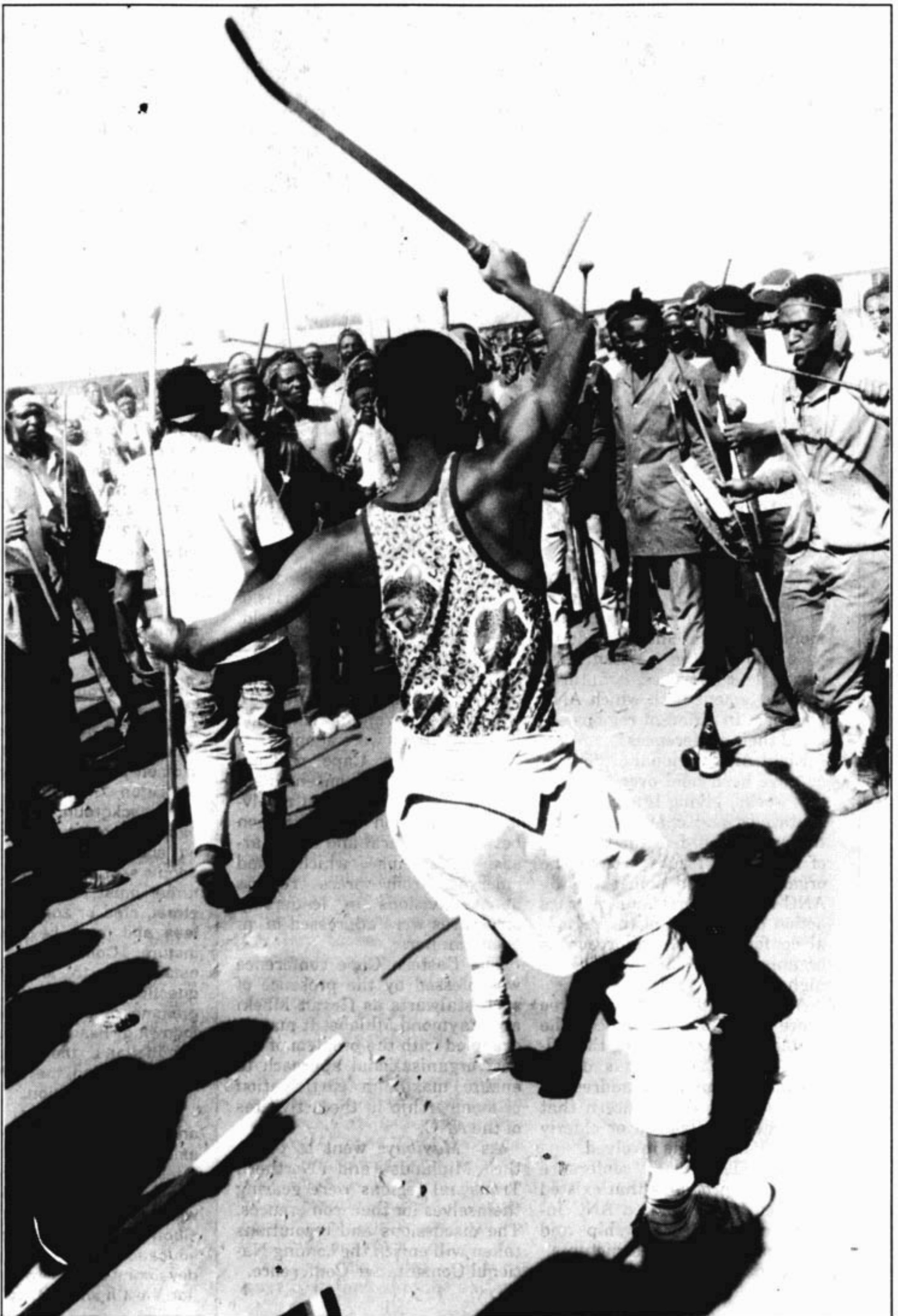
It was a highly charged gathering reflecting the fighting mood which has come to characterise the region. Two issues dominated the proceedings: how to strengthen the ANC as a national liberation movement in our fight against apartheid and how to ensure that Natal does not become a "Savimbi enclave".

The 400 delegates came from 62 branches spread throughout the region. The delegates were composed of a blend of young and old, men and women - a blend which some regions have yet to achieve.

There were animated discussions around the reports of the outgoing Regional Committee. Reports were also received from the Youth And Women Leagues and the Repatriation Committee.

A background paper on people's courts was presented and it was decided that people serving on these structures must be elected by street, area or zone committees and must be politically mature. Commissions were established to look at the question of developing a programme of action under the following headings: national negotiations, the Natal violence, building the ANC and the ANC constitution.

The programme of action and resolutions which emerged will be considered at a resolutions conference on 7 December. This conference will also look at the ANC's position on local government, education, economic policy, development and reconstruction, health and welfare.



# Dealing with terrorism

In Natal, the PWV, the Eastern Transvaal, KwaNdebele and other areas, thousands of lives have been lost in a campaign of violence the scale and character of which have never been seen before.

Who is responsible for this violence? Who benefits from it? How should the broad liberation movement respond to this situation? These questions affect both the day-to-day approach and the strategic posture of the anti-apartheid forces.

The violence has taken various forms, and the perpetrators are, on the surface, not the same. But a common thread has started to emerge, reflecting the following major characteristics:

- organised counter-revolution carried out by well-trained, professional bandits;
- where the violence has the appearance of inter-communal conflict, a hidden hand is apparent, with well thought-out motives and a clear political programme;
- direct involvement of organs of the state machinery in some of the massacres; and
- actions characterised by deliberate terrorism, without regard to the political affiliation of the victims.

In a booklet on the violence, the Institute of Contextual Theology (ICT) argues that the violence cannot be attributed merely to Inkatha or the extreme right-wing. These forces, the ICT points out, do not have the capacity to train, deploy, and sustain the bandits. Neither do they have the power to co-ordinate actions of the scale that gripped the PWV area, let alone command the SAP and SADF to act in the

**Debate is raging about the character of the violence engulfing the country. Recently, the National Working Committee on violence made up of representatives of the ANC, Cosatu and the SACP held a discussion on this question. MAYIBUYE summarises some of the key issues raised.**

manner that they have done.

The state could have acted differently to unearth the culprits, argues the ICT. It could have systematically followed the evidence provided by black communities; thoroughly scrutinised the many affidavits and other information provided by the ANC; dealt strongly with those caught red-handed as in Sebokeng on September 4; traced the origins of the weapons and ammunition and so on.

## OPERATION IRON FIST

But none of this has happened. Instead, the state elected to introduce Operation Iron Fist in the PWV and similar measures in Khayelitsha and other areas. The effect of these measures, aimed purportedly at ending the violence, has been to further weaken anti-apartheid organisations and undermine the efforts of communities to implement self-defence measures.

It would be wrong, though, to blame the whole of the ruling class for the violence. While it is obvious that big business, the more far-sighted elements within the Nationalist Party, the

security establishment and the extreme right-wing forces share a common desire to weaken the ANC and other democratic formations, they would differ on the methods to be used in this regard.

While most of them want the kind of transformation that serves the interests of capital and the white community, they would not be at one on the extent to which violence can be used to ensure this. While most of these forces seek long-term stability, they would not agree on whether stability could be sacrificed in the short-term. Related to this are such questions as the effect of the violence on the economy, investor confidence and sensitivity to international opinion.

The forces responsible for the violence are to be found within the apartheid state machinery, from the lowest to the highest echelons. The counter-revolutionary gangs were trained over many years: the CCB, Askaris, recruits from the KwaZulu bantustan, Renamo, Unita and others.

These elements are being used to introduce fear and despondency among the people,

and thus destabilise the vibrant optimism that characterises the present stage of struggle. This would discredit the ANC, which is seen as talking peace, yet unable to eliminate the violence or adequately respond to requests for arms.

At the same time, these forces are able to switch the violence on and off at given moments. And, by creating the impression that measures such as Iron Fist have eliminated the violence, they hope to engender the idea that the apartheid state machinery is indispensable to security in the transitional period. Some among them clearly wish to scuttle the whole negotiation process.

It would, therefore, be erroneous to divorce the violence from the general political strategy pursued by the forces in power. The Nationalist Party has not only opened its doors to blacks. It is also frantically trying to form multi-racial alliances. The campaign of violence helps open up space for the discredited allies of the NP.

Above all, the interpretation of the violence as ethnic and as a battle between the ANC and Inkatha representing an ideological struggle between "socialism" and "free enterprise", reinforces a more central theme: Apartheid colonialism is dead. The national liberation struggle has come to an end, and so has the politics of racial oppression versus national democracy.

Like in the past, the defenders of the old order will not come fully dressed as such. They exploit certain realities within the ranks of the people, and come under the cover of black faces. A clear understanding of these issues is crucial to the political and organisational measures the liberation movement has to adopt.

Firstly, for its recruiting ground, the state exploits objective conditions bred by the system of apartheid such as migratory labour, unemployment and the housing crisis.

Secondly, it takes advantage of any secondary contradictions that might exist among the



oppressed people: between hostel-dwellers and settled communities, squatters and those with houses, traditional structures and some anti-apartheid formations as well as ethnic and racial diversity among the oppressed.

### **WEAKNESSES**

Thirdly, the weaknesses of the ANC and other democratic formations lend themselves to misuse by the state: acts of indiscipline and lack of tolerance among our supporters, and other problems arising out of lack of political consciousness within our ranks.

Lastly, in a number of areas, the timing of the switch-on of violence has shown a particular

trend, linked to major conferences, rallies, branch and regional launches and other activities of the ANC and its allies.

Therefore, while the acts of banditry or the violence in general can subside from time to time, its perpetrators will use it in bits and spurts to achieve the aims outlined above. They will seek to make it a permanent feature of the transition.

Given the nature of the violence, the liberation movement is at a terrible disadvantage. Objectively, terrorism and banditry are difficult to handle, even by states with resources and relatively huge armies. The experience of Nicaragua, Angola and Mozambique demonstrate this fact.



**ANC leader Walter Sisulu addressing residents at the height of the violence in the PWV**

Our weakness is not a consequence of the suspension of armed struggle as such. The right to self-defence has not been forfeited. What is at issue is our actual capacity to implement effective military self-defence against roaming bandits who strike indiscriminately.

But, if this is our weakness, the state is also at a terrible disadvantage in pursuing this strategy. The establishment responsible for this banditry is still in power. It cannot therefore afford a protracted, escalating bandit war which exacts maximum dislocation of infrastructure within society as a whole. There are other inhibiting factors for the state.

Firstly, it cannot completely control the instability and anarchy that results from banditry. It is not always in control of the immediate actors, and the rampant sale of weapons – among other things – is bound to turn against it in the long run.

Secondly, the repressive measures are costly. It is estimated that, in the PWV alone, the cost of keeping troops in the township is between R2,5-m and R4,1-m per month.

Thirdly, differences have started to emerge within the apartheid security forces, with

many black policemen – especially those based in the affected areas – coming out against the attacks.

These and many other factors are the real Achilles Heels of the state. On the one hand, it seeks to carry out a terrorist bandit war to destabilise and weaken the forces of opposition. On the other hand, as the government in power, it has to contain the cost of this war to itself. What it then tries to do, is to conduct well-timed, well-controlled actions which are administered in doses at selected moments.

The liberation movement must exploit this contradiction to the full. The strategic aim must be to raise the cost of the bandit war to the regime and its allies. Central to our approach must be a strategy that brings to the fore our primary political strengths.

### **NATIONAL GRIEVANCES**

As a liberation movement engaged in a liberation struggle, we must seek to unite the African people and blacks in general on the basis of their historical national grievance. Building a broad patriotic front – made up of black and white patriots – is central to this. (See article on page 47) We should systemat-

ically deny the state the ground from which to recruit the vigilante and bandit forces.

The democratic movement's programme for self-defence should put these strategic questions at the fore. It should also concretely address such issues as:

- the setting up of street and village committees, self-defence units and effective networks to gather and process information;
- a systematic campaign to win over and engage those within the state security apparatus who are interested in peace;
- campaigns for a code of conduct for the security forces, demilitarisation of the police, effective disbanding of notorious units such as Askaris, CCB and Battalion 22; and
- a programme for the elimination of the hostel system, spearheaded by the hostel-dwellers themselves.

All these actions must be linked to one of the most central demands of the transitional period: an impartial Interim Government with effective command over the security forces.

If any proof was ever needed, the campaign of violence shows that the apartheid state cannot secure the transition to a new order. We must demand an Interim Government now! ♦



**An Actstop march in Johannesburg: The demand for democratic local government is increasingly being taken up in mass action.**

# Struggle at the local level

**Rent boycotts and other local struggles are producing tangible results. The discredited community council system is collapsing. The voice of civics is reaching the city centres. But the regime seeks to undercut these victories.**

**O**ver the last seven months the state has been making concessions to civics that, even a year ago, would have been unthinkable. The recent experience of the Soweto People's Delegation (SPD) and of the Eastern Transvaal civics graphically displays the changed conditions. These include:

- agreement that the Black Local Authorities laws need to be repealed because they have proven to be practically unviable;
- acknowledgement by government officials that affordability must be accepted as a criterion for determining what residents must pay for rents and services;

- the write-off and freezing of arrears; and
- making available more land for housing.

## INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS

From the negotiations a variety of interim arrangements have emerged. The Soweto People's Delegation is on the brink of creating a Metropolitan Chamber involving the SPD, civic associations, and the Johannesburg City Council.

In Klerksdorp a single administration for the white town and black township of Jouberton has been created. The town clerk is the head, and with his heads of departments they form part of a

joint committee that includes the civic.

However, the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) has unilaterally been trying to impose negative arrangements in KwaGuga, near Witbank, and other areas. This involves the appointment of ex-councillors as administrators. Another controversial arrangement has been in one Eastern Transvaal town, where members of the civic have been made assistant administrators.

In short, many different kinds of interim arrangements have emerged depending on local conditions and the strength of the civics. In the wake of these agreements, several issues arise. The most crucial of these relate to the continued state of organisation of the civics which have signed agreements with the authorities.

The regime is still of the view that the crucial thing around these talks is to break the boycott psychosis after which they will gradually implement the high 'economical' rents. Even more insidious is the state strategy to reach local and regional agreements which can be used to compromise any arrangement which will result from national negotiations.

### **STRUCTURAL CHANGE**

A key question arising out of the talks civics held with the councils is the long-term economic viability of the townships. The demand for a single tax base is going to have to be followed with vigour. Without it townships are inevitably bound to sink deeper into debilitating levels of poverty. Services will continue to be appalling. Infrastructure will slide into a state of disrepair and thus increase the cost of services.

Civics have demanded that the TPA agree to major structural changes with respect to the following: upgrading of services; provision of land; housing construction; transfer of housing; abandoning of the hostel system; one tax base and non-racial local government.

### **REGIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES**

Civics in many townships are still battling to force councillors to resign. In the East Rand, the TPA is refusing to write off the arrears, and high flat rates are being imposed. The neighbouring white municipality is CP-controlled.

How do we develop a regional strategy to the provincial administration which takes into account these local differences?

An approach suggested in a discussion paper produced by Transvaal civics is for setting broad policy guidelines at a regional level. The specifics relating to the implementation of these policies will have to be negotiated at the local level.

"This", the document says, "will help to regionalise victories such as the Soweto deal and simultaneously help weaker civics without doing their work for them. If pushed into accepting unacceptable compromises because they are weak, the weaker civics will be able to refer to the regional framework as the parameter within which they can negotiate."

Regional negotiations will simply facilitate co-ordination so that the TPA is prevented from negotiating with civics deals which contradict one other. This is the procedure that was applied in the Eastern Transvaal.

### **LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS**

Mayibuye asked Thozamile Botha, from the ANC's Local Government section about his assessment of the SPD agreement. He pointed out that the existing city councils work within the framework of apartheid structures and legislation.

"Once an arrangement involving them is accepted, then it will be difficult for us to get rid of the local authorities. That is why dissolving existing local structures, including white local authorities, and the scrapping of existing discriminatory legislation is essential.

"Not only do we want 'one city,

one municipality', we also need to look at the economic implications of arriving at such an arrangement. The Metropolitan Chamber will not have the power to undermine existing economic relations.

"Furthermore, we don't want state structures which have collapsed to be resuscitated. To have community councillors as equal participants in the Chamber will be undermining people's struggles over all these years.

"The creation of a Metropolitan Chamber raises a number of other questions such as: What is its tax base going to be? What the policy on housing will be? The question of land is a constitutional question - how will land for residential areas be allocated? These questions can only be settled at the level of national negotiations.

"We therefore need one national position. Local negotiations will need to be guided by that national position. It is with this aim in mind that the ANC convened the conference on local government."

### **CONFERENCE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

This conference was aimed at giving guidelines on how we conduct our struggle at local level. Before this national conference, regional workshops took place where questions of transformation of local government and the electoral system occupied the minds of many delegates.

Explaining how the conference saw the relationship between local struggles and national negotiations, Botha said: "We need to have interim structures at the local level which will be responsible for the transformation of the cities while national negotiations continue."

"Negotiations at the local level have implications for those at the national level. Any issue which requires redefinition of the constitutional arrangements has to be referred to negotiations at the national level. This has to be done to avoid constitutional differences in different parts of our country."

In a paper for discussion among civics, the MDM states that "if councillors resign and civics are requested to suggest who the administrator should be, the following should be taken into account:

- the town clerk of the white municipality should be appointed as the administrator – this will be a first step towards one city;
- ex-councillors must not be appointed as administrators;
- civic members should not agree to become administrators or assistant administrators."

Another factor in taking this position is that the Group Areas Act, Population Registration Act and Local Authorities Act were all established by the national government. It is difficult to see the removal of all discriminatory legislation without changes at national level.

### SINGLE CITY CAMPAIGN

How far then can civics go in

the fight for 'one city'? Some of the areas which must be striven for and negotiated at a regional level include:

- the writing off of arrears;
- the continuation of bridging finances;
- the removal of Black Local Authorities and the appointment of administrators;
- interim arrangements such as the establishment of Metropolitan Chambers (or Local Chambers in the small towns);
- the dismantling of separate race-based administrations;
- the acquisition of large-scale finance for development.

Whilst this can go on, constitutional arrangements will have to be the product of a Constituent Assembly elected by all the people of South Africa on a common voters' roll.

Interim local government arrangements are meant to operate in the transitional period. And their existence can only have meaning if discriminatory legislation has been abolished.

### RECIPE FOR VICTORY

The struggle for democratic structures of government continues.

Even at the national level, the guarantee for success lies with mass action, including struggles around local issues.

It is instructive that those civics that won victories in negotiations were ones that combined:

- strong grassroots organisation;
- regular report-backs ensuring community involvement and clear mandates;
- a clear-cut strategy that linked short-term demands (like the writing off of arrears) to long-term objectives (like one non-racial municipality);
- technical back-up from service organisations; and
- trained and skilled negotiators.

The terrain has changed. But the struggle for people's power has yet to be won. ♦

## No compromise on mass action

As this issue of *Mayibuye* went to press, the Southern Transvaal Civic Association (Cast) was planning consumer boycotts and stayaways in protest against the disruption of marches against the Transvaal Provincial Administration. The people of Bophuthatswana had just carried out a successful one day stayaway. In the Western Cape marches and other actions were under way.

De Klerk, Botha, Magnus Malan and other leaders of the regime were at one in condemning these actions. This attack against mass struggle is not new. The democratic movement has weathered assault after assault against our right to protest and struggle against apartheid. The State of Emergency was aimed at curbing mass action. So was Operation Iron Fist.

The government tried unsuccessfully to get the ANC to drop its commitment to mass action at the August 6 meeting in Pretoria. Now De Klerk is even bold enough to claim that he can bring the ANC to account over these actions. Veiled threats about violence have been issued.

There is all the reason for the regime to fear mass action. It is the most effective weapon of the voteless in pursuit of their rights. Even in societies where people have the vote, they do exercise the right to mass action to assert their demands.

The people have engaged in mass action because of specific grievances. For example, the Cast marches on 17 March aimed to back up a memorandum to the TPA which demands the resignation of community councillors by the end of November; a halt to electricity cut-

offs and a single city.

If the community councils have not resigned by the end of November, other forms of mass action will be considered. This will include isolating them socially and boycotting their businesses.

The stayaway in Bophuthatswana was aimed at demonstrating the people's rejection of sham 'independence' and the repressive measures used by the Mangope regime. It is part of the mass actions that people of that region have been engaging in for almost a decade.

The government claims that mass action works against the talks. In fact, it is the actions of the government which are militating against this process. The curfew imposed in Atteridgeville and the policy of switching off power in various townships are but two examples of government actions which can only have the effect of complicating the negotiations process.

Those opposed to our struggle are forecasting chaos resulting from these actions. They are also painting a bleak picture of what will happen in the event of the councillors resigning.

The communities involved in these actions argue that they are in fact acting to bring the current state of chaos and anarchy to an end. The normalisation of their lives can only result from the solution of the many problems they face in the townships.

Provision of affordable services and resignation of the idle, corrupt and unwanted councillors will go a long way to normalising the situation in the townships.





**Thousands of residents marching in Port Alfred to present local and national demands to local authorities and police.**

# The role of civics

**L**ocated at the local level and organising specific communities, civic associations have been primarily concerned with changing the lot of people in the townships.

The struggle for the transformation of our cities took a dramatic turn when the Cradock Residents Association (Cradora) set about building street committees, in 1983. These structures, and the methods they used, placed mounting pressures on apartheid authorities.

This approach spread rapidly and became the main defence of the people during the State of Emergency. It allowed for the full participation of township residents in discussions on how they would like to change their communities. It also enabled people to defend themselves.

With the unbanning of the ANC, organising civics remains a priority. Focused struggles on local issues need to be intensified. Transforming South Africa must entail placing power in the hands of the people. An important aspect of people's power is

**From small beginnings in the late seventies, civic organisations have grown to a point where they have begun to transform the cities and towns. What is the role of civics in the struggle?**

the ability of the people to run their day-to-day lives. The best way to achieve this is by strengthening civic associations and street committees.

## THE NATIONAL AND THE LOCAL

Civics have striven to represent residents as a whole against the injustices of apartheid local government. They have historically defined the local as their theatre of struggle. Experience suggests that civics operate best and are responsive to local problems if firmly locat-

ed in a specific locality.

However, other experiences made activists reconsider. From the mid-80's the struggles in the townships were essentially led by civics. These struggles had implications, not just for the individual townships but for the country as a whole. It was argued from this period that civics form themselves into a national formation like other sectors in the democratic movement.

It was also argued that the local authorities against which civics have struggled are controlled from the same source and implement policies designed

at national level.

Today, the question of a national civic movement has been placed high on the agenda. Already regional civics have been launched in the Southern Transvaal and Northern Transvaal, and other areas are laying the basis for this. This should help strengthen the civics.

The national civic will be central in co-ordinating local civic action. It will also be useful in stimulating the formation of strong civics in the rural areas and raising the issue of democratic forms of local government for the attention of people generally. Yet care will have to be taken that the national structure does not try to replace the work of local civics.

## **POLITICAL ALIGNMENT**

Civic associations are an integral part of the liberation struggle. The issues that face local communities are a direct result of the system of apartheid. The politics of the civics has, therefore, been informed by the politics of the liberation movement as a whole.

This does not mean that civics are or should be political organisations. Neither should their involvement in the politics of liberation necessarily imply that they should align themselves to the ANC or any other political organisation.

Within broad liberation politics, the actual alignment of the civics should emerge democratically within the civics themselves. The work of political organisers on the ground, in the interests of the community, will determine the political direction of the civics. Their actions, initiative, ability to persuade and other qualities, will ensure that the community develops confidence in them. It is primarily for these reasons that the ANC and mass democratic movement enjoy the support of virtually all civics throughout the country.

It would, however, be wrong to exclude some residents from a civic simply because they are members of the PAC, Azapo or any other organisation. A civic

association is first and foremost a broad community structure. It must strive to represent the interests of all members of the community irrespective of their political affiliation. Its composition and political alignment cannot be decided upon by decree.

In the same vein, leadership structures of a civic, as well as its political policy, cannot be decided upon on the basis of mechanical parity among various political organisations. The wishes of the majority, established in a democratic manner, must determine the composition of the leadership structures.

## **CIVICS AND THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE**

At the time when political organisations were banned, civics were called upon to take up the cudgels against the pillars of apartheid. Under the States of Emergency, civic associations became centres of struggle around both local and national issues. Because of their mass base and their ability to harness the energies of communities, many of them withstood the attacks of the state.

Their crucial role, however, revolved around the basic question facing the communities: the undemocratic and unrepresentative nature of apartheid structures of local government. Pitted as they were, and still are, against apartheid government, they are an essential part of the formations addressing the issue of political power.

Whilst the struggle against apartheid lasts, civics cannot evade this fundamental question. Problems of rents and services cannot be separated from apartheid power relationships.

However, the extent of their involvement in political struggles has changed somewhat with changes in society. Political organisations can now more openly take up political campaigns, and civics can more deliberately focus on day-to-day community issues. But it would be disastrous if civics were to distance themselves from the struggles for one-person, one-vote. After

all, this is what the community needs in order to change their material conditions.

This calls for close working relations between the civics and the ANC. Many of the issues to be negotiated with the government affect the local communities directly. A mandate from them, through the civic structures, is necessary. Campaigns of mass action must be undertaken jointly.

## **CIVICS AND THE FUTURE**

Civics are not merely concerned with opposition. They are also concerned with enhancing the quality of democracy at local level and thereby at other levels in society.

Like the trade union movement, they are an independent formation. The arena in which the civics work calls for a type of breadth in politics which the ANC and any other political organisation cannot claim to represent. Their independence, now and in the future, is crucial. It is in the interest of the ANC that they should continue to exist as independent community structures.

This does not mean depoliticising the civics. It means ensuring the widest community representation possible.

While civics are central to the struggle for democratic local government, they cannot be seen as local government structures of the future. These structures will be formed on the basis of votes won by organisations in local elections. While the party in power will strive to fulfil voters' mandates, it will also be constrained by bureaucratic, economic and other problems.

To enhance the quality of a future dispensation at the local level, it is not sufficient to have democratic structures of local government. We need organisations in which a maximum number of people can participate; organisations representative of the broader community. Civics are such organisations – an important watchdog of the community. ♦

**A**t one of its recent meetings, the NEC of the ANC announced that senior delegations of the ANC and Inkatha would meet soon, led by Mandela and Buthelezi respectively. According to representatives of both sides, only the dates, venue and details of the agenda need to be worked out.

This seemed impossible a few months ago. What, if anything, has changed?

Judging by the murders that are still taking place, it is difficult to conclude that much has changed. Yet there are pointers that some working arrangement can be reached between the democratic forces and Inkatha.

In September, a much-celebrated Peace Accord was signed in the Lower Umfolozi area, and all indications are that peace is holding despite the many problems faced. Representatives of the ANC and Inkatha have started to tackle such areas as Ndwedwe and Mpumalanga. In all these initiatives, the NEC Sub-committee on Natal has been playing a direct or supervisory role, in conjunction with Inkatha Central Committee delegates to the joint meetings that have been held.

Statements released after these meetings - four of which have been held since the beginning of September - reflect optimism on the part of both parties. The main areas of concentration have been the local initiatives. This reflects an understanding on the part of both the ANC and Inkatha that local initiatives are central to the search for peace - an important common perception which in the past tended to be subsumed to the cry for a meeting between Mandela and Buthelezi.

According to ANC representatives dealing with these local initiatives, there are many lessons that need to be borne in mind. In Ndwedwe, difficulties arose long after joint decisions had been reached to bring the two sides together. Rumours of attacks, difficulties among the local leaders 'to find' each other and actual acts of aggression have created stumbling blocks for the

# The road to peace still thorny

**A few months ago, a meeting between the ANC and Inkatha seemed impossible. Now Mandela and Buthelezi are soon to lead delegations to a joint meeting. What, if anything, has changed?**

process.

But what also became clear was that there was reluctance on both sides to be seen by supporters to be reaching out to one another. Initial contacts have, however, been made and an accord could be reached soon.

In Mpumalanga, after hearing about the Lower Umfolozi Accord, youth from township sections which consider themselves ANC, decided to reach out to their Inkatha counterparts. A soccer match and general interaction was initiated. However, there was disquiet on both sides of the divide about 'this reckless action' by the youth.

## JOINT TOUR

This is what prompted ANC and Inkatha representatives to conduct a joint tour of the area in October. The visit, they argued, would help to encourage those who are actively searching for peace. Afterwards, both sides expressed strong impressions: not only about the extent of devastation, but also the overwhelming yearning for peace among the ordinary people. We do not understand why we should be fighting each other,

was the spontaneous comment expressed repeatedly by the people met.

But the problem is not as straight-forward as it seems. Even in Empangeni, where an accord has been signed, there was disquiet among some local Inkatha leaders, especially the chiefs, which threatened to derail the whole process. It was established later that their bone of contention was not so much the fact of the accord, but that they had not been brought in during negotiations and the signing of the agreement.

This is not to rule out the possibility that a few individuals have become so used to and part of the conflict, that they do not see any role for themselves in a situation of peace. It is crucial for the ANC/Inkatha negotiators to take note of this reality, and find appropriate solutions to it.

But there are much deeper problems. The attacks in Mooi River and Wembezi, which left many supporters of the ANC and MDM dead, have not, to say the least, helped to advance the peace process. In Greytown and other areas, reports indicate that whites have been seen leading the attacks.

Both the ANC and Inkatha agree that there might be other forces which deliberately want to scuttle the process. These elements either instigate attacks, arm the attackers or spread rumours aimed at fomenting conflict. But the fact that they are not being brought to book, leaves the communities wondering whether there is more than meets the eye.

Serious perceptions exist on the ground that a much more sinister scheme might be unfolding. Some activists argue that Inkatha is signing peace accords in areas where it has managed to drive out supporters of the ANC, in order to pre-empt counter-attacks. On the other hand, in areas where the ANC has established itself or is setting up structures, systematic attacks are conducted. Monitoring as agreed upon in a number of areas seems to come to naught, because the police are seen to favour and even support one side to the conflict.

These developments have made the work of the negotiators the more difficult. But if anything, they should serve as an injunction for the contacts now established to be pursued with more vigour. If there are any forces which seek to perpetuate the conflict - for whatever reason - they stand a better chance of getting exposed and isolated as the peace process unfolds.

The process has gathered enough momentum that it cannot grind to a halt. The support for peace is overwhelming, whatever differences of analysis might exist on the real cause of the conflict, the actual forces behind it and the imagined as well as real aims of the elements involved.

It is primarily because consultations had to take place among the NEC Sub-committee, JWC and the ANC Regions - on progress and problems thus far - that the meeting with Inkatha scheduled for November 8 had to be postponed.

From these consultations, decisions have been taken to strengthen the NEC Sub-



**From left to right: Ndlovu, Nkadimeng, Mbeki, Mdlalose and Nkehli during a joint ANC/Inkatha tour of Mpumalanga in October.**

committee with representatives of the three ANC regions in Natal and COSATU. This will allow for a more efficient system of feed-back to the grassroots and briefings to the delegation meeting with Inkatha. The regional Joint Working Committee established to meet with Inkatha and co-ordinate the peace process has likewise been strengthened by the seconding of ANC regional representatives and one person from the NEC Sub-committee.

#### **UNIFORM APPROACH IN AFFECTED AREAS**

This will also help ensure a uniform approach in all the areas affected, and empower the movement in its dealings with Inkatha.

Deputy President Mandela and Chief Buthelezi are soon to lead their delegations to a summit of the two organisations. Much groundwork had to be done before this could even be envisaged. But the process is

still fragile.

It would therefore be an illusion to believe that the meeting will act as a magic wand to sweep away all the violence. The peace accords signed and the local initiatives now under way are a product of plodding industry on both sides. If the summit - with its high-profile symbolic value - helps to strengthen these initiatives and encourage others across the board, it will have achieved its purpose.

Lower Umfolozi and other areas are showing that the two organisations can co-exist without going for one another's throat. Political competition among them can rage and rage, without kindling devastating fires and spilling blood. This is what the ANC and the rest of the democratic movement have been fighting for over the years.

To achieve it now will be a great investment for the future. If anyone sought to subvert the struggle under the cover of this conflict, they will stick out like a sore thumb. ♦

**An ANC/government Working Group recently discussed the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles. A number of issues were agreed on, but the process still faces major hitches.**

# Removing the obstacles

**T**he meeting of the Working Group clarified a number of contentious points, for example, the guidelines for defining "political offences" and the process through which prisoners and exiles will return. It decided that amnesty or indemnity will be granted for political offences committed on or before 12 noon on October 8 1990.

Regarding the definition of "political offences" the following guidelines have been agreed on:

- Motive – whether the action was undertaken to further the aims of a political organisation or not;
- Intent – whether the action was aimed at forcing a change in the policies of or overthrowing the government;
- Context – whether the action was committed as part of an uprising or a disturbance or in reaction to such;
- Objective – whether the action was aimed at the government or its property or at private individuals or their property;
- Gravity – the legal and factual nature of the action;
- Whether the act was undertaken by order from or with the approval of a political organisation;
- The relationship between the action and its objective.

The question of the "administrative release" of political prisoners was also resolved. It was agreed that political prisoners would immediately receive a re-

mission of sentence of one-third plus one year.

This means that prisoners who are now one year short of having served two-thirds of their sentence, or who have served two-thirds or more of their sentence, will qualify for immediate release. A list of people who qualify for immediate administrative release has been worked out. The ANC aims to have them released by the end of November.

Furthermore, the ANC has forwarded a list of 3 622 names of prisoners who qualify for amnesty or indemnity in terms of the guidelines mentioned above.

The figure of "approximately 600 people" that Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee has mentioned is grossly unrepresentative. It could be that the honourable minister has suddenly "forgotten" the thousands who are now held in criminal prisons on blanket charges of "public violence". This is a violation of the agreement.

## THE PROCEDURE

In terms of the Working Group agreement, the South Africans now in exile, the prisoners who do not immediately qualify for administrative release and those now on or awaiting trial will apply for indemnity, release or immunity on a standard application form.

The form consists of four sections:

- The first section deals with personal particulars – such as name, address and membership of political organisation – and is to be filled in by all applicants.

- The second section applies only to those who left the country without travel documents and/or without passing through a legal point of exit.

- The third section applies to those who do not qualify for indemnity under section 1 a) and b) of the Groote Schuur Minute, referred to in the two sections above. Thus, this section requires details of and motivation for any activity for which the applicant requires indemnity.

- The final section applies to political prisoners and only requires details of where and when the prisoner was sentenced.

This application form is supposed to have been made available to the prisoners and the exiles. It allows them to assert their right to release and indemnity. Moreover, it places the onus on the government to justify the reason for turning down an application.

If an application is turned down, the prisoner or exile has the right to refer the application to a Consulting Body consisting of representatives of the ANC and the government and/or other concerned groups. This Consulting Body will then review the application and send it back to the president with its recommendation.

# The mass party takes shape

It has also been agreed – and this is supposed to be gazetted – that the information furnished in the forms cannot be used to charge the applicants in court nor in any way to bring their names into disrepute.

In so far as travel is concerned, the Department of Home Affairs is to issue Extra-Ordinary Travel Certificates to returnees who need them. Over 25 000 of these have already been produced.

All these measures sound technical and administrative, and are meant to facilitate rather than hinder the process. But a fundamental problem arises around the fact that it is the government which is to process the applications, and it will therefore exercise discretion over the applicants.

Pretoria could therefore delay the process by creating bureaucratic hurdles. It could also use this dubious vantage point to try and blackmail the ANC over other issues.

## HURDLES

Sources indicate that government strategists have put forward the option of creating all kinds of hurdles in this process. Their aim is to create ferment within ANC ranks, as part of the overall strategy to weaken the movement. It is no accident that the regime has unilaterally inserted a link between the release of prisoners and the degree of violence committed and progress in the Working Group on armed struggle.

This emphasises one fundamental question: that we cannot rely simply on the goodwill of the government. ANC branches, the MDM and other anti-apartheid structures must gear themselves for action to demand their brothers and sisters back by the end of the year.

Among other things, the bona fides of the regime with regard to negotiations will be judged on the basis of this issue. There is no way in which negotiations can start before this matter is concluded to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. ♦

**After its public launch on 29 July, the South African Communist Party has set out to establish regional and local structures. The enthusiastic reception at the national launch is now being turned into disciplined organisation. MAYIBUYE asked a member of the Party leadership about developments since the launch.**

**A**t the launch, a 24-person national Interim Leadership Group was announced. The task of the ILG is to guide and lead the process of building the organisation until the national congress next July.

A Working Group consisting of ILG members resident in Johannesburg, where the head office is located, has been established. Its task is to co-ordinate the work in-between ILG meetings. The day-to-day work at the national office is guided by the secretariat appointed by the ILG.

## REGIONAL STRUCTURES

Since the launch, the Party has been "under pressure" from people who want to join. Already thousands of applications for membership have been received by the national office.

At the time of going to press, regional ILG's (RILG) had been established in the key industrial centres: the Transvaal, Western Cape, Eastern Cape and the Transkei. The Eastern Cape and the Transkei regional launches were each attended by over 70 000 supporters.

Party organisation is not going to be limited to the major indus-

trial centres. These have been identified as starting points because large numbers of the working class are located here.

The task of the RILG's is to begin building party structures, transforming the massive following of the Party into active organisation. Already, the RILG's, where they are functional, have begun to process applications in order to establish branches.

In some regions, party structures already exist. The Transkei has set up party districts and branches. In the Eastern Cape, the membership is being brought together in discussion groups as a first step towards the formation of branches. The Transvaal group has demarcated the various areas and townships of the PWV with a view to bringing together all those who have submitted applications for membership.

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Party is open to all those who apply to join and who accept the Party's policies and constitution. The strict selection and probation period for membership demand-

ed by conditions of secrecy have been done away with. Emphasis is going to be placed on active participation of members in the life of the organisation and in the struggle against apartheid generally.

### **THE PARTY BRANCH**

The branch is to become the basic unit of the party. To allow for active and regular participation of every member, the branches will have between 25 and 50 members. Branches are to be located both in the residential and industrial areas and/or workplaces.

It is in the branches that the main work of the Party is going to take place. Through regular meetings and discussion, the party intends to concentrate on cadre development. At the same time, the building of the organisation cannot take place without engaging in active campaigns. Whenever appropriate, party structures will initiate campaigns around issues that daily affect the working people. This will be done in consultation with the alliance partners.

### **THE ALLIANCE**

The formation of Party branches will strengthen the alliance at all levels. The RILG's are already consulting other members of the alliance and structures of the democratic movement in the regions in the process of building the organisation.

The Transvaal regional group intends to submit a draft programme for mass action for discussion by other members of the alliance. Once branches are formed, they will work together with branches of the ANC and Cosatu locals around local campaigns, mass actions and other activities.

An open mass democratic SACP is taking shape. The Party remains committed to the immediate end to apartheid, the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa, and for a democratic socialist future. ♦



**Some of the thousands of supporters who attended the SACP launch in Johannesburg at the end of July. According to an SACP leader, the organisation's task now is to build party structures and transform its massive following into active branches.**

**T**he Worker's Charter is envisaged as a document embracing workers' long and short term demands. It should include trade union rights, rights which are not necessarily only for workers but which are in workers' interests such as freedom of association and socio-economic rights such as collective ownership.

When the demands of the Worker's Charter are realised, they would find their place in a future constitution, in new laws, in a Bill of Rights and so on.

The changing pace of political decision-making has forced COSATU to focus attention on issues to be included in a future constitution and to discuss the role of workers in deciding on a new constitution.

Many issues are being debated and discussed in COSATU ranks at the moment.

### **THE PROCESS**

The demand of the ANC/SACP/COSATU alliance is for a democratically elected constituent assembly to decide upon a future constitution.

Does this mean that all debate about a new constitution should happen in this forum? Or should the Alliance propose, circulate and discuss drafts which they will ultimately propose to a Constituent Assembly?

A further question is whether these drafts can be presented to and discussed with the government before the establishment of a Constituent Assembly.

### **COSATU role in the constitution making process**

As a trade union federation, it is unlikely that COSATU will put up its own candidates for a Constituent Assembly. Rather it will want to contribute through a process established by the ANC/SACP/COSATU alliance.

However, the alliance is still embryonic and needs to be built at local, regional or national levels. Will the alliance be an ef-

# Linking the Workers' Charter and the new constitution

**Workers need to have a say in the making of a new constitution. In this article, MAYIBUYE looks at how COSATU is linking the Workers' Charter campaign to this process.**

fective forum for the development of joint approaches? And, are there not other mechanisms for workers to contribute? Workers can also contribute to the process as members of the ANC and SACP. By joining and being active in these organisations, workers will ensure that their interests are adequately taken care of.

### **ISSUES FOR A NEW CONSTITUTION**

Workers are obviously concerned about each and every provision of a new constitution. However, in discussions in COSATU, there has been the feeling that we need to prioritise for debate and attention, aspects of the constitution which can most

protect and further working class interests. Some of these include:

#### **The right to strike**

There is little debate in COSATU that the right to strike should not only be in the constitution, but should be an entrenched right.

COSATU would most likely argue that the right to strike should include strikes over political issues. This is more controversial. Mozambique has only recently changed their legislation to allow political strikes.

Others may argue that a newly formed government needs to be protected against economic destabilisation which strikes may create. One may need to





**Sactwu members participate in a lunch-hour Workers' Charter demonstration in the streets of Johannesburg**

find a balance between the need for political stability and workers' actions for economic rights.

### **Economic issues**

High up on COSATU's agenda, would be that the constitution incorporate clauses relating to the economy. Workers who have suffered the worst ravages of capitalism want a new constitution to protect them against this.

One proposal from COSATU is that the constitution should state that the government promotes and encourages collective ownership, greater worker control in decision-making within all levels of the economy and jobs for all.

A broader question that has been posed is: "Do we want a 'Freedom Charter constitution' or do we want a constitution that would enable us to achieve the aims of the Freedom Charter?"

Faced with the priority of building a new national consensus out of a relatively disparate and divided population, would

not the ANC be in stronger position vis a vis its adversaries, with a shorter, general and enabling constitution rather than one that seeks to reflect the detail of ANC policy?

### **Trade union independence**

COSATU is agreed that the constitution should safeguard the independence of trade unions and other organs of civil society. After the experiences of Eastern Europe, there are some compelling reasons for this.

There have even been proposals which extend to asking for constitutional provisions which prohibit the wearing of two hats - to be a trade union leader and parliamentarian at the same time. But would this not have the effect of restricting the political rights of a section of society?

A counter-argument would not deny the need for trade union independence. Instead the actual forms through which trade union independence manifests itself need to be spelt out in the union's own constitution.

### **A referendum**

COSATU affiliates are also debating whether or not they should demand that there is a clause in the constitution which makes provision for a referendum. A referendum would ensure that workers have a means of intervening and redressing unfavourable legislation, if parliament began to pass unpopular laws before its term of office expired.

However, others have expressed concern that a referendum can be a tool used by powerful lobbies which are not necessarily progressive. In many European and American states, referendums have been used lobbies to prevent contraception laws being legislated.

These issues and others were topics of a special Workers' Charter Conference held in mid-November. The recommendations will be presented at the COSATU Congress next July. But the debate will no doubt go on, before and after the adoption of the Charter at a special Workers' Summit next year. ♦

# A home for all the youth

**The ANC Youth League was relaunched on October 27 at an emotionally charged rally in Soweto. Given the pace of political developments, the young lions face a serious challenge to live up to their reputation.**



**Delighted young lions at the launch of the ANC Youth League in Soweto at the end of October.**

**R**arely have I been moved as I am today in sending a message of solidarity to a rally". These words of ANC president OR Tambo reverberated throughout the rally to relaunch the ANC Youth League (ANC YL) on October 27 - his birthday.

It was an emotionally-charged moment indeed as about 20 000 young people gathered to witness this important event which will contribute to the organisation of the majority of South African youth.

The task of co-ordinating this has been given to the Provisional National Youth Committee, (PNYC), which is comprised of youth from various organisations. It is also a blend of the 'Class of '76' and the 'Young Lions' of the eighties.

The process of relaunching the Youth League began immediately after the unbanning of the ANC on February 2. The ANC Youth Section initiated consultations with youth and student formations on the relaunch.

The Youth League had been banned along with the ANC in the early sixties. Since its birth in 1942 it was associated with the radical input made by Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and others into the ANC.

Operating within the broad parameters of ANC policy, the Youth League introduced a militant programme of action which emphasised mass action above the "cap-in-hand" approach of the ANC leadership at the time. Its programme called for defiant actions such as stayaways.

The Youth League of the 1990s is faced with new challenges. Militant struggles and traditions remain the central forms of struggle. But they have to be conducted in a situation in which power through negotiations is on the immediate agenda. The initiative and verve of the youth still has to be felt decisively in all fronts of struggle, including negotiations. Whilst guided by the policies of the mother body, the League enjoys organisational autonomy.

In an attempt to involve the

maximum number of youth formations in the process of launching the Youth League the following structures are taking part: the ANC Youth Section, the South African Youth Congress (Sayco), the SA National Students Congress (Sansco), the National Union of SA Students (Nusas), the Young Christian Students (YCS), Students United for Christian Action (Suca), Catholic Students, and the Congress of SA Students (Cosas).

### A MASS-BASED LEAGUE

An almost daunting process of establishing Provisional Regional Youth Committees (PRYCs) and then Youth League branches throughout the country is envisaged. To overcome some of the problems faced in establishing ANC regional structures, the PRYCs will be comprised of people seconded by youth organisations in the particular region.

The members of this PRYC will sign up as the first members of the Youth League in their region. In areas which may be organisationally weak, task forces will be appointed by the PNYC.

At the time of going to press, Regional Committees had already been formed in the following regions: the PWV, Eastern Transvaal, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Border, Transkei and Northern Transvaal. The task of these regional committees is to sign up local youth committees (LYCs). The LYC will be drawn from the youth structures in each area. It will be responsible for the recruitment of members into the Youth League branch.

Once the LYC is satisfied that a sufficient number of people have been drawn in to the branch, then elections can be held for a Youth League branch executive. This process will go onto the regional level, where each region would hold a regional conference to elect a regional committee.

The national committee of the Youth League is expected to be elected at a national conference to be held on April 6, 1991. This day has been chosen for its historical significance: it is the day

on which Solomon Mahlangu, an outstanding cadre of Umkhonto we Sizwe, was hanged by the apartheid regime.

### UNITING THE YOUTH

The objective of the ANC YL remains to unite the entire youth of South Africa. OR Tambo, in his message to the relaunch rally, called on the Youth League to "open its membership to all South African youth, including those who formerly belonged to apartheid structures".

With this in mind, the ANC Youth League Manifesto says: "This situation demands of the youth to stand united and combine in its millions into a single formidable force". The manifesto appeals to a cross-section of the youth, with particular reference to youth in the army and police, white youth, young traditional leaders, young workers, women, students, intellectuals and professionals, and those in the ban-tustans and rural areas.

The mobilisation of these varied forces is a huge challenge. The organisational forms which will allow for the attainment of this goal will have to be bold. The perspectives which unite the different sections of the youth of South Africa will have to be carefully worked out. It does, however, signify a serious attempt to ensure that the Youth League becomes the leading voice of the South African youth.

A recent experience is an example of the manner in which the basis for unity will be laid.

Sayco recently concluded a series of regional conferences dealing with the theme, "Peace, Negotiations and Youth"

Delegates were invited from organisations within the fold of the mass democratic movement, as well as the Democratic Party, Azapo and the PAC.

ANC national executive committee members addressed the conferences on the organisation's position on negotiations. The delegates were then able to raise questions. ANC secretary general Alfred Nzo commented after one such intense session, which lasted four hours, that he had

never been "interrogated" like that in his life.

This experience underlines the central role of progressive youth formations in raising issues which concern youth generally and providing the platforms for such discussions. More importantly, it is laying the groundwork for the youth of South Africa to be consolidated into a single block committed to safeguarding the future of this country.

Sayco's experiences make the

point that the youth must have a say in what is being decided today, because it is the youth who will have to run the country tomorrow.

It is the youth who will have to bear the decisions of today in the form of the heritage of tomorrow.

### THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE YOUTH

The challenge facing the Youth League, as well as the

ANC, is to capture the mood of defiance and direct it into organised fighting formations. At the same time, we have to continue widening the alliance of youth around a common concern for the future.

The Youth League must be prepared to play the role of active participant and youth watchdog in any democratic society. Today, it must occupy the front trenches in this complex phase of struggle for a democratic and peaceful future. ♦

## Regional Youth Conferences

Youth from a variety of organisations collectively applied their minds to the question of negotiations and peace at regional conferences convened by the South African Youth Congress (Sayco) in September/October.

Invitations to the conferences were extended to all youth formations committed to

peace. Sayco had meetings with allied organisations as a lead-up to the Conferences. It also met with white youth organisations like Jeugkrug, youth wings of the Nationalist Party and Democratic Party; youth organisations of the Black Consciousness and Africanist organisations and religious and cultural youth organisations.

On the eve of the Southern Transvaal regional conference, the Inkatha Youth Brigade (IYB) requested to be allowed to send delegates. Sayco agreed providing that the delegation did not include any known warlords. It so turned out that the IYB did not attend the Conference.

The conferences were attended by about 600-1000 delegates. The leadership of the ANC gave briefings on the ANC strategy on negotiations, explaining the process up to

now and the future of the negotiations.

The conferences agreed broadly on the following issues:

- support by the youth for the process of negotiations towards a non-racial democracy;
- the need to keep pressure on the government to as quickly as possible remove the obstacles to negotiations by campaigning for the release of prisoners, the return of exiles and the repeal of security legislation;
- committing youth to work to bring an end to violence;
- working towards closer links between youth organisations across the political spectrum.

It was recognised that the conferences

could not be a one-off event. It is the responsibility of the progressive youth movement in particular to continue deepening the understanding and contribution of the youth to the unfolding process. This can be done through political education and regular briefings.

It also requires the involvement of youth in a programme of mass action behind demands like the removal of obstacles, for an interim government and a constituent assembly. ♦





# What about the women?

**Women constitute the majority of our population. But, in all areas, they do not enjoy equal status with their male counterparts. Why is this and what can be done about it? *MAYIBUYE* invites comments on this from our readers – both male and female.**

**Right: A play by garment workers depicts the exploitation of women workers. Far right: Another play about women's oppression: "You have struck a rock".**



**W**omen in South Africa make up just over half of the population. So long as they are not free, South Africa cannot be free.

Women have always played an important role in the struggle for liberation – be it in the anti-pass campaigns, boycott of municipal beer-halls, setting up of detainee aid services or fighting in the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe. However, we should not simply recognise the contribution that women have made in struggle. We should also take account of the problems that women experience and ensure that women's liberation is an integral part of our struggle for national democracy.

What is meant by women's liberation is that no person is discriminated against by virtue of their sex.

The structure of our present society restricts women to certain roles in the home, at work and in society generally. Women are expected to be "caring", submissive and unable to take responsibility and control over their own lives. The consequence of this is that women feel that they should be confined to the home. If they go into the workplace, it is for work defined in terms of gender. This makes women feel powerless and lacking in the confidence they need to reach their full potential.

On the other hand, men are led to believe that they should regard women as the weaker sex who can therefore be dominated, exploited and abused. Ultimately, this degrades both men and women.

In the family, men are expected to be the bread-winners and the decision-makers. Because women hardly have control over money and finances, they do not play an equal role in making important family decisions and thus become dependent on men.

Often it is not considered important for women to be educated. This is because women are ultimately expected to get married and devote most of their lives to the home. At school, inequalities in the home are taken further in the form of the subjects taught and the authority structures.

### LITTLE JOB SECURITY

At work, women are placed in jobs similar to the work they do in the home, for example, in the clothing and textile industry, secretarial jobs and cleaning. They are also not easily promoted and are paid the lowest wages. They have little – if any – job security. Women are also subjected to harassment in the workplace by both fellow male workers and management.

In society generally, the low

status that women are given means that they tend to be seen as objects, leading to the high incidence of rape and abuse.

This is enhanced in already-violent societies such as our own. This means that women are afraid to go out on their own, at night and during the day. They are thus restricted from feeling free to carry out their daily activities.

Women's liberation therefore requires an awareness by both men and women of gender oppression in the home, at work and in society at large. It demands conscious action to remove this oppression and inequality. Men and women should have the opportunity to realise their full potential and to contribute effectively to the development of society and themselves as individuals.

The importance of this for women is that they can choose among options open to everyone and live lives in which they feel productive and fulfilled. If they choose to, women can become mothers, full-time workers and activists without having to feel that they are not properly carrying out a role that society expects of them.

If women's liberation is the responsibility of both men and women, do we need a separate women's organisation such as the ANC Women's League?



Women need a place where they feel they can express themselves freely and develop confidence. Moreover, because it is women who experience this form of oppression, it is in their interest to ensure their own all-round liberation.

Women's liberation does not automatically follow national liberation. In fact, history teaches us that, even where women have played a central role in liberation struggles, after liberation, they find themselves in much the same situation as before. This happens despite the many promises made to women by the liberation movement.

This is not to say that liberation movements in other coun-

tries were not sincere about this issue. Rather, the liberation movement and later the new party in power have many "burning issues" to deal with: restructuring of the economy, the legal system and welfare issues.

While all these concerns certainly do affect women and go some way to relieve their burden, we need to be aware that women experience national oppression in a particular way.

For example, although all people in South Africa suffer from lack of welfare services, it is women who suffer most of the consequences of not having adequate child-care facilities, since they are generally responsible for rearing children. Hence,

within the ANC, there needs to be a consciousness of how certain conditions affect women in a specific way that is different from men. We need to be aware that there is no such thing as a gender-neutral policy.

There are certain issues that are largely women's problems. Some of these specific concerns include the problem of rape, access to contraception, and the domination of men over women in the home and even in our organisations. It is only through the separate organisation of women that constant pressure will be placed on our organisations and government not "to forget" these concerns or make them secondary to others.

This is not to say that it is the sole responsibility of women's organisations to ensure that women are adequately catered for at all times. However, we need to critically assess whether society and our own organisations are at a stage of consciousness around women's concerns and specific experiences for this to occur without a separate women's organisation.

### NON-SEXISM

Through the Women's League, women need to organise in such a way that they are able to define their programmes and play a more meaningful role in the broader movement. This will serve to transform the nature of the liberation struggle itself. It is the responsibility of all members of the ANC to ensure that the ANC itself is able to maintain its principles of real democracy, non-racialism and non-sexism through whatever necessary means.

In this phase of transformation, it is essential to ensure that all forms of oppression are addressed. Society as a whole needs to destroy the power relations which are based on male domination. Only when this is a reality will people be able to relate to one another simply as people.

It is the task of all members of the ANC to build the Women's League. ♦

# Heads or tails, bound to lose

**T**he government's intention to abolish the Land Acts has been welcomed as a victory against apartheid legislation. The ANC has, since its inception, identified land as a national grievance and galvanised people into action to regain land.

While the repeal of these laws is an important advance, this alone cannot undo existing inequitable distribution of land ownership as well as the apartheid legacy of dispossession.

The main essence of the struggle for land, is for all our people to have access and control over it. This means that the task facing us is to break the legal and social monopoly whites have over land ownership and access. The repeal of the Land Acts will not stop this monopoly.

The ruling class' approach to the land issue is to leave the situation to unfettered market forces which, they argue, will redistribute land.

But reality indicates otherwise. A market forces approach will undermine the limited rights which some rural poor presently have to land, and will also exclude future land claims. This will lead to further concentration of land in a few hands.

Few blacks, if any, will be able to compete with whites when it comes to the purchase of land. Our struggle, in any case, is not meant simply to open up possibilities for our people to buy their land back.

## LAND REDISTRIBUTION

The question of land redistribution cannot be left to be determined by the whims and fancies of the government and big busi-

**The repeal of the Land Act will make the position of the landless black people even worse. The whole system must be overhauled in order to deal with deep-rooted injustices**

ness. If that happens, we will end up with a more serious situation than we currently have.

The policy of land dispossession has been as intense in the last few years as it was throughout the past three centuries.

People have been forcibly removed, inadequately compensated and abandoned to barren unproductive areas. Now, they are expected to buy land back. Otherwise they will simply lose their ancestral lands to the rich.

We need therefore to look into ways of restoring land to its former owners. This is not an unreasonable demand, particularly when we take into account the fact that we are not merely talking about a process of dispossession in the dim and distant past, but about a deliberate policy which has robbed people of their land until as recently as the 1980s.

## COMMUNAL TENURE

As part of its land reforms, the

government intends phasing out communal tenure. In most cases until now, people in the homelands have been prohibited from land ownership. The biggest land owners are the bantustan governments and the South African Development Trust. The title to much "tribally-owned" land rests in the name of bantustan ministers.

This means that the majority of bantustan residents are tenants of one or other of these land owners.

What will happen to this land? The government intends to privatise it.

This will mean large-scale dispossession of tenants who do not have the capacity to buy land. It also means that the existing land-owners are the people with vested interest in sale.

## COMBINED STRATEGIES

The African people have suffered terribly under the Land Acts. These Acts were enacted after massive displacement of many people through wars of dispossession. The acts then delivered the final blows to African land ownership rights. They destroyed African property rights and entrenched white monopoly over land. Their repeal does not even start to address the problem.

The most urgent task facing us is to ensure effective access and control over land on the part of black people. We will have to combine all kinds of strategies to achieve this. Legal means, defiance and mobilisation of all people, rural and urban, must feature prominently in our attempt at redressing this legacy of apartheid. ♦



**A**t the October 5 summit between leaders of the ANC and representatives of the "homelands", it was agreed that there was a need to form a broad front. The meeting further called for a Constituent Assembly as the best mechanism to thrash out a democratic constitution.

The implications of these resolutions are far-reaching. What broad alliances need to be entered into at this stage of struggle? What are the immediate and long-term issues that can bring different forces together?

These questions arise in a fundamentally new situation. Negotiations are high on the agenda. And the crucial question at issue today is one about power changing hands. New forces have been thrust onto the stage by the sense of history that characterises our times. As in all struggles, the most decisive moments bring forth the widest variety of forces into battle. The ability of the liberation movement to harness these forces can make or break its historical mission.

### **TERRAIN OF NEGOTIATIONS**

Having entered the terrain of negotiations, the ANC is redefining its strategy and tactics. Compared with other "pillars", mass organisation and mobilisation have become the main and decisive weapons of struggle.

The suspension of armed actions in August constitutes the culmination of the shift, since February 2, from armed actions towards organisational questions related to the building and upgrading of MK.

The new situation places on the ANC the responsibility to consolidate its mass base. It has also created possibilities for the movement to act in a way that it is seen to represent the interests of most of society.

The ANC is advancing a cause that goes beyond limited ANC interests. It must emerge as the main guardian of truly national interests. The ANC is not only interested in peace. It must be seen to be capable of bringing

# **Building a broad patriotic front**

**A wide variety of forces wish to see peaceful transformation to a non-racial, democratic South Africa. A broad patriotic front against apartheid is needed to harness these forces for the transfer of power to the people.**

peace to the people as well as maintaining and defending the peace.

These changes in emphasis are not an end in themselves. Rather they should be seen in the context of the strategic task of this phase of our struggle: **the contest about the fundamental question of the national democratic struggle - the transfer of power to the people as a whole.**

Since its unbanning and the release of leaders, the ANC has more openly captured the imagination of millions. The enthusiastic support it has received throughout the country reflects most clearly the popularity it enjoys among the people. But much more needs to be done to

harness these forces into an effective movement capable of bringing about fundamental change. In this regard, it will be foolhardy on the part of the ANC to operate from the premise that all the people interested in change will agree with it on everything.

A wide variety of forces yearn to reach out to one another. What makes their hearts beat as one is the desire to see peaceful transformation to a future which will consign to history the suffering, deprivation and insecurity bred by the system of apartheid. These are the forces that have the interests of South Africa at heart. A sense of patriotism, based on the efforts to bring about peaceful transforma-

tion is what South Africa needs today.

The desire among most "homeland leaders" to work with the ANC reflects a recognition of some broad common interests. This applies to the chiefs who are either joining the Congress of Traditional Leaders of SA (Constralesa) in large numbers or simply seeking contact and working relations with the democratic movement. It applies to the broader intellectual community in both "liberal" and Afrikaans universities. It applies, too, to those in Jewish synagogues and Moslem mosques who eagerly listen and pose incisive questions to the movement's leaders when the opportunity arises.

### **VIOLENCE**

Certainly, the orgy of violence that has gripped the PWV and other parts of the country has marred the whole process of peaceful transformation. It brings into question the essence of the current stage: whether in fact everything will not go up in smoke. The exercise of raw power by elements within the state has exposed very harshly the weaknesses of the ANC. The message of peace and the capacity of the movement to help in people's self-defence have been dented.

But if these lacerations have drawn blood and much pain, they have also exposed the tendons which keep parts of the body together. The violence affects, to varying degrees, most sectors of society. There is a sense, at least among the overwhelming majority of the people, that the common national interest is at stake. There is a convergence of interests – even among those who might be confused about the actual causes and character of the violence – to secure peace.

The desire for peaceful transformation constitutes a solid basis for consensus among the overwhelming majority of the people. Virtually all South Africans agree that, even if parties can differ, they should canvass



**ANC and PAC, women's organisations and the local civic**

their policies freely and peacefully within society. Violence not only complicates the process under way. It also leads to further social dislocation – affecting business and labour, "maid and madam", taxi-driver and passenger, Azapo member and ANC member alike.

Therefore, the most effective challenge to this carnage is for those who are interested in peace to assume an offensive posture. Besides strengthening mass democratic structures, forging a broad patriotic front is the most effective political weapon at our disposal.

It is also quite clear that, if negotiations are to succeed, there has to be an impartial supervisor. The state, particularly the army and police, have failed dismally in this. All patriots need to campaign for an impartial transitional mechanism. The actual detail – who should consti-

tute such a body, the role of the international community and so on – must be thrashed out by these forces, in the interest of peaceful fundamental change.

There is agreement also that the drawing up of a new constitution has to involve the people. The ANC and its allies, PAC, Azapo, the majority of "homeland leaders", religious bodies and many others are at one that there should be a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of one person, one vote, on a common, non-racial voters' roll.

### **THE FUTURE**

What ultimately is the system that should emerge from this process? There would most certainly be acrimonious debate on this. The policies of these forces differ on many issues. But what they do have in common is the desire to bring about fundamen-



represented after a protest march in Vosloorus early this year.

tal social transformation, the creation of a democratic South Africa; of a government based on the will of the majority of the people. On this basis, a common minimum platform can be worked out, reflecting broad parameters within which any government of the future can implement its policies. (Refer article on page 13).

It is in this context that the issue of national liberation – fundamental change – should be addressed. National liberation, in the broad sense, is the mission that all oppressed and democratic forces must accomplish.

It is treasonable for forces which seek to achieve this objective to so submerge it within narrow partisan interests that the mission itself is subverted and endangered. For, it cannot be denied that, in many instances, forces opposed to the eradication of apartheid colonialism

have taken advantage of the misunderstanding among those interested in liberation, not only to sow discord among them; but also to lay the basis for inter-communal violence.

The danger is that the very essence of the struggle is being undermined. Under the guise of high-flown ideological clichés, the national liberation struggle is being deprived by its opponents of its basic content.

### CONCERTED CAMPAIGN

There is a concerted campaign to shift the ideological terrain from the debate about apartheid and liberation to one about "nationalisation" and "free enterprise". The central issues in this regard are about the content of transformation that the majority of the people want: an economic policy that serves the interests of the people. This is a crucial

debate and it must continue at all levels, including mass action. But the liberation movement cannot afford to allow defenders of apartheid colonialism to narrow perceptions and seek to win allies from among the oppressed on the basis of these distortions.

### DIVISIONS

The violence being perpetrated against black communities also serves this purpose. By creating the impression that Africans are divided along "tribal" lines, and by interpreting obvious terrorism and banditry as a fight among political organisations on the basis of ideological differences, representatives of the old order are able to thrust a dagger into the very heart of the struggle. They turn around to challenge national liberation as a meaningless cliché.

Having clouded issues thus, these forces seek to gain political advantages for themselves. Under the cover of multi-racialism, so-called "free enterprise", federalism, "group rights in a nation of minorities" and so on, they are striving to bring under their fold a credible alliance for modified apartheid colonialism.

National liberation means first and foremost the transfer of power from the minority government to the people as a whole. The broad patriotic front must put this high on the agenda. In the context of the present phase, national liberation can only come about if an impartial transitional mechanism and, later, a democratic forum to draw up a new constitution are set up. The broad patriotic front must unite and act jointly around these issues.

In general terms, what forces can be drawn into a broad patriotic front?

Briefly, all those who stand to gain from genuine transformation. Account has to be taken of a variety of crucial factors:

- national unity transcending ethnic and racial compartments fostered by the system of apartheid;
- sectoral interests represented by various classes and strata

# Alliances

within society;

- traditional structures and religious communities;
- political organisations and ideological tendencies among the anti-apartheid forces; and
- campaign-oriented structures and interest groups.

## ORGANISATIONS

Moving from this premise, we should seek to bring together:

- the ANC, SACP, PAC, Azapo, BCMA and other political organisations which define themselves broadly as national liberatory;
- the trade union movement represented by Cosatu, Nactu and unaffiliated unions;
- professional bodies across the spectrum, irrespective of the anti-apartheid political camp they associate with;
- community organisations such as civics and sectoral organisations of women, youth, students and others;
- functionaries in "homeland structures" – "independent and non-independent" – including their political parties where the case may be;
- traditional structures of chiefs, traditional healers and others;
- religious structures including the Independent Churches such as the ZCC;
- black entrepreneurs;
- the Democratic Party and others who believe in liberal values;
- forces within big business;
- civil structures constituted on the basis of given interests such as Black Sash, Five Freedoms Forum and burial societies.

The list cannot be exhausted. The approach should be to include as many forces as possible. Even members of the Nationalist Party and organisations related to them such as Jeugkrag, who agree with the perspectives of the patriotic front, must be drawn in. Those who seek to block the process of genuine peaceful transformation will define themselves out. Sectors which have not as yet formed organisations of their own must be encouraged to do so, and their efforts strengthened by the broad patriotic front. Sectarian

approaches based on "holier-than-thou" attitudes have to be avoided.

At the same time, those who agree on some and not all the policies of the broad front should be allowed to co-operate with the front on these issues. Similarly, those who see eye to eye on questions outside the scope of the front must act together on those policies. As such, the front will have "a series of concentric circles".

Central to this process is the question of African unity in particular and black unity in general. The theme of the ANC from its formation – to unite the African people – is no less crucial today. Conditions might have changed. A variety of political forces might be at play.

## DIFFERENCES

But we must take note: The forces of apartheid seek to exploit, exaggerate and turn into antagonistic conflicts the secondary differences among the people: among black workers, between hostel-dwellers and settled communities, between "squatters" and those with houses, among ethnic groups, between the young and the old, between traditional structures and the youth.

A failure to grasp this nettle plays into the hands of the forces of apartheid and violence, and in turn weakens the general anti-apartheid thrust. The foundation for national unity rests on two fundamental obligations: forging African and black unity as well as consolidating the non-racial content of the democratic movement. As the genuine alternative to the current status quo, we must marry these tasks in splendid combination to build a nation of South Africans.

To call for a broad patriotic front representing a variety of political and sectoral interests is to acknowledge one basic reality: that there are areas of agreement as well as areas of disagreement among these forces. Therefore, it would be the height of folly on anyone's part to expect these differences to disap-

pear simply because there is a coalition.

No organisation is called upon to abandon its positions by virtue of belonging to a patriotic front. Debate must go on. Where necessary competition among the parties must continue. Components of the front must strengthen themselves and seek to convince others of the correctness of their positions. But a partisanship that undermines the common objective – the main task that all patriotic South Africans face today – would be detrimental not only to the front, but also to all the forces within it.

## OPENNESS

This could come about as a result of unwillingness to act according to programmes agreed upon. It could be the result of attempts to treat others as less than equals, conspiratorial scheming as distinct from open partisan consultation, arrogance towards allied opponents, intolerance in the field, and so on.

Forces within the front will need to work out principles which obviate such problems. But crucial to all this is the education of the grassroots in the practice of democracy, peaceful political engagement, tolerance and so on. This will not only strengthen the front, but help to engender the culture of debate within the whole of society. It will also help to nip counter-revolution in the bud.

## UNITED VOICE

The stage for negotiating principles for a future constitution and tackling mechanisms of transition is in the offing. A united voice of anti-apartheid patriots on these issues is long overdue. Broader national consensus cannot be attained if these forces are not united.

We must so occupy the moral high-ground and be so strong in organisational terms that resistance to genuinely patriotic positions, by those in power, will be virtually impossible. Above all, our demands must be backed up by consistent mass action. ♦

**MAYIBUYE:** What is your assessment of the state of negotiations, given the many difficulties we face? Is there any cause for optimism?

**ENOS MABUZA:** I am not really in a position to supply an overall assessment on the current state of negotiations or the potential state of negotiations, given my position as a leader of a government-created structure which has been involved in bilateral talks with the South African government, as distinct from bilateral talks which have been held between the ANC and the government.

The black people face enormous difficulties, given our history of oppression and the denial of access to democratic structures and the fact that our people have not been allowed to organise themselves.

However, personally, I am cautiously optimistic that firstly, goodwill exists among the majority in South Africa, despite extremists on both the left and the right of the political spectrum.

Secondly, there is the commitment of significant leaders in our country towards finding a peaceful solution and establishing a just and democratic South Africa.

**The Pretoria government is discussing the question of regional governments with homeland leaders. What is Inyandza's viewpoint on this?**

As this matter constitutes a subject currently under discussion, and, as it is a possible matter for the later negotiation process, it is not appropriate to comment at this juncture. It is for this reason that we have, up to now, not nominated a representative to the Working Group that was agreed upon by other leaders of self-governing territories at a meeting between the first and second tiers of government and the state president on 10 August 1990 in Pretoria.

The Inyandza National Movement's bottom line has always been a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. It is In-

# What role for homeland leaders?

**MAYIBUYE spoke to Inyandza president and KaNgwane chief minister Enos Mabuza about his views on negotiations and how the homelands fit in to the process**



**President of the Inyandza National Movement and KaNgwane chief minister Enos Mabuza.**



**Mabuza greets Mandela at the Sayco congress in KaNgwane earlier this year.**

yandza's contention that the 'homelands' as political entities cannot constitute the basis of regional government in a future South Africa, even if such government were to emerge from the negotiation process as part of a new constitution.

**What role do you think homeland structures should play in negotiations? Should they take part as a bloc on the side of the Pretoria government, as the latter seems to intimate?**

We contend that the position of homeland leaders is not significant. However, the position of those homeland leaders with recognisable and identifiable political constituencies is and should form the basis for their participation in the negotiation process.

Our political constituency has mandated us to represent our people's interests. We believe

that we should maintain our 'independence' in doing so.

**What is Inyandza's position on the call for a Constituent Assembly?**

We endorse the call for a constituent assembly. Having observed the pace and relative ease with which the Namibian Constitution was drafted, I would like to think that this could represent a viable option.

While we have called for a constituent assembly as the appropriate representative forum to draft a new constitution, the political constraints which are now operating and will operate in the near future could necessitate a compromise whereby a negotiation forum made up of representatives of identifiable political parties with proven constituencies could draft the constitution.

**At the October 5 summit with the ANC, the partici-**

**pants noted the need for a united front towards the creation of a democratic South Africa. What form and what programme will this have?**

We in the Inyandza National Movement believe that democracy is for those who think differently, accommodating and allowing for a wide range of opinions to be heard.

While we recognise the need for unity among the black people, we would stress that unity should not mean uniformity or conformity.

Difference should not be equated with dissidence. Instead, unity should entail the recognition that our country should be governed by all its people, both black and white, as equals in all their differences and variances.

**Do you envisage the proposed united front having a common platform on constitutional matters and on negotiations in general?**

While there will obviously be wide areas of agreement and convergence among the political groups of the proposed united front, it will be important that points of difference should not be subsumed by a monolithic uniformity.

**Are you a member of the ANC? What is Inyandza's position on dual membership?**

Yes. I have all my life supported the principles and objectives for which the ANC stands and I have regarded its leaders as my political mentors.

In terms of the communique issued on Inyandza's return from Lusaka in March 1986, it was agreed that "each organisation would continue to act in its own way, in accordance with its own decisions independently arrived at, in pursuit of the common objective of the birth of a genuinely democratic South Africa".

I believe that both the letter and spirit of this communique have been adhered to since 1986; and the above adequately addresses the question of dual membership. ♦

# Reflections on German unity

**O**n October 3 the 80-million-strong German nation once more became one. For the majority of the German people this was a moment for celebration. No other consideration can override this overwhelming feeling.

The unification of Germany carries ripples far beyond German borders. This is not so much in relation to the skeletons of history, which most of the world media seek to exhume.

The European and world balance of forces has fundamentally changed. What this portends for humanity lies not so much in speculation, but in what the people of Germany and the whole world do to ensure that this development redounds in the interest of all humankind.

It all started with the tentativeness of a whirlwind before a storm. Mass demonstrations in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) shook the very foundations of a government the people saw as unpopular and repressive. As in other parts of eastern Europe, people's sovereignty won the day.

Ironically, governments fell in uprisings that were characterised by a minimum of violence – even by the standards of those in the West who have left no stone unturned to condemn "communist tyranny".

Most observers view the collapse of the GDR and other similar governments as the necessary decline of corrupt and inept governments. Some view it as clear proof of the untenability of the whole system of socialism and the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism underpinning it.

But, if in addition to celebration, the air is also filled with apprehension, confusion and dis-

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**The unification of Germany was cause for celebration for the people of the previously divided nation. But two wrongs do not make a right and for many living in the new Germany, there is still cause for apprehension.**

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appointment, this is because there are many, too, who feel that two wrongs do not make a right. The consolidation of a power which – like all other Western states – is not renowned for sympathy with the developing world is bound to be viewed with suspicion in these quarters.

## ANNEXATION

Was the collapse of the GDR and its effective annexation by West Germany a case of throwing out the baby with the dirty bathwater? Debate on this question will outlive the present generation. For, in Germany and elsewhere, the search for a more caring, equitable and just system will not come to an end. Rant as the West can, the reality is that the capitalist system – both within these countries and in relation to the developing world – is not the answer.

If anything, the events in Eastern Europe show that those who are at the receiving end of social, political and economic inequality will always rise to claim their rights.

The solution to problems of social injustice does not lie merely

with good intentions. Ultimately, actual practice will determine whether a given system is in the interest of the people. This will be on the basis of how the people's needs and aspirations are addressed and on the depth of democracy.

No economic system can survive for long if it is based on the deprivation of the majority of the people. But an economic system, too, which seeks to reverse this in one fell swoop, and fails to balance between the needs of the majority on the one hand, and the availability of infrastructure, intellectual, physical and material resources on the other hand, is also bound to fail.

GDR is no more, and Germany is reunited. The extent of dislocation in the east will, according to estimates, require investments of up to 250-billion marks (about R500-billion) to rectify. It is also estimated that by the end of this year, nearly half of the GDR workforce will be unemployed.

If unification meant unity rather than annexation, the process could have been different. Instead, everything is being left to the rampant market forces: a race by the wealthy for the

spoils.

Among areas of concern is the expansion of right-wing racist elements which has begun to threaten the physical safety of foreigners. Mozambican and Vietnamese workers who were contracted by the former GDR government are victims of racial attacks. At the official level, for political strategic reasons, the Vietnamese have been given the option to acquire citizenship and stay, while the Mozambicans are being sent back in droves.

That racism is raising its ugly head in the former GDR is in a sense not surprising. Wherever people become insecure and uncertain of the future, there is a tendency to blame everything on foreigners or people of a different skin colour. Many from the east are now emigrating to South Africa, where they hope to settle in the comfort of white privilege.

#### **ASSISTANCE FOR THE ANC**

Unification has also meant the drying up of most of the direct all-round assistance the ANC used to get from the GDR. Sechaba, the official ANC publication stopped printing there a few months ago. Places for students will be drastically reduced. However, a number of projects undertaken by the GDR Solidarity Committee will be sustained for some time: for example, assistance to the ANC Somafco school in Tanzania.

The anti-apartheid movement in the former west Germany, hand-in-hand with similar structures in the east, are holding extensive consultations to ensure that solidarity with the South African struggle does not get undermined.

This is not only in the interest of the people of our country. To the German people, as with all other nations, the elimination of apartheid is crucial to the worldwide struggle against racism. By advancing this common human value, the people of Germany will be helping to create a safer, more secure and harmonious planet. ♦

# One party systems on the decline

**All over Africa  
the one-party  
system is being  
challenged.  
While the  
collapse of  
Eastern  
European  
governments and  
pressure from  
the West  
contributed to  
this, there is a  
groundswell of  
support for a  
multi-party  
system within  
Africa itself.**



**R**ecently, the Ivory Coast held its first contested election since independence. The Mozambican parliament has just voted to end Frelimo's monopoly of power. Zaire was promised a multi-party system in May; Angola and Zambia in June.

In Nigeria, Africa's most populous state, the military government intends to initiate a two-party system in 1992. Senegal, Gabon, Cameroon and Niger have witnessed mass demonstrations in protest against one-party rule. Clearly, the post-independence reign of the single party is drawing to an end.

The wide-ranging call for multi-party democracy in Africa has come in the wake of the crash of East European governments. However, the collapse of the role model was simply a catalyst which set off already existing tensions.

### **COLONIAL LEGACY**

For the most part, movements that led African countries to independence were mass based and enjoyed vast popular support. However, their tasks and responsibilities were enormous. They had not only to overcome the major inequalities left by the colonisers; but also to undertake the complete restructuring of their underdeveloped societies.

Where a number of parties existed, political contest often tore the newly-born societies asunder in election violence, religious pogroms and ethnic conflict.

Against the backdrop of these problems, the way forward seemed tailor-made: a single party would allow the state to concentrate all available resources on equitable development. Moreover, it would absorb differing socio-political trends within broad nationalism and so contribute to building a united nation. This would guarantee the political stability necessary for economic development.

While this approach can hardly be faulted, the arguments underpinning it were at times used

in some countries to justify actions against forces which opposed the entrenchment of imperialist interests. In instances where attacks from anti-independence forces were real, these forces exploited the lack of legal channels of opposition as well as perceived "uniformity and conformity" to recruit counter-revolutionary bandits.

### **ECONOMIC DISLOCATION**

The primary motive factor for the multi-party movement is the sorry socio-economic state in which many of these countries find themselves. The unequal and exploitative relations with Western developed nations are at the core of these socio-economic problems.

But in a number of developing countries, a social group bent on self-enrichment has grown by leaps and bounds – both within and outside state structures. By means of speculation, siphoning off of national funds and frustrating programmes aimed at uplifting the lot of the people, these elements subvert true national interests.

In other countries, the ideal of equality was pursued at a pace that could not be backed up by the human and material resources available. The fact that skilled personnel – mostly from the settler population – left these countries, contributed to the crisis. So did the tightening of economic screws by those imperialist countries to which African economies are historically linked.

In the case of Mozambique and Angola, systematic sabotage and a devastating terrorist war backed by Pretoria further wrought havoc to the economy and entire infrastructure.

It is a combination of these objective and subjective problems which has prompted the widely popular demand for an end to the one-party state.

The masses seek governments and parties which are more accountable to them. They demand the right to remove from office any party that does not satisfy

their needs.

### **ONE-PARTY SHORTCOMINGS**

One reason for this is that it is virtually impossible for a single party to represent within its ranks the whole nation. A political party organises support on the basis of specific policies.

Different social groups may well hold differing views regarding some of these policies. Where the liberation movement represented most social groups, it was possible for a certain period after independence to balance these interests within one party and its affiliate organisations. But, in time, one social group or combination of groups gained ascendancy, and progressively sought to suppress views other than its own. This not only created dissatisfaction and dissent; it also weakened the parties concerned.

It is also a fact that where there is no challenge and competition, ruling parties, in particular, tend to sit on their laurels. The distinction between the party and the government bureaucracy tends to disappear. Accountability to the membership and the people in general suffers. A weak ruling party will inevitably resort to coercion and subterfuge to maintain its hold onto power.

### **WHAT FUTURE?**

Africa is entering an interesting era. There are definitely many factors that will play themselves out in this new situation.

Some political forces will seek to latch to the straw of ethnicity, religious and other differences in their pretence to political office. Others will link up with imperialist interests to promote their political ambitions.

This, however, does not militate against the demand for a multi-party system.

Rather it is a challenge for parties which represent the interests of the poor to build powerful organisations to advance these interests. ♦

**ANC members and society at large have been called upon to chop, change or amend the ANC's Discussion Document on Economic Policy. In this article, MAYIBUYE outlines the main ideas in the document.**

**T**here will be no real freedom in South Africa if we do not achieve both political and economic democracy. There are too many examples of countries where people won independence and the economy remained under the control of a small minority. As a result, the quality of life for the majority did not improve. We need to take the challenge of changing our economy more seriously.

At the moment, the discussions and debates about a future economy are being dominated by the interests and concerns of big business and the state. All suggestions about changing the economy which might mean less profits but more poor people benefitting are being fought tooth and nail by these forces.

They are concerned not with the question of addressing the serious problem of poverty and inequality in South Africa. Because they control the media and have more resources, their views are heard more often and may appear to be the views of the majority.

What we need to do is begin to place our demands and concerns on the agenda for discussion and debate. It is clear that unless we stand together and demand the changes we need, not much is going to happen. The question of economic policy for the future is too important an issue to be left to ANC leaders and experts.

All of us need to contribute our views and make our voices heard on economic issues. Change comes through mass organisation and action, and this is true of the economy as well.

The ANC discussion document covers three main areas:

- the problems and crisis of the South African economy now;
- a strategy for growth; and
- the role of different forces in a mixed economy.

#### **PROBLEMS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY**

Three main problems are identified.

Firstly, the economy has not been growing. This is a direct result of apartheid economic policies, which focused on white privilege and black exclusion, and paid a high price to maintain white domination. During the past ten years, the population has been increasing by 2,5% a year, while the economy grew by an average of 1,4%.

This means the country has become poorer each year. The other related problem has been less new investments, which means fewer new factories and machines. This has resulted in increased unemployment. Some 3 to 4-million people are without jobs.

The second problem is one of serious inequality and poverty. The richest 5% of the population owns 88% of all personal wealth in the country.

White workers still earn ten times as much as African workers. The distribution of education, health and social services is very unequal. Six out of ten Africans do not have access to electricity.

The third problem is the nature and extent of economic centralisation or an absence of economic democracy. Too few own and control too much. The repeal of the Land Acts has not substantially

# **Chop, change or amend**

changed the position of black people. In addition, we have a situation in which 4 large companies control 81% of all the shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, giving them almost total control of the economy.

The total black share of the same Stock Exchange is less than 2%.

## **STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Any viable economic policy must aim at finding answers to these problems. It must lead to the creation of more jobs, increased wages (especially for the poor), the production of more goods with an emphasis on satisfying the basic needs of the majority, improving the position of black people in the economy and the provision of more housing, education, health and other social services.

The priority is to get the economy to grow. We do not want any kind of growth. In the past, the economy did grow, but benefited only the whites. We want growth that will improve the lives of all.

This means that economic growth must come as a result of producing basic goods.

This will not be useful unless people can afford these goods. That is why redistribution is cru-

cial. This can be achieved by the government directing its spending towards the poor and creating jobs. We therefore need economic growth through redistribution.

This broad strategy can be implemented through different mechanisms. Some of them are:

- The government contributing to redistribution by building more affordable housing, increasing welfare to the very poor, and creating more jobs and training opportunities.

- Increasing our capacity to produce more goods in less expensive ways. Producing basic goods in a way which provides more jobs and doing more research so that we learn to produce our own machines instead of importing them.

- Promoting agricultural development and land reform, in a way which ensures that more people have access to land and the capacity to produce.

- Carrying out programmes of education and training so that we increase the number of especially black people who are skilled so that they get jobs and begin to have a greater role in the economy.

- Introducing new laws and taxes which will mean that more money is to be invested to provide more jobs and goods. This will have to be done in such a way that the poor pay less and the rich pay more.

people must be allowed to plan and implement an economic policy that achieves the goals discussed earlier.

One of the major debates about economic policy is related to the role of a democratic government in the economy. Big business wants a small role for the state in what they call a free market economy.

They claim that they want an economy in which all people compete as equals and the most powerful get more. We believe that the situation in our country is very unequal. There can be no fair competition. A democratic government will have an important role in improving the position of the poor.

There is also an important role for the business sector. They own and control a lot of resources in the economy. This can be used in a constructive way to provide jobs, make things that people need and help bring about equality.

Trade unions, community organisations and co-operatives will also have an important role in a future democratic economy. They will have to work to ensure that their members benefit from the economy. They should be given a direct say in the running of the economy.

## **TOWARDS A NATIONAL WORKSHOP**

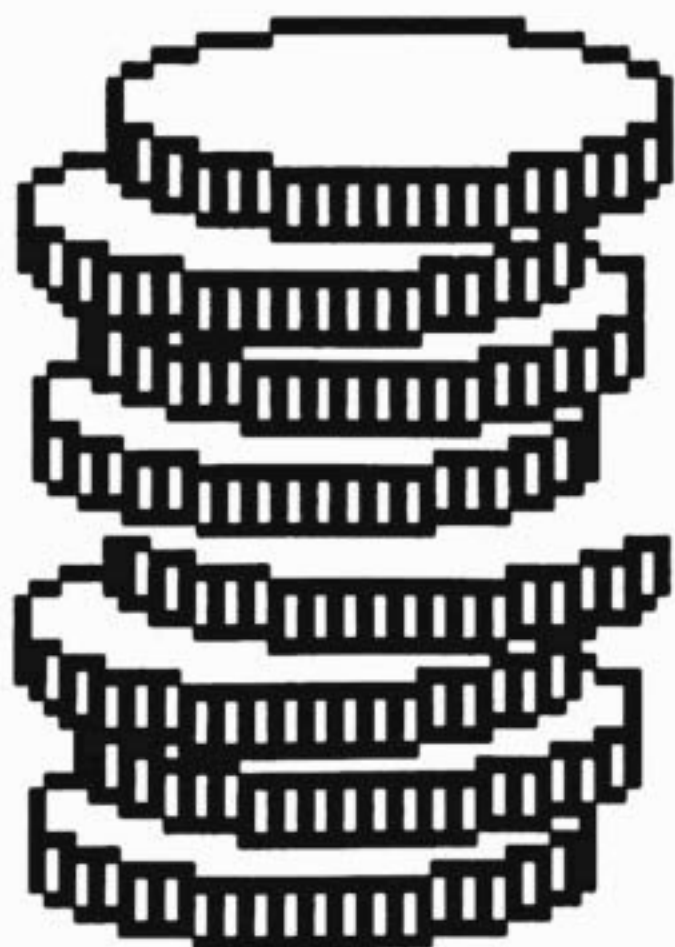
These are some the ideas in the discussion document. It is open for debate by all members and any other interested individuals and organisations. Branches and regions are called upon to use the document as a basis for discussion. Comments and other contributions are welcome.

The ANC Department of Economic Policy will soon hold a national workshop to discuss all the views submitted. On the basis of this, the document will be rewritten, incorporating the views of ANC members, in particular, and other sectors of society in general.

Your views are important. Do not hesitate to express them. ♦

## **PEOPLE'S ROLE IN A MIXED ECONOMY**

The economy is controlled by a few for the benefit of a few. In a democratic mixed economy, the





**Umkhonto we Sizwe chief Chris Hani makes a point at a conference in Lusaka to discuss the future of the military in South Africa.**

**G**overnment representatives, particularly Defence Minister Magnus Malan and Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok, display a knee-jerk sensitivity to any criticism of their forces.

Malan rejects the idea of the integration of the SA Defence Force (SADF), Umkhonto we Sizwe and other military forces. Yet he offers no alternative to the present situation, which is unacceptable to the majority of South Africans.

It is unacceptable that over 4 000 South Africans, most of them black, have been killed in politically-related violence on the Reef. The war in Natal continues to claim scores of lives. Several ANC-aligned activists have been assassinated recently. The right-wing continues to attack innocent people.

### **SOARING CRIME RATE**

Also, crime rates are soaring throughout the country. In many townships, fighting between criminal gangs is commonplace. The white suburbs are characterised by high walls, Rottweiler dogs and Armed Response. Today, three-million licensed handguns are owned by a million South Africans – over 90

# Security forces after apartheid

**How will the security of citizens in a democratic South Africa be assured? What changes will have to be made to the SA Police and Defence Force? These issues affect each one of us. This article is a brief contribution to what we hope will be a stimulating debate.**

percent of them white.

The SA Police and SADF are racist institutions that the government's reforms have so far left untouched.

Clearly, any long-term political solution to this untenable situation must include new security forces that have the trust of South Africa's people. At the same time, the issue of impartiality during transition has to be seriously addressed.

### **A NEW POLICE FORCE**

While it is true that over 50 percent of the country's police force is black, the officer corps is over 90 percent white. There are no black officers commanding white units. The police colleges are also all segregated.

Amongst the white police, including the senior officer ranks, there is a strong and organised right-wing presence.

It has been estimated that up to 90 percent of the whites in the police force support the Conservative Party. Also, the security police have undergone little change in structure and orientation. While they may be less influenced by the far-right, they maintain a perspective which views the ANC and the liberation alliance as the prime enemy.

With all of the above in mind, it is not surprising that the vast majority of South Africans do not trust the police.

It should be obvious to even the most cynical National Party supporter that to create a climate of peace and trust, a police force with an entirely different orientation and composition must be built.

To facilitate this process, the following steps are suggested:

- a new training programme that emphasises the benefits of non-racialism, and moves away from the old methods of policing that have relied heavily on force.
- an increase in the size of the police force without a shortcut in the training given;
- an affirmative action programme to increase the number of black officers;
- the creation of new symbols to promote a new loyalty;
- the complete re-orientation of the security police; all those known to have assaulted or tortured detainees must be retired;
- the contentious units of the police, such as the Askaris, must be disbanded.

This entire process should not be carried out unilaterally by either the government or the police. Rather, this issue should be placed on the agenda of negotiations.

### A NEW DEFENCE FORCE

The SADF is a racist army which relies on the conscription of young white men to force the policies of the government on the people. The fact that only whites are conscripted brings home the nature of the SADF and what precisely it is designed to protect.

Moreover, many of those in

the top ranks have records of planning or carrying out atrocities, for example, the bombing of the Frontline States, supporting terrorist groups such as Renamo and, of course, the setting up of secret groups like the CCB to murder opponents. These people include Magnus Malan and SADF chief General Kat Liebenberg.

The process of building a new defence force should begin as soon as possible. Umkhonto we Sizwe must be allowed to return home immediately – as an army with its weapons.

A future defence force will be comprised of the existing military forces in the country. Due to its size, training and structure, the SADF could be a major component of a new defence force. However, it must be integrated rather than absorbing other forces. Another major component will be MK. The armies of the "independent homelands" would also be included. The PAC's APLA and the BCM's Azanla and any other forces which owe allegiance to the new constitution could also be integrated.

The process of integration will assist in ensuring that all parties at the negotiations will keep to any settlement reached. It will also help strengthen the general commitment to peace. Finally, it will ensure that threats from the right-wing to derail the process of negotiations are kept at a minimum.

### STEPS TOWARDS INTEGRATION

The process of integration should include the following steps:

- the creation of a joint commission on integration and the nature of the new defence force;
- ongoing liaison at national and local levels between the different military forces and the SADF;
- implementation of joint monitoring and patrols of trouble spots;
- the ending of conscription;
- the reintegration of the "homeland" armies (this is

linked to the dissolution of the homeland administrations);

● the disbanding of units which have been involved in atrocities (such as 32 Battalion) and the forces retirement of their personnel;

● a new name, uniform and symbol for the new defence force; and

● the promotion of senior MK commanders (and officers of other military forces) into command and control positions in the new army.

The new defence force should be subject at all times to the authority of parliament.

Its primary role must be to protect South Africa's people against hostile and aggressive forces. It must be politically non-partisan and owe allegiance to the elected government of the day. Commissions to the officers corps must be based on merit alone.

However, due to the existing racial imbalances, an affirmative action programme must be introduced to ensure that the new defence force reflects the country's racial composition.

The new army will be a professional organisation and highly efficient. The current size of the SADF, including the navy and airforce must be substantially trimmed. The leadership of the new defence force should be made up of full-time professionals.

Military conscription must be ended. As an alternative to military conscription, there could be a system of voluntary service on a short-term basis (1-3 years), which would provide an opportunity to those willing to help in crucial areas such as housing and agriculture. After completing their service contracts, these people could then decide between joining the permanent force, the Reserve or retiring from national service.

If these issues are tackled in the process of negotiations and if all parties commit themselves to developing representative security forces for a democratic South Africa, then the security situation in our country will improve significantly. ◆



**A trade union cultural group expressing workers' experiences in song and dance**

# The antidote to apartheid

**A cultural worker argues that artists should come together to draw up an Arts and Culture Charter. What this Charter should contain is the crucial question.**

**T**he 1990s have brought us new political challenges and possibilities. Democratic organisations are shifting their emphases from reactive politics to the politics of preparing for government. It is in this context that cultural organisations should start formulating clear demands and alternatives within the cultural sphere.

What should the cultural policy of a post-apartheid government contain? Who should decide on it? How will it be implemented? We must begin to answer these and many other questions and put our ideas into practice now. If we don't, then we run the risk of being overtaken by history.

In the tradition of the Freedom Charter and workers', women's and other charters, the time is ripe for us to build an Arts and Culture Charter. These charters have proved invaluable in the history of our struggle.

In drawing them up, we have to consult widely and democratically. We are also compelled to concretise our demands, and evolve programmes to realise them in action. These charters form strong foundations for the future. They give us the vision and self-confidence to assume the responsibility of preparing to govern ourselves.

What should an Arts and Culture Charter contain? I would suggest three main areas:



**Gcina Mhlophe**

● An understanding of what the role of culture is and what it should be in our society.

Based on this understanding we can:

● formulate demands on the state's role in the cultural sphere; and

● address the type of culture and cultural practice that we believe should be encouraged.

### THE ROLE OF CULTURE

When 100 000 people at Soccer City cheer the poet or the band performing on the stage, we can see with our own eyes what unites our people in a society plagued by division.

Black and white, Xhosa and

Zulu, women and men – we are joined together for a moment by the beat of a drum or the words of a poem. Isn't this the unique and most important role of culture: its ability to unify the most diverse groupings of South Africans?

It is through its ability to unify that culture can help us to forge a common South African identity in our efforts to build a South African nation. In the same moment that culture expresses and celebrates our differences, it pulls us together. Many of us can take delight in and learn from a Zulu dance and an Afrikaans song. We find unity in our diversity. This must be the greatest antidote to apart-

heid.

The challenge is to build a South African culture that is specifically South African; a culture hybrid and inclusive of all our people and their traditions; a culture accessible and readily available to all South Africans.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, one of Africa's greatest cultural thinkers and workers, argues that culture is a crucially important site of struggle in the fight against colonialism. Ngugi sees the process of colonisation as two-fold: the physical violence of the battlefield and the psychological violence of the classroom.

The colonists knew, says Ngugi, that economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control.

So, while the real aim of colonisation was to control the people's wealth, this was achieved by dominating the mental universe of the colonised – the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world.

In the process of undoing this domination, Ngugi argues, we can liberate our factories and our farms and our mines and our parliament. But, unless we decolonise our minds, we will never be liberated. Culture is central for us to decolonise our minds.

It is widely acknowledged that culture is an important tool of education and empowerment. It assists us in articulating and communicating our developing consciousness. It gives expression to what we know but can't say. Culture should teach us how to think and to make choices – not what to think.

Culture is also something we take pleasure in; sometimes simply for its beauty and humour. And it is precisely because we enjoy culture that it is so powerful. When we are laughing or crying with the book we read or the song we hear, our minds are open to what that book or song is arguing.

In the South Africa of today, where we have no voice in the structures of authority, the pleasure of expressing ourselves through culture is enormous.

## CULTURE AND THE STATE

If a post-apartheid state is to use culture in a constructive and progressive way, then it cannot see culture's major role as one of entrenching its own power.

At the very outset, what is needed is full freedom of expression. Anti-censorship is a principle that should become part of the law of the land.

The freedom to express ourselves, even to attack and slander the ruling party, must never be violated.

Culture that promotes racial and sexual violence can be dealt with by the courts, not by the government. In this regard, we must learn from the mistakes of the apartheid state. The more it censored and repressed our cultural expression, the more this culture flourished. Censorship does not work. Nor is it desirable.

Broad-based cultural organisations must grow and must be autonomous from the state. Like the civic organisations, these structures cannot be aligned to any party. They must be fully representative of their constituencies. Cultural organisations have great potential to unify people of many political persuasions around cultural issues. It is necessary to strengthen and broaden the Congress of SA Writers, the Film and Allied Workers' Organisation and the SA Musicians Alliance, local cultural forums, photo workshops and other structures.

While the government should help in funding and providing facilities, arts and cultural organisations must be autonomous from the state, and accountable to the communities they serve. The state cannot use public money to promote only the culture that it supports. Public institutions and funds should be available to the public they are meant to serve.

## ENCOURAGING CULTURAL WORK

While the state cannot repress any form of cultural expression,



which forms should it actively support and encourage?

The central question in the early transitional period will be social reconstruction. The state has a responsibility to support the cultural production that was stunted by apartheid. Imbalances created by apartheid have to be corrected.

This entails a redistribution of the means of production and dissemination in the cultural sphere. This includes building arts and recreation centres, libraries and cinemas in the areas where the majority live. Community-based cultural groups and those of workers, women, youth and others deserve priority attention.

Special attention will have to be paid to South African cultural traditions, repressed and distorted by apartheid.

But the opera, ballet, the European literary canon, classical music and other forms must be brought to the libraries and theatres of all our communities. Alongside other cultural forms, they should be taught in the schools. South African children must have the opportunity to learn ballet, South African traditional dances as well as dances of other nations.

## A NOTE OF CAUTION

These demands are easy to endorse while the apartheid regime is in power. In the future, it will be tempting to say, "after all these years of being on the wrong end of state power, let us use culture primarily and directly to strengthen the movement!"

Culture cannot be used successfully to this end. Anyway, surely the interests of a people's government and of the country at large will best be served by a culture that serves to unify our people in their diversity; a culture that helps them to forge a strong and proud South African identity in a climate of openness and debate?

An Arts and Culture Charter will serve many important objectives, including:

- to encourage cultural expression;
- to protect the rights of cultural workers; and
- to remove the legacy of apartheid.

It must be drawn up by cultural workers themselves, on the basis of maximum, democratic participation. And other sectors of society must vigorously take part in this process.



**T**he recent two-day symposium on South African sport, held in Harare, has outlined the process through which South Africa may be readmitted to the international sports arena.

When the boycott was initially mounted, the political situation in the country was very different from what it is today. The ANC and other democratic organisations were banned, and apartheid was enforced in every aspect of social life. The position of the democratic movement, both internally and internationally, was that South Africa would be denied international competition until apartheid was totally abolished.

Today, however, the issue is no longer quite so clear cut.

Political developments that are now fundamentally changing the nature of South African society were brought about through the long and hard struggle of the people. Over many years, a democratic people's culture developed within many cultural spheres, including sport. In the sports arena this new and progressive culture found expression in the non-racial organisations set up as alternatives to the institutions of the racist establishment.

It is surely illogical to exclude the democratic and non-racial sports community from the international arena. It is precisely this community that must be supported and encouraged to expand. The point of the sports boycott is, after all, to isolate racist sport.

It was precisely this that the Harare symposium looked into.

There, the African Olympic and Sports Movement, which represented the International Olympic Committee, agreed to recognise an eight-person Steering Committee consisting of two representatives from the South African Council of Sport, the South African National Olympic Committee and the National Olympic and Sports Congress as well as a single representative from the Confederation of South African Sport and the South African Non-Racial Olympic Com-

# The fate of the boycott

**The Harare Symposium brought SA sport closer to international acceptance. This is a result of positive changes within South Africa itself. But for those who look forward to the past, the future is bleak.**

mittee.

This Steering Committee will work towards the abolition of apartheid in South African sport and the unification of all sports organisations into a single, integrated and non-racial body for each sport. It will also oversee the process through which these new bodies unite into a single National Olympic Committee.

The most important issue on the agenda of the Steering Committee is the creation of a non-racial organising body for each sport. This is the minimum condition that must be fulfilled before the boycott can be lifted.

Thus, as a starting point, all controlling bodies should observe the current moratorium and issue a sincere statement of intent regarding this issue. Such statements must, of course, be supported by concrete steps to achieve unity.

Organisations that overcome the racial divide and unify will be granted observer status within a number of relevant African sport federations. Also, the Steering Committee will consider the possibility of a selective boycott as a means of rewarding the unified bodies and further isolating those organisations that continue to cling to the attitudes and practices of the past. The question of utilising international contacts to assist in a systematic upgrading and training programme will also be addressed.

It is a matter of serious con-

cern that the South African Rugby Board insists on clinging to the practices of the past. Danie Craven recently stated that only the SARB would take decisions on international tours. He has also stated that he is considering calling off unity talks with the South African Rugby Union. This kind of rash arrogance does nothing to further progress towards an end to international isolation.

Much has been said about the detrimental effects of the sport boycott. Of course, the lack of a wide range of good competition does effect the overall standard of players. The exclusive policies of the establishment sport organisations does the same. So does the lack of adequate facilities for those who strive for excellence, blacks in particular. These are the fundamental issues that must be addressed immediately.

Above all this, the sports boycott must be viewed in its wider context. Together with the cultural boycott, sanctions and mass and other forms of struggle, it has brought South Africa to the point where the process of transition to a united, non-racial and democratic society is underway.

Progress towards non-racialism in sports will no doubt serve as a catalyst for welcome political developments. This is another reason to continue with the isolation of racist sport.

# A brief introduction to a worthwhile debate

**T**his short book of 71 pages covers the formation of the ANC's armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe and its activities up to the present day.

Howard Barrel locates these activities in the context of the ANC's strategic perspectives. He has tried to address three questions:

- What did the ANC and MK think was necessary and possible at different points?
- How well did they carry out the tasks they set themselves?
- What actions can we now say were necessary and possible in any phase for the ANC and MK to have made progress?

However, as he points out, the book is a sketch and many of the issues are addressed too briefly.

For instance, he deals with the reasons why the ANC embarked on armed struggle in only three pages. This is simply insufficient to deal with the complexities of the situation prevailing at the time.

Barrel notes throughout the book how the ANC saw the relationship between armed action and mass activity, and how that conception changed with time.

However, the strategic perspectives are not sufficiently contextualised. For example, Barrel mentions the influence of the struggles in Cuba and Algeria. The impact of the anti-colonial struggles on the African continent also need to be noted. These factors contributed to the building of political consciousness and were not unrelated to

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## *The ANC's Armed Struggle, by Howard Barrel.*

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the movement's strategic thinking in this period.

Barrel states that the ANC failed to develop an internally-based underground capable of giving leadership to both political and military forms of struggle.

Furthermore, he says that the most successful attempt was Operation Vula.

It is important in examining this question to understand that Operation Vula was the most recent attempt to set up an underground leadership. But it was not the first.

### COMPLICATED DEBATES

Lack of space (or perhaps information) prevents Barrel from fully explaining what underground structures the movement has had and the many successes and failures over the years.

When history is finally written, without present-day restrictions, details of the movement's internal work and the surrounding lengthy and complicated debates to set up regional politico-military underground leadership will come out in bolder relief.

It is a fact that senior cadres had been sent into the country from the early 80's with the aim of creating underground leader-

ship. It is the experience gleaned from those earlier efforts that enabled the ANC to send in its top leadership underground as part of Operation Vula.

When Barrel concludes that "the argument of this book has been that, granting the difficult conditions, the major reason for the failure of MK and the ANC to achieve this aim (seizure of power) was their inability – despite opportunities to do so – to develop underground leadership, at both regional and national level", one would be interested to know what these opportunities were.

He cites "a lack of strategic agreement and clarity within the ANC" as the reason for this.

What the argument about "the failure" fails to grasp is the combination of factors which have led to the current political situation. If there was no progress towards the seizure of power, the regime would not have felt compelled to adopt its new approach.

And is it time yet, some would argue, to write post-mortems on this issue?

Otherwise, this is a good introduction to the debates waged throughout the ANC since the adoption of the armed struggle as a key aspect of strategy.

It is not, as occasionally claimed, a history of MK. As an overview of some of the strategic perspectives surrounding the development and implementation of the armed struggle, it is an interesting and worthwhile read.

- S.R. ◆

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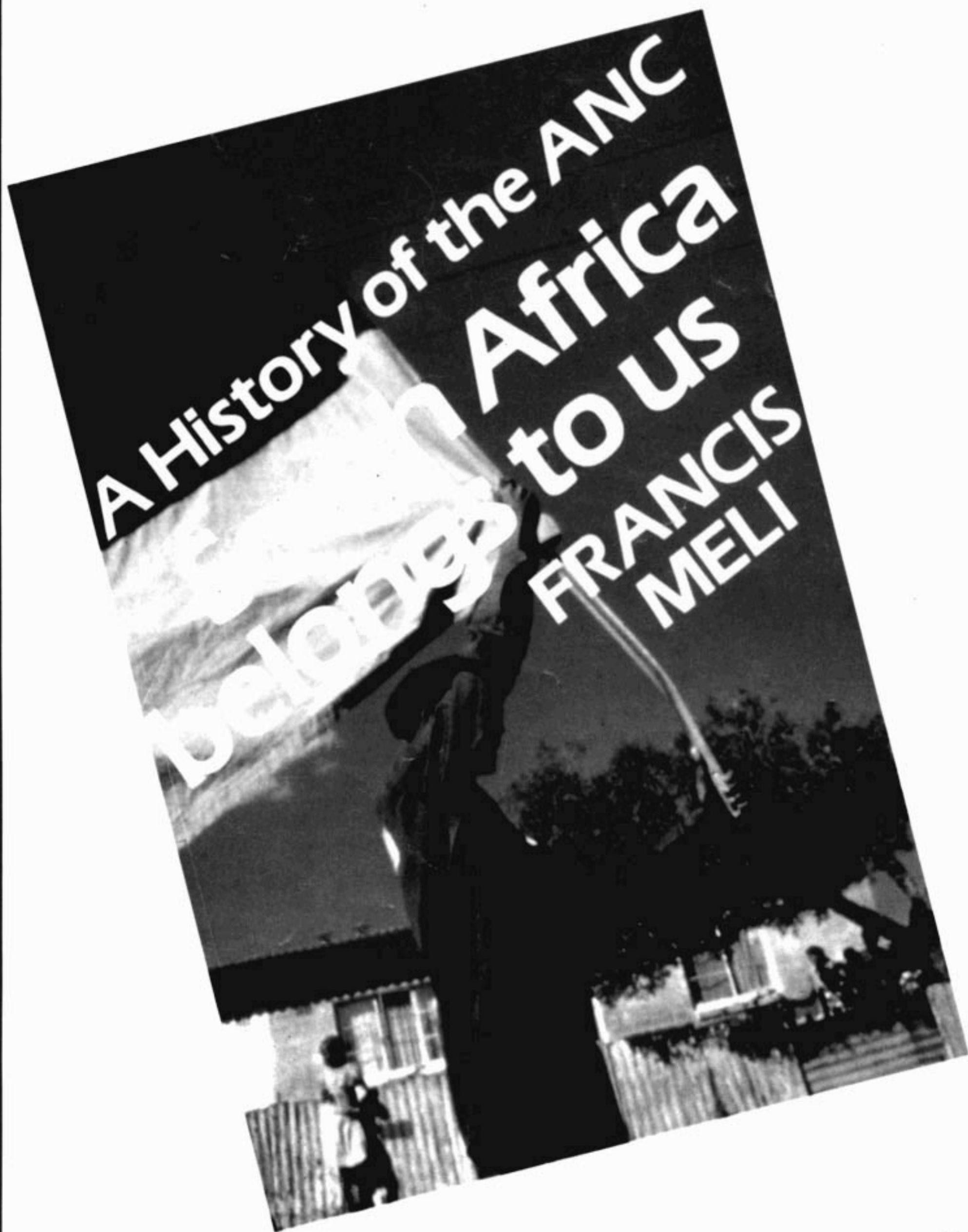
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