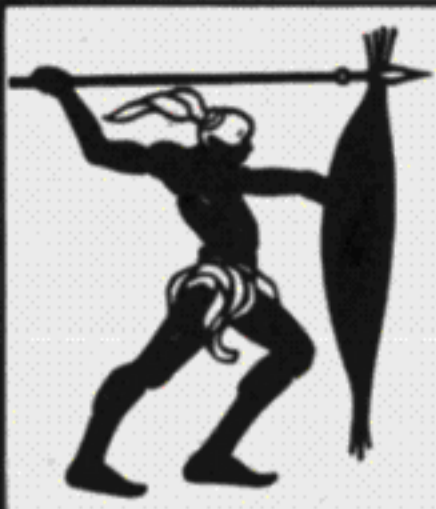


JAN 1989



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**JOHNSTONE MFANAFUTHI MAKATINI**  
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# EDITORIAL

# HISTORY AND TIME NOT ON THEIR SIDE

The year 1988 has come and gone. It started on a discordant note for the apartheid system. After they were disgraced by the Angolan and Cuban forces at Cuito Cuanavale, they belatedly called for a ceasefire and then negotiations — they agreed to quit Angola and to grant Namibia its independence. It is true they tried — and are still trying — to salvage what they still can from their sinking ship. History and time are not on their side.

We have already reported about the devastating effects of sanctions on the ailing economy of apartheid. Even militarily, sanctions do have an impact. At Cuito Cuanavale, the ageing Mirages were no match for the sophisticated weaponry used by the Cubans and Angolans — thanks to sanctions. They lost air superiority. Politically they are more divided than ever before. Even the December 16th celebrations — a perverted historical memory — were characterised by divisions, fear and uncertainty about the future. Surely the future does not belong to them.

They told us that they are releasing Nelson Mandela from Pollsmoor Prison to a "safer" and "more comfortable" place. This turned out to be another form of incarceration. Since they have invited the Mandela family to join him when and if it wants, they intend to incarcerate them all. Surely the family will not bite that poisoned bait. Nelson Mandela and his family never wanted to be fat slaves; they have sacrificed for the freedom of our people.

Whilst they were talking about releasing Nelson Mandela, a marathon trial was taking place in Pretoria, in the Criminal Court of the Palace of Justice — a misnomer — the very courtroom in which Mandela and his co-accused received their life sentence in the Rivonia trial in 1964.

It all started as a result of what was called the "Vaal unrest," which began in

September 1984 as a reaction to the 1983 introduction of the tricameral constitution, rent hikes and so on. Delmas, the small Eastern Transvaal town 70 km from Johannesburg, was chosen as the place of the trial — after it was removed from Bethal — so as to avoid the huge attendance political trials involving key figures usually attract.

This trial of 22 leaders of the mass democratic movement proved to be one of the longest trials, and definitely the most costly, in the history of political trials in South Africa. It had been running since June 1985, and most of the accused had been in detention since 1984. The trial proper opened on January 20th 1986; three were acquitted for lack of evidence in November 1986; six were freed on bail of R15 000 each. Popo Molefe, the General Secretary of the UDF, Moses Chikane, its Transvaal Secretary, and Patrick Lekota, the Publicity Secretary of the UDF, were refused bail. Molefe and Lekota have been in gaol since April 1985, and Chikane since August of that year.

The regime wanted to prove that the accused conspired with the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party in fanning the nation-wide unrest. The irony was that the court records were updated to include the period up to 1987 of the "ANC-UDF conspiracy," — that is, two years after the accused were detained. The allegation that the UDF conspired with the ANC and the SACP to overthrow the regime was linked with the killing of councillors, and generalised "violence" of the people.

Nothing was said about the violence of the police, and the fact that the army had occupied African townships. Nothing was said about a policeman who dispersed the mourners at a Sebokeng funeral in 1984, wiped the blood off the blade of a butcher's knife, and said, "Seker een van hulle gaan dood daarso." ("One of them will surely die

there.") The procession to the cemetery was led and followed by the police; police in army Hippos were at the graveyard, and before the diggers had finished shovelling earth into the grave they took up positions as if they were trying to encircle the mourners. The police fired tear gas. There was confusion. The police were busy sjambokking and firing rubber bullets at the mourners; the order was, "Slaan die Kaffers" (Thrash the Kaffirs). People scattered in all directions.

This information was not relevant for the judge, who was interested in establishing a case of high treason or any charges carrying a death penalty, or others allowing for long gaol terms without the option of a fine.

In a statement on the Delmas Treason Trial, the ANC accused the courts of being an "instrument of oppression," and said that "the apartheid system is criminally unjust." The case of the Delmas trial proves this beyond doubt. Announcing the termination of the services of one of the assessors, Professor Joubert, on March 10th 1987, Judge Dijkhorst said it had come to light that Joubert could no longer be part of the court because he had been signatory to the 1984 UDF one-million signatures against the introduction of a new constitution. Joubert's dismissal provoked a sharp reaction from the defence team, challenging the judge's right to drop the assessor. Defence counsels asked the judge (and the remaining assessor, W F Krugel) to recuse themselves, and thereby nullify the trial. Dijkhorst and Krugel were obviously prejudiced, biased against the accused.

It should be remembered that Krugel was believed to be a member of the Broederbond, and therefore supportive of the regime. He was also believed to occupy an office at John Vorster Square, where he had contacts with, and briefings from, the secret police. This Krugel was the liquidator of SASO and other Black Consciousness organisations in 1977. There was no question that impartiality should be expected from the judge and assessor.

The irony of the whole case was that Judge Dijkhorst was on trial at the Delmas trial; he was supposed to pass judgment on himself, and the 19 accused in the treason trial he was presiding over were now spec-

tators, as the legal battle dragged on between the bench and the defence.

The longest and costliest treason trial ended on December 8th 1988, with Patrick Lekota sentenced to 12 years, Popo Molefe and Moss Chikane each receiving ten years and the Rev. Thomas Manthatha six years. Seven others received lesser sentences, and 11 of the original 22 had been acquitted at various stages of the marathon.

These men, like Mandela 24 years before them, acted courageously, defending their organisations, explaining the policies of their movements, and turning the court into another field of battle. Their spirit at the trial inspired those who came to cheer them up.

The panic of the racists is evidenced by the fact that during the 442 court days to the end of judgment, 911 "co-conspirators" were named, that is, individuals, and 50 organisations. There were 565 pages of indictment, 27 194 of evidence and 14 425 of exhibits; 42 videos and radio tapes, 5 rolls of film, and numerous photographs and maps. This is to say nothing of the 152 state witnesses, 126 defence witnesses, and the 1 521 pages of judgment. The cost was obviously "unavailable."

These men of the Delmas Treason Trial were being tried by three White judges and prosecuted by a team of Whites, assisted by White policemen. They were kept as hostages in a political wrangle. This trial, taking place during the state of emergency, developed from quiet beginnings into a marathon legal and political struggle over Black rights and the right to struggle for them. At stake were not only the futures of Black leaders of the struggle, but also the very existence of the UDF and similar organisations. The UDF and many organisations are now partially banned, and virtually any Black man opposed to apartheid can now be found guilty of high treason. These leaders of a peaceful organisation, the UDF, who have been charged with high treason and several alternative charges ranging from murder to terrorism, and are accused of being the "internal wing" of the ANC and SACP, received full support from our people, who marched to the rhythm of their favourite freedom song, *Siyaya e Pitori* — We Are Marching to Pretoria.

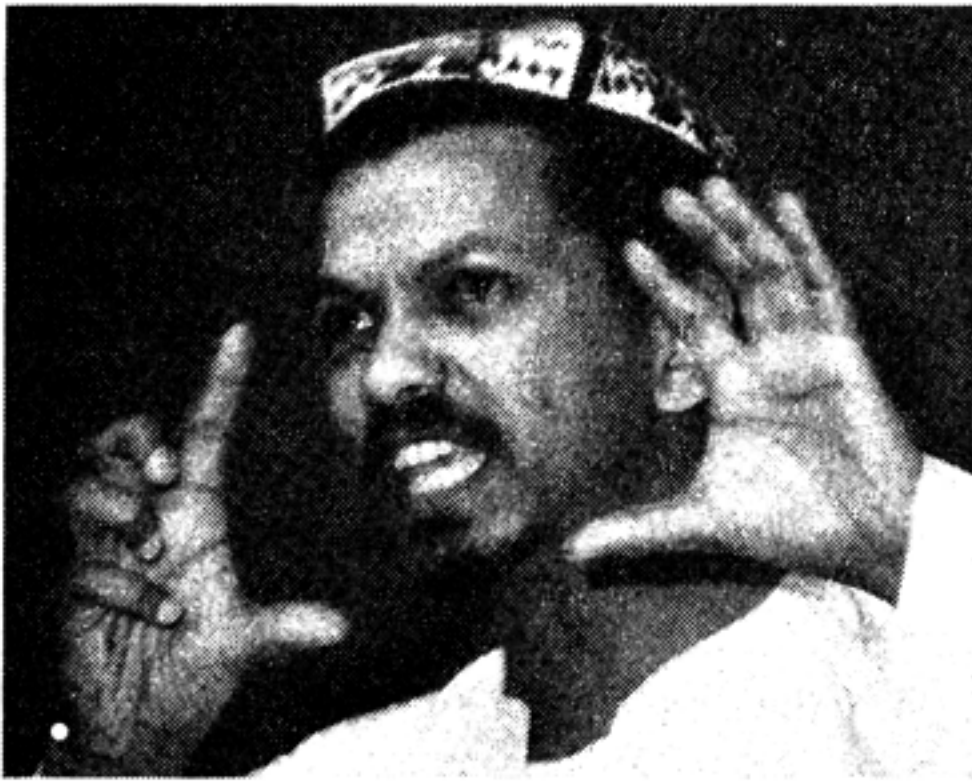
# CANON COLLINS MEMORIAL LECTURE

# THE BASES

# OF OUR

# HOPES

The third annual Canon Collins Memorial Lecture was delivered in London on December 1st 1988, by Maulana Farid Esack. The occasion was under the auspices of the British Defence and Aid Fund, founded by the late Canon John Collins, in the 1950s. We print here a shortened version of the Maulana's speech.



In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, Comrade Chairperson, comrades and friends, I regard it as a tremendous honour to deliver the Third Annual Canon Collins Memorial Lecture. To speak in tribute to a person of the stature of Canon Collins and to do so in the footsteps of someone who is regarded as the leader of our nation — Oliver Tambo — is a rare honour, and I am sincerely astounded that the invitation has come to me. Both of them have made an inestimable contribution to the development of our country — and President Tambo continues to do so — and I pray to Allah that I and our people become worthy of their sacrifices.

I have chosen as my theme for tonight's lecture, "the liberation struggle in South Africa: the bases of our hopes." I have done so because certain developments taking place within and outside of South Africa

need to be placed within the context of our ongoing struggle for liberation.

The apartheid regime's denial of the right of the people of South Africa to govern their own lives on the one hand, and the assumption of the right to initiate change on the other is at the heart of the conflict in South Africa today. Repression and reform are two sides of the same bloody coin. There is a link between the world rejoicing at the commutation of the death sentences of the Sharpeville Six and the world's ignorance of the hundreds of others who are still on death row, between the applause at the release of Zeph Motopeng and Harry Gwala on the one hand and the deafening silence at the tragic spectacle of 18-year-old Charles Bester facing six years in gaol for refusing to join an army that is at war with its own people.

## **We Cannot Adjust to Apartheid**

The world may adjust to maladjustment, but as for us, who never get used to the knock at four in the morning, who never adjust to the loneliness of having to live in a city without one's family because it is against the law for them to be in the cities, who never become accustomed to seeing children in detention, who, after 26 years, have not accepted the fact that a sentence of life imprisonment for Nelson Mandela and others does really mean that — we shall not adjust to the insanity of apartheid. Our

worth and integrity as human beings is directly proportional to the level of our refusal to do so and to our willingness to resist.

This is the first reason why we are part of that struggle to destroy the apartheid system. We are, however, not engaged in some symbolic gesture of hara kiri against an invincible monster — a courageous gesture culminating in the brave death of the candle as it seeks to provide light to a world as divided and unjust as apartheid society. We are resisting because we are winning, and because we are going to win.

Let us look firstly at the political and economic considerations, and then the moral considerations, which lead us to conclude this.

We belong to a tradition of winning. Our struggle has acquired enormous recognition throughout the world, and the days when Sol Plaatje came to London to plead the case for democracy in South Africa, and hardly found any listeners, are past. This recognition has come from the tenacity of our people, and from the various successes that we have scored along the way. Freedom for Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe and now Namibia, did not fall out of the sky. They were the results of our people's struggles. Every single act of so-called compassion on the part of the Botha regime, every time they are forced back to the constitutional drawing board, every time an ordinary Londoner asks, "Where do these oranges come from?" before he or she purchases them, has been a victory for our people, and a loss to the regime.

More specifically, there are two major political reasons for our hopes in the dismantling of apartheid and the creation of a non-racial South Africa: the economic cost of apartheid and the organisational strength of resistance to it.

## **The Regime Tries to Save Face**

The war in Angola and the occupation of Namibia are simply too expensive to be continued, and the protracted negotiations around the withdrawal of the Cubans are mere face-saving devices. It costs the South African government more than a million

rand a day to sustain that war, and it has no alternative to withdrawal.

Internally, the price of administering apartheid is becoming astronomical. We have more than 130 cabinet ministers, and something like 17 educational departments. Numerous White high schools are standing empty, and 400 million rand is owed in rent by boycotting Black communities.

The institutions of apartheid have drawn the weaker ones amongst our people, and the price for their participation has been an enormous financial burden on the shoulders of the regime. The coups in the Transkei are an attempt to get their books to balance. The various commissions of enquiry into financial irregularities in the homelands, and the James Commission of Enquiry into various scandals that have rocked the Indian parliament — the House of Delegates — are not just innocent attempts to ensure clean administration; they are desperate measures to call their own supporters to financial order. What they do not understand is that their system and various reform schemes are so devoid of any morality that they can attract only those who have an interest in little other than the linings of their own pockets.

Apartheid is an expensive commodity, and it seems as if the people of South Africa — who never wanted it in the first instance — are determined to make the costs rise even further.

More important than this is the hope that emerges from our own organisations.

## **Bloodied But Unconquered**

I do not want to romanticise our position, or deny that we are bloodied under the state of emergency. Repression in South Africa has taken an enormous toll on our organisations, and we simply haven't recovered from blow after blow dealt out to us. Many of our structures have been smashed, and we have not always succeeded in finding viable and creative alternatives.

At different times, the weakest link in the enemy's defences might occur at different points. It is also important to understand

that history develops unevenly, and in an often contradictory way. In mass struggle, for instance, it is not possible to maintain the same level of intensity for years at a time. Our main task is to ensure that we do not just mark time at the same time in the same place. Each wave of mass struggle must carry us forward. In each period of relative slowing down we must ensure that the gains are not lost, that the lessons of the previous waves are learned.

Yes, we have been bloodied, but that has not prevented us from staging the largest national stayaway ever in South African history. The three days' stayaway in protest against the Labour Relations Amendment Bill and the state of emergency, in May this year, was an unprecedented success. Conditions militated against such a stayaway; it occurred in a period of protracted repression, restrictions placed on COSATU and regulations preventing organisations from calling for a stayaway. In addition, the state threatened harsh action against participants. Despite all of this, COSATU made it happen.

## **Elections: A Test of Wills**

The South African government made the recent countrywide municipal elections a major test of wills, and they lost that round dismally. Let us look at what they put into it and what they got out of it, and you will understand why we insist that our people are beyond co-option for their own oppression.

■ They announced that 60-70% of Black people registered as voters. Closer examination, however, revealed that rent receipts, housing accommodation waiting lists, pass registration, electricity receipts, and even death certificates, were used to register people. Large numbers of people were registered more than once. Democrats in South Africa have been clamouring for one person one vote, and the government upstages them — it gave us one person ten votes!

■ Prior voting enabled anyone to vote over a period of ten days. The government claims that this was done to prevent intimidation. We say that it was done to deny

the community its right to act as a moral censor.

■ The salaries of the newly elected councillors were increased by 35% — the largest salary increase ever in the public sector.

■ Calling for a boycott of the elections became a crime punishable by R20 000 and/or ten years' imprisonment.

■ *Al Qalam*, the newspaper of progressive Muslims in South Africa, was seized, and so was *Crisis News*, the journal of the Western Province Council of Churches. Both had openly called for a boycott of the polls.

■ They spent 4.7 million rand on a publicity campaign to ensure participation in the elections, and Minister Heunis remarked that at least 80% of the people knew about the elections.

How far did all of this get them?

In many townships, not a single candidate could be found among hundreds of thousands of residents. Out of 52 townships in the Eastern Cape there were elections in only 25. In Motherwell and Cradock there were no candidates. In KwaNobuhle there were only eight candidates for 16 wards. For the remaining 24 councils in the Eastern Cape, there were either no candidates, or only one candidate came forward.

The picture was hardly rosier in other parts of the country. A casual look at Natal and the Witwatersrand areas clearly reflects the hollowness of their victory. According to the Bureau for Information, the total number of eligible voters in the Witwatersrand area totals 2.38 million. They claim that 154 092 votes were cast in this region. Basic arithmetic points to something like 6.5%, which is quite different from the over 20.5% they have claimed. This is, of course, ignoring the fact that the actual population in the area is far beyond the official figures, and that property owners had as many votes as they had properties; 154 092 votes, therefore, does not really mean that so many people actually voted.

Of the 108 possible seats in African townships in Natal, elections were held in only 40 wards. These wards attracted only 7 592 votes.

This is where our people are at.

## **Organisational Unity**

The impact of the national democratic struggle is being felt all the time, and in ways which strengthen the resolve, unity and organisational ability of our people as nothing has ever done before. Numerous ostensibly neutral organisations have been won over to the struggle in recent years.

Every single church grouping — with the exception of the Afrikaner churches — is under the leadership of people who have, to varying degrees, identified with the liberation struggle. Community-based organisations existing in opposition to state structures have proliferated on an unprecedented scale, and have developed an infra-structural strength hitherto unknown. Similar is the case of professional organisations. Equally significant — though a far greater cause for celebration — is the strength of the movement to resist conscription. They have banned the End Conscription Campaign, but that has not deterred close to 200 young Whites from announcing their refusal to join the South African Defence Force.

In the same manner that we rejoice in the unity of our people and in the growth of democratic structures in our own communities, we rejoice in the doubt and confusion that the ruling class has been plunged into as a result of our struggles. We make no apologies for this, because whatever weakens them tactically is going to lessen their chances of perpetuating minority rule.

They are more fearful than ever before and more dehumanised than ever before. This fear of theirs is giving rise to the emergence of the non-uniformed right-wing vigilantes. Until a few months ago, Barend Strydom, the young White Afrikaner who went on a shooting spree in the streets of Pretoria, was a member of the uniformed right-wing vigilantes — the South African Police. They are in the townships, they are in the factories, they are on the ground, and they have seen the reality of South Africa. They have chosen to get out of their uniforms and fight the battle on their own terrain to complement the battle of those in uniforms. This is the context of the bomb-

ing of Khotso House, the NUSAS office, the office of the Catholic Bishop's Conference; and the kidnapping and killing of activists.

## **Killers:**

### **Uniformed and Non-Uniformed**

It is important for us to remember that these people are part of the mainstream of the ruling class. As far as we are concerned there is no difference between the killings Barend Strydom engaged in when he was in uniform a few months ago — and that his uniformed colleagues may still be engaged in — and the ones he engaged in after he got out of that uniform. This also applies to the judicial murders taking place day after day in the Central Prison of Pretoria.

All of this saddens us immensely, because our country is being dragged into a long-drawn-out and bloody war. We must not for a single moment underestimate the determination of the ruling class to survive and to resort to further violence, and — contradictory as it may seem — we may also not overestimate the ability of a people to remain pariahs in the eyes of the international community. There is something elusive that binds us all together — in Islam we refer to this as the Spirit of Allah blown into us at the time of creation — and ultimately, they too must succumb to it.

Meanwhile, we rejoice in the popularity of our struggle. We rejoice in the moral high ground of our struggle, without succumbing to the idea that the moral correctness of our struggle is the only basis of our hopes. We rejoice because our struggle is transforming us now as people and as a nation. We are not going to be victorious some day, or free some day. We are becoming free every day. The meaning that our struggle has supplied our existences with, the joy of working on something together, the pain and trauma of believing in something, and the willingness to lay down one's life for it — all of this has transformed our people.

We rejoice, for the new South Africa is being formed now, in the non-racial and democratic nature of our struggle. Forward to a non-racial, non-sexist, nuclear-free and democratic South Africa!



# THE CASE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

By Zola Skweyiya

When the South African government delegation was expelled from the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross in Geneva on October 25th 1986, the western mass media blew the event up beyond its proportions. The racist regime was portrayed as a martyr, a victim of prejudice and African extremism. The whole event was presented as politically motivated, devoid of any humanitarian considerations.

Little was made of the unique compromise reached at the Conference, which allowed the South African Red Cross Society (SACRC), despite its deficiencies, to remain and participate, and to continue as a member of the International Red Cross Movement (IRCM) — a compromise which was never challenged during the deliberations of the Conference.

One found oneself doubting the impartiality of the western media, and wondering whether or not they were using this event to gain sympathy for the apartheid regime and as a weapon to safeguard western economic and financial interests in apartheid.

The decision of the Conference is still remembered by many people around the world, especially supporters of the Red Cross Movement. The clear distinction made between the SACRS and the South African regime demonstrated the moral high ground and political maturity of independent Africa and also its desire to nurse, develop and accommodate the Red Cross Movement and its principles within South Africa, despite the unacceptable political system there.

It was a gesture aimed at jolting the conscience of the White community in South Africa, which has always monopol-

ised the highest echelons of leadership and administration of the SARCS.

It was meant to encourage internal discussion and dialogue within the SARCS towards a non-racial approach and its democratisation. There was no desire whatsoever to hamper the humanitarian efforts of a sister society working under very difficult conditions. The work of the SARCS for the benefit of the victims of the apartheid situation was universally recognised as more necessary than ever in the evolving situation within the country and the region of Southern Africa. It was this recognition and the appreciation of the continued humanitarian efforts of the ICRC in conjunction with the SARCS, in alleviating the suffering of the victims of the South African situation, that prevailed and led to the concrete distinction between the SARCS and the delegation of the apartheid regime.

## Kenya's Point of Order

The debate on South Africa had been initiated by a point of order raised by the Kenyan government delegation on behalf of the African group at the Conference. They requested that the South African government delegation be suspended from

Conference, on the grounds that the South African government, by maintaining its policy of apartheid, did not respect the fundamental principles of the Red Cross or the provisions of international humanitarian law. It was made clear that a decision to expel the South African government delegation should not affect the SARCS. In the debate, two main lines of thought emerged.

The first advocated the need to preserve the universality of humanitarian law, saying that it applied essentially in conflict situations, like the one that was developing in South Africa, and therefore should not meet discrimination by further discrimination. It was of vital importance to preserve the haven of dialogue which the Geneva Conventions and the IRCM represent in the midst of battle. Setting a precedent would be dangerous, and might ultimately lead to the destruction of a movement patiently built over 125 years.

## **A Humanitarian Organisation**

Suspending South Africa would no doubt align the Red Cross Movement with other international organisations, including the United Nations system, from which the racist regime has been suspended, but would not enhance the prestige of the Conference. On the contrary, the Red Cross Movement derives its authority from the fact that it is 'fundamentally different' from others and can only lose by becoming 'just like the others.' In carrying out South Africa's suspension, as demanded by the Kenyan motion, the RCM would have compromised its image as a neutral and non-political institution, and also lost credibility, particularly among thousands of young volunteers who adhere to it precisely because of its non-political, humanitarian, neutral and non-discriminatory posture and action. This precedent would have presented the danger of a shift within the movement towards a general politicisation which would divest it of its specific humanitarian action.

The other tendency which emerged from the debate, and which ultimately prevailed, was that apartheid was so fundamental a violation of the essence of human dignity

that the representatives of independent Africa (and of many other nations in the world) could not possibly be required to sit in the same room as the delegation of a regime upholding a policy deemed to be based on racist principles. No form of racism could be acceptable, and, most of all, to institutionalise racism to state policy, as is done in apartheid South Africa, could not be tolerated. South Africa had to be suspended in the name of human dignity, which the RCM claims to universally defend. Such a decision, it was maintained, was in line with the course of history; the RCM would not regret it. It would demonstrate that the RCM was in line with the aspirations of the oppressed majority in Namibia and South Africa and would therefore gain credibility in Africa and the Third World. Apartheid is a crime against humanity, an institutionalised and openly declared violation of human rights and basic principles of the Red Cross; a systematic debasement of human dignity.

This trend of thinking won the day, and the racist regime was suspended from the Conference.

## **The South African Red Cross Society**

It was obvious that, after this, the activities of the SARCS would be under scrutiny and its development watched with interest.

Formed in 1913, the SACRS grew out of earlier Red Cross organisations that served the opposing sides during the Anglo-Boer War. It is organised into nine regions: Northern Transvaal, Southern Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal, Border, Eastern Cape, Cape and SWA/Namibia. The main policy body is the National Council, with control exercised by the National Executive Committee. The national office is in Johannesburg. The regions have semi-autonomous status, which makes the national office rather weak.

Its assets amount to R25 000 000, and it has an annual turnover of R12 000 000. It has about 12 000 members and 1 150 employees. Its main areas of activity are:

■ 4 500 uniformed Voluntary Aid Corps;

- 70 ambulances;
- 4 air ambulances based in the Cape and Natal;
- 17 homes for the aged and 750 retirement cottages;
- 13 creches;
- relief and feeding programmes in Natal, Namibia and other areas;
- first aid training, including a programme for mine rescue;
- youth and dissemination activities;
- 56 community organisers working in Black townships, recently increased to 64.

Although the SARCS claims to have constantly stressed the neutrality and non-political nature of its activities, one detects a desire from the SARCS leadership and officialdom to stretch this 'neutrality' and 'non-political nature.' No attempts are made to tangle with its structures to fit present-day progressive thinking.

## Blacks in the SARCS

For instance, the SARCS still treats the Namibian Chapter as an integral part of its South African component while allowing its structure in the bantustans of Ciskei and Transkei to assume independent postures. This happens at a time when the SARCS is going around the world, cap in hand, seeking funds for projects in South Africa. One would have thought that the toleration of independent Red Cross entities in the Ciskei and Transkei would affect the meagre resources of the SARCS. If it does not, why not assist the Namibian Red Cross to develop an independent structure? Arguments about legal and constitutional restraints are not very convincing. The administrative costs of maintaining independent entities in the Ciskei and Transkei must have effects on the limited resources of the SARCS, which are essential at this crucial time of our history.

*"We have to live with the realities of South Africa as determined by the government,"*

says Mrs Mars, a leading official of the SARCS.

The executive and administrative leadership of the SARCS is predominantly White. Dr Ben Ngubane from Natal is the only

Black member of the 13-strong executive, and, though there is a sprinkling of Blacks in lower administrative positions, Blacks are generally relegated to the roles of doling out soup, bathing eyes streaming from tear gas, and treating buckshot wounds. The pace of integrating Blacks in the leadership and administration is rather deliberately slow.

Despite the euphoria created by the acceptance of the SARCS at the 25th International Conference, there has been no deliberate attempt to upgrade Blacks and co-opt them into the leadership. Nor have there been attempts to recruit capable Blacks into the movement. The most senior Black employee of the SARCS is Bongani Khumalo, who is Deputy Director of the Southern Transvaal Region. The SARCS, in late 1988, still does not have a deliberate programme of upgrading Africans nor has it gone out on a campaign, or designed a project, to attract Blacks of managerial and executive ability. The general trend is still Whites at the top and Blacks at the bottom. The SARCS leadership structures remain 'lily-white.'

Hopes are pinned on the Community Organisers' Programme, organised in conjunction with the International Committee of the Red Cross, based in Geneva.

The relief work carried out by the SARCS during the period of 'unrest' in 1985-1987 has clearly earned it new respect among the oppressed. This was achieved through the efforts of the Community Organisers, by the painstaking patience, co-operation and nudging of the ICRC. Otherwise the SARCS would have remained a group of White philanthropists, directing the distribution by Black employees of soup and some plastic sheeting during forced removals, or giving first aid assistance after car accidents.

Why the SARCS could not have thought of organising these programmes alone after more than 70 years of existence is unimaginable. It is a typical example of the lack of initiative and imagination of its decrepit and ossified leadership style. What is further most worrying is the readiness to sacrifice accepted Red Cross principles, especially that of neutrality, as exemplified by Mrs Mars' social, if not political, closeness to Inkatha and Gatsha

Buthelezi in Natal, especially at this present period of conflict in the area, where Buthelezi stands openly as a protagonist of Inkatha violence against the democratic movement. Ought Mrs Mars not be a bit more discreet and show some neutrality?

## **The ICRC In South Africa**

No organisation has been more exemplary, and more able to win friends for the Red Cross Movement in South Africa, than the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The ICRC has been visiting people formally convicted of breaking security laws in South Africa since 1963. A regional delegation was opened in Pretoria in 1978, to provide "logistical support" to other delegations in Southern Africa. During the uprisings which started in 1984, the delegation found itself with no option but to offer assistance and protection services to people detained as a result of the growing internal disturbances, and to provide relief for those of their families in need of it.

The ICRC has been in constant negotiations with the regime in its efforts to fulfil its mandate in accordance with its standard criteria, especially for those held under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act (under interrogation), those awaiting trial, and those sentenced to death. There is particular concern for detainees held incommunicado and often interrogated for long periods. Since 1985, the ICRC has also tried, without success, to gain access to people arrested under the emergency regulations, those sentenced for acts of 'public violence' (demonstrations), and those held in the homelands.

## **Protection for Civilians**

Owing to the intensity of the uprising and the increasing number of civilian casualties, the ICRC had to broaden its activities in South Africa to include protection for the victims of the internal disturbances in the townships and homelands. The very visibility and presence of ICRC delegates in the midst of the unrest has provided a measure

of protection to civilians, enabling the delegates to witness the suffering in the townships, to give much-needed advice where necessary, and to intercede with the authorities. With the recent clamp-down on journalists, they have proved to be the only independent witnesses of the unrest.

In the midst of this experience, the Community Organisers' Programme (COP) was initiated by the ICRC and the SARCS, to strengthen their capacity to act during the 'disturbances,' and to ease the suffering of the victims. The efficiency of this programme was first tested in 1986, when the first fully-trained group of 46 Community Organisers was put into the field. They proved so good that this number had to be increased to 69 by the end of 1987.

With the extension of the state of emergency on June 11th, 1987, the ICRC stepped up its activities in South Africa. It also increased its demands to the authorities for access to all categories of detainees held in accordance with the internal disturbances. This demand included a demand for access also to those arrested for public violence. As the negotiations had not borne fruit by the end of 1987, the ICRC — for the first time since 1963 — cancelled its annual visits to sentenced political prisoners. This painful but principled decision was taken because, throughout the world, the ICRC delegates visit places of detention only if they are allowed to:

- See all the detainees, register them, talk to them fully, without witnesses;
- Have access to all places of detention;
- Repeat the visits as necessary.

Respect for all these conditions is a prerequisite of all ICRC visits in the world, and South Africa was to be no exception.

Because of its impartiality and neutrality, the ICRC is appreciated by all opponents of apartheid in South Africa. Despite the events of November 1986, when the ICRC was nearly expelled from South Africa, there have been signs that the racist regime, too, is beginning to appreciate the humanitarian role the ICRC plays in the conflict in the Southern African region.

One sign was the approach by Pretoria's

Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ICRC, requesting it to act on behalf of 76 sailors interned in Walvis Bay. It also seems that the work of the ICRC with Mozambican refugees is now appreciated, as is also the role of the ICRC in prisoner exchange, in the conflict around the region.

Perhaps the highest point, so far, of the racist regime's appreciation of ICRC work in South Africa is the agreement signed in 1986 between the ICRC, the SARCS and the armed forces, to draft a joint programme to teach the principles of the Red Cross Movement and spread the knowledge of International Humanitarian Law among the officers and enlisted men of the South African Defence Force. A similar programme is being prepared for those responsible for security.

## **Future of the Red Cross In South Africa**

In a country threatened by war as South Africa is today, and divided by racial tensions, where extreme standpoints are hardening, there is an essential role to be played by a movement like the Red Cross. There is a role for a movement capable of doing humanitarian work effectively without discrimination and in a spirit of brotherhood and desire to help all those who, both in time of war and in time of peace, expect from other human beings that grain of human kindness that will help them regain their human dignity. It is this role that is expected of the South African Red Cross Society.

Right through the world, the Red Cross Movement has been able to adapt itself to changing realities, as the case of the independent states of Southern Africa demonstrates especially Angola, Zambia, Mozambique and recently Zimbabwe. In these countries, it has been able to keep alive the flame of the traditional principles of the IRCM while being able to discard the ashes of racism, with which they were tainted during the colonial era.

Is it not time for the SARCS to start thinking of the future? The broad outlines of the future are already visible. The Community Organisers' Programme needs

to be re-evaluated. Africans, and Blacks in general, need to be attracted into the RCM.

## **Prestige Enhanced**

The integration of the oppressed into the highest echelons of leadership and administration will enhance the prestige of the SARCS, both internationally and at home. It will help to remove the image it has among Blacks of being associated with the apartheid system. Being faithful to its principles of neutrality in conflicts and universality, while remaining faithful to the victims of the apartheid conflict, for whose sake it has to continue to exist, it will be able to keep up with the times, while avoiding politicisation. By adapting to ever-changing events without surrendering its basic principles to passing trends, it will be able to continue being useful to all, and especially to the victims of the conflict.

Its work during the present unrest, especially during the forced removals and the state-concocted disturbances around the country, is highly appreciated. It is hoped that its activities will spread to the rural areas which suffer from highly inadequate health, education and nutritional facilities. Our experience is that the apartheid system has no intention of providing these areas with any of these services, least of all of providing the people in these areas with gainful employment or subsistence.

An intervention by the SARCS in these areas would be welcome, just as it would be in the field of alcohol and drug abuse which continue to take a toll of our people.

If the SARCS could strive to initiate some projects directed toward achieving these tasks and many more, it will have the support of all, including that of all humanitarian and democratic people the world over. The democratisation of its national and regional leadership could be taken as a declaration of intent. With such tasks in its programme, the SARCS could be a symbol of hope, of a future that will be better for all and more humane. There is still time for improvement and for rising to the occasion before the next International Conference of the Red Cross.

# ANC INTERNATIONAL

## India: A Trusted Ally

When, in 1946, the South African Indian Congress under the leadership of Dr Y M Dadoo and Dr 'Monty' Naicker launched a passive resistance struggle against racial discrimination, they appealed for support. India, which was on the verge of independence from British rule, was the first country to respond. It did so by breaking off relations, both trade and diplomatic, and by giving support to the South African Indian Congress and the ANC at the United Nations. The spirit of its pledges have continued in various forms over the years, and were to find expression through the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement, and virtually every international body to which India belongs.

Recognising the importance of collective action, Gandhi and Nehru constantly counselled Indians in South Africa to follow their leaders in the search for unity with the African people in a common struggle for freedom. In 1979, the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru Award was conferred on Nelson Mandela, who, like many of his colleagues in the ANC Youth League, had been inspired by the leadership of Gandhi and Nehru in the struggle for Indian national independence.

The prestige of the ANC and SWAPO in India is widespread. The offices of the ANC and SWAPO enjoy embassy status, and neither President Tambo nor President Nujoma are strangers in the country.

Demonstrations and acts of solidarity, not only by the government of India, but by the vast masses, reached new heights in 1988. Coal miners in Bihar started a collection through their trade unions, and have pledged a sum of 20 million rupees to the Africa Solidarity Fund, while students in Delhi collected 16 000 rupees.

Events to mark the 70th birthday of Nelson Mandela included concerts, exhibitions and rallies; the occasion was observed in many schools, and for many days

there was a steady stream of students visiting the ANC office with petitions, poems and pledges. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi sent birthday greetings, which Winnie Mandela acknowledged with a powerful reply. More than 100 000 people in Delhi signed a petition for Mandela's release.

After consultations between Sam Ramsamy of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee and the Indian parliamentarian, Anand Sharma, moves began to stop the English cricket tour, because members of the team, including the captain, Graham Gooch, had broken the sports boycott. Recently, the Indian government has put a ban on any member of the Tri-Cameral Parliament from entering the country; and this ban includes any known collaborators.

September and October 1988 marked the centenary of the birth of Pandit Nehru and the 119th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. The government of India invited Monomaney Naidoo (widely known as 'Ama' which means mother), together with her exiled daughter, veteran activist Shanthie, to mark the events. This invitation was in recognition of the contribution made by Ama's father-in-law, C K Thambi Naidoo, to the struggle against racial discrimination made in the early part of this century by the small Indian community in South Africa, led by Mahatma Gandhi.

This family has a proud record — the struggle against apartheid has continued over 82 years, and through four generations. The most recent to have been imprisoned is 17-year-old Kuban, during the run-up to the racist municipal elections. Ama's son, Indres, was among the first soldiers of Umkhonto We Sizwe, and was held on Robben Island for ten years.

Ama and Shanthie were received by the President of India, Mr R Venkataraman, and the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. They were taken on a three-week tour of the major cities, where they gave people a first-hand account of the brutality of the apartheid system, the position of the ANC as the

central force of the liberation struggle, and the Freedom Charter as the guiding factor in the new South Africa. They had cordial discussions with the ANC mission in New Delhi.

At the same time, in Lusaka, the ANC was engaging in an historic meeting with a selection of representative leaders of the Indian people in South Africa.



*Press conference in Japan: Comrade Jerry Matsila, ANC Chief Representative, centre.*

## **Sanctions Movement in Japan**

Japanese companies are indifferent to what is going on in South Africa; they pursue profit, and have no philosophy for humanity and human rights, claims the Japan Asia Africa Latin America Solidarity Committee (JAALA).

Late in 1987, JAALA appealed to broad democratic forces in Japan to demand sanctions against South Africa, and to send letters to all companies trading with South Africa, demanding that they cut these links. As a result, about 620 trade unions and groups sent about 32 000 letters to 50 companies. JAALA was indignant at the replies, in which the companies claimed that they had never examined their trade with South Africa, that they had kept to the guidelines suggested by the Japanese government, that the withdrawal of one company alone could not make a sanctions movement, and that to stop trading would cause difficulty for South African Blacks. JAALA resolved to expand its campaign.

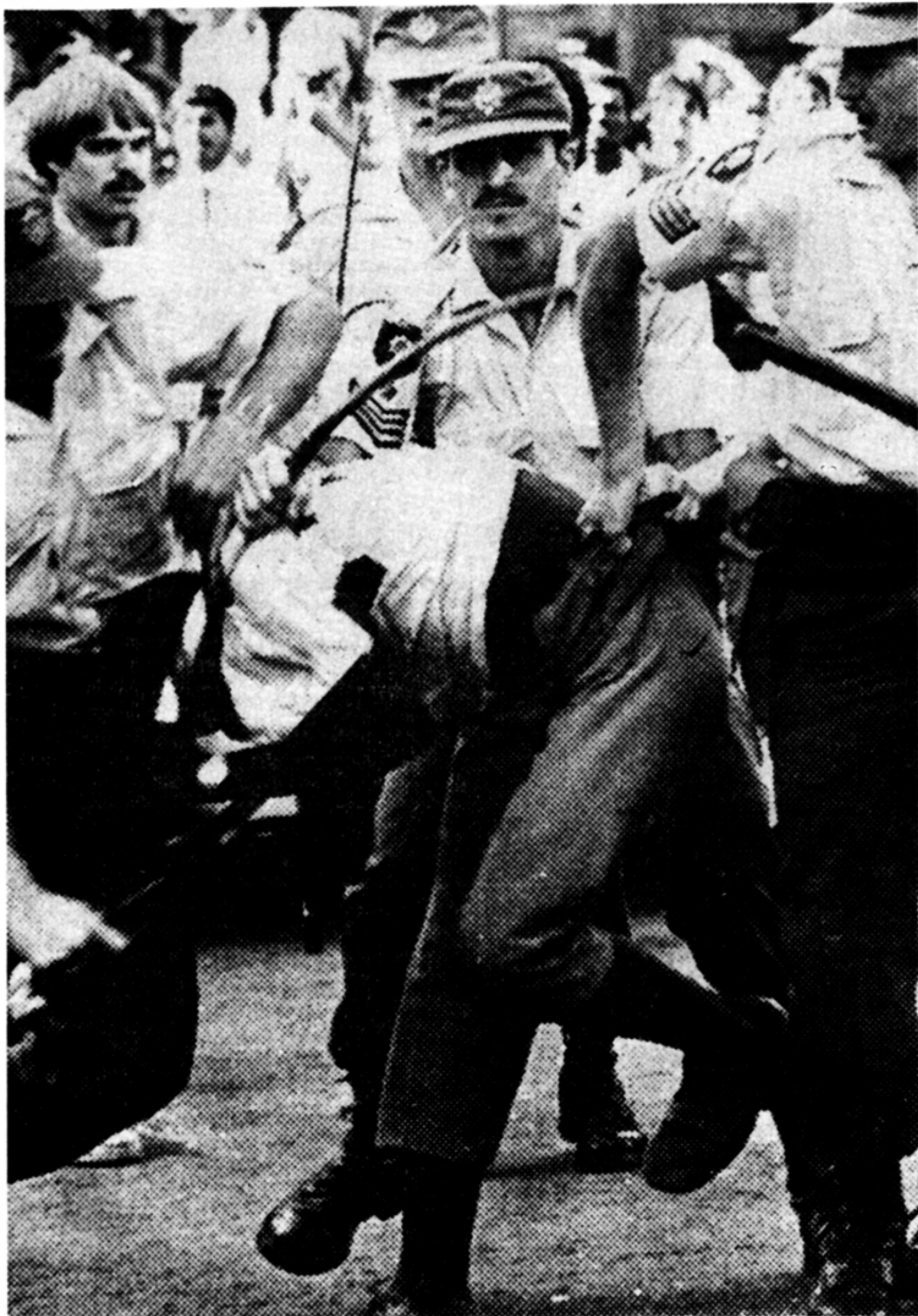
In January 1988, together with other groups, JAALA helped to form the Fund for Support and Solidarity for the South African People to Abolish Apartheid, with the aim

of opening and maintaining the ANC office in Tokyo. The fund is managed by representatives from trade unions, groups of women, students and youth, lawyers, religious people, intellectuals, sports people, cultural workers, medical workers, trade, industry, and from JAALA itself.

The opening of the fund attracted a good deal of attention, and supporters intend to collect donations until the ANC office becomes an embassy for a democratic South Africa.

The fund publishes a quarterly journal, and has also published a booklet called *Amandla!* explaining the history and reality of apartheid, the struggle of the South African people, and the relationship with Japan. The ANC office was opened on May 25th 1988, and on June 27th, in spite of heavy rain, about 1 300 people gathered at an 'Evening for Facing Apartheid.' A campaign to collect signatures of protest ended in 4.7 kilos of protest forms being sent by air to P W Botha.

Anti-apartheid activity in Japan has been stimulated by the visit of President Tambo in April 1988, and by attendance of representatives at the Arusha conference, and other conferences.



*"The structural and unrepentant violence of the state" — Kairos Document.*



# THE CONCEPT OF 'VIOLENCE' IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE STRUGGLE

By Lamola

It is the ruling class in a given epoch of history which, because of the material advantages afforded by its control over the means of production, constructs the meaning of concepts, and formulates as well as enforces a conventional morality in society.

This whole process of formulation and construction of meaning has always the deliberate aim of safeguarding the interests of the ruling class, and entrenching its position in power. In our experience and epoch, no other concept has been as successfully manipulated by the reactionary imperialist forces as that of 'violence.'

This is at present disturbingly manifest in the form of a well-orchestrated crusade against so-called 'international terrorism.' The aim of this crusade is to legitimise international squads that will work to liquidate any liberation organisation that is waging armed struggle and does not toe the line of the western capitalists.

Abundant theoretical justification of the moral rightness of the attempts of the oppressed of South Africa to seek their freedom through armed struggle has already been done, convincingly and conclusively. The point we should register and highlight is that to engage in military acts of struggle for the liberation of the oppressed from a political system as vicious as apartheid is not to engage in what can be called 'violence,' nor even 'revolutionary violence,' since wrongness and immorality is implied in the word, 'violence.'

## Word Used as Propaganda

We need to go beyond the scope of the tired debate on the ethical value of 'violence in politics,' and focus on the

crucial issue of the use of the word 'violence' in the propaganda and the diplomatic and analytical language of the liberation movement. While doing this, we should take the issue beyond the philosophical sophistry of semantics.

Our task here is an attempt to expose the subtle power of the ruling classes, both South African and imperialist, over the liberation movement. In constructing and enforcing meaning for concepts in a way that suits their interests, these classes skilfully proceed to dupe us into operating according to these meanings, leading us to end up acting only within the precincts of their status-quo-entrenching, bourgeois morality.

The word 'violence' is not only a loaded concept in the sense that it is often ambiguously used in a subjective manner by parties at opposite and rival ends of a conflict. Its mention in speech implies a value-judgment, an automatic declaration of an act as being morally reprehensible. The word 'violence' falls within the same set of meaning as words like 'pornography,' 'murder' and 'illegitimacy.' All of these are concepts in which the ethical value of the action referred to is already pre-announced in the selection of the word.

## Etymological Insight

The Latin word, *violentia*, is the mother-word of the English word 'violence,' and it is related to the Latin words *violatus*, which means 'violation,' and *violare*, which means 'to violate.' The concept of 'violence' is therefore generally rooted in that of acts of violation. 'Violence' fundamentally means an infringement, a profanation,

Continued on page 18 ►

# FREEDOM MOVEMENT TRIED FOR TREASON

The decision announced by the apartheid courts yesterday, pronouncing various leaders and activists of the UDF and other organisations guilty of treason and terrorism, confirms the role of these courts as an instrument of repression. The accused had, without exception, engaged in open political struggle representing the view of the majority of our own people, that the apartheid system is criminally unjust, and that it has to be abolished in its entirety, and replaced by non-racial democracy. It is for upholding these views that the accused have now been found guilty of treason and terrorism. We condemn this decision with all the force at our command, and call on all our people, and the international community, to engage in intense struggle to secure the immediate and unconditional release of the 'Delmas Trialists.'

— ANC Information Department, Lusaka, November 19th 1988



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◀ *Continued from page 15*

undue deprivation. All these denote activities that are ethically negative.

To do violence is to violate the common good of a people; to violate their rights, well-being and peace. Fighting to promote the common good of a people, for the manifestation of an order of justice, is something else — an act of righteous defence of what is good as well as a participation in the historical progression of universal human emancipation.

In the Christian view of the world, which is derived from Hebrew thought and which today purports to be the framework of western morality, the word 'peace,' which is usually presented as the opposite of 'violence,' is encapsulated in the Hebrew word, *shalom*.

*Shalom*, like the Sotho words, *khotso* and *kagiso*, denotes more than a mere absence of turmoil; it sets a criterion establishing a qualification of a presence of what may be declared a state of peace. *Shalom* denotes a progressive and historically realisable state of well-being. This includes good health, economic prosperity, social justice, as well as the preservation of a humanitarian consciousness that leads to a life of struggle to maintain all these.

With this understanding of peace — not as a state of quiet and absence of conflict, but as *shalom* and essentially a process of struggle to attain human emancipation and ultimate self-realisation — we are able to clarify further the concept of 'violence' by adding to it a categorical implication that what constitutes an act of violence is any manner of tampering with *shalom*. 'Violence' is a disturbance of the material and legal well-being of a people, rather than merely an infliction of physical harm.

## **Oppression is Violence**

We note, therefore, that the right and duty to self-defence, and the defence of one's well-being, is the cornerstone of *shalom*.

It is naturally unacceptable to expect any living being to stand passively by while its right to life is ferociously trampled upon. Further, from a theological point of view, when victims of an aggressive, *shalom*-violating regime rise up in defence of their

humanity, they are doing so not necessarily in their personal, or nationalistic, interests. They are essentially making a concrete proclamation that seeks to have God's will of justice, peace and righteousness done and preserved on earth. They are fighting for a manifestation and extension of *shalom*.

This is why it has repeatedly been said that it is not only a question of social responsibility for the church in South Africa to engage in the struggle for liberation, but that it is its central religious duty, an evangelical obligation to see to the overthrow of the apartheid regime. A 'peace' that is instituted and maintained by repressive legislation, despotic power and military rule must be rejected. The vision of *shalom* led first-century Christians to refuse to collaborate with the Roman authorities, by objecting to service in an army whose sole role was to spread Roman rule through violent subjugation of other peoples. They were aware that the *Pax Romana*, the Roman public order and its expansionist policies, that the army was conscripted to protect, were an affront to the *shalom* of authentic justice.

## **Imperialist Definitions Favour Pretoria**

All oppressive regimes have a construction of the meaning of violence which goes to give an impression that violence is a terrible and punishable category of political behaviour that is always and exclusively exuded by those opposing the state, and never *vice versa*. In seeking to enforce their prescribed 'peace' (which in their parlance is called 'public order' and 'law and order'), undemocratic governments exploit, oppress and repress, but, even so, popular government-speak allows for no one to call the actions of the state 'violence.' It is those resisting the tyranny and reign of terror of the regime who will be made to feel guilty for being 'violent.'

Acting on this self-legitimation, that it is never a 'violent' institution, the state, which in such a case happens to be nothing other than a vanguard of the interest of the rul-

ing class, then proceeds to accord itself the absolute right and the machinery to defend the interests of those it represents, against the 'violence' of those resisting its rule. In this defence of sectional interests, which goes by the code words, 'state security,' the state behaves as a person whose very life is threatened, proceeds to surround itself with an army, a police force, security intelligence and a battery of legislation to control and punish those who threaten its security — its continued existence.

## **Violent Defence of Violence**

To legitimise this, an impression is given — often hedged around with some spurious theological justification — that the state, irrespective of its moral standing, has some mystically ordained right to defend its life. In its ideology, the state characterises itself as a human person, with a 'human right' to life.

That is why the severity of the methods the state uses in perpetuating itself is never met with the same condemnation as that being routinely levelled against the methods used by the people's forces of resistance and self-defence. Because state authority is assumed to be legitimate, whatever method of repression the state uses is, from the beginning, seen as legitimate and warranted.

Hence, the South African regime can publicly declare its intention to assassinate the leadership of the liberation movement, and continue to assassinate anti-apartheid activists inside the country, without fearing any manner of reprisal from the international community. At the same time, the ANC is expected to beg for international diplomatic acceptance by eschewing similar activities against Pretoria.

Hence, when Pretoria throws a rope around the neck of a condemned anti-apartheid activist, it is not seen as reprehensible, and it has never faced the same expression of disgust as that incited from all over the world against the use of the 'necklace method' by township activists. Both methods are gruesome; but because the former is used by the state, criticism of it is either muted or totally absent.

It is because of this demonic obsession with the mystique of the right to life of the institutional state, that even when a government like the Pretoria regime is declared an enemy of the common good (*hostis boni communis*), and politically as well as legally illegitimate, it is still allowed to call its armed forces a 'defence force.'

What are the South African security forces defending when the only moral cause to defend in politics is the welfare of the governed? Wouldn't defence of a brutal and dehumanising system like apartheid constitute violence? — a violent defence of violence by further violence?

It is naturally unacceptable to expect any living being to stand passively by while its right to life is ferociously trampled upon. Further, from a theological point of view, when victims of an aggressive, *shalom*-violating regime rise up in defence of their humanity, they are doing so not necessarily in their personal, or nationalistic, interests. They are essentially making a concrete proclamation that seeks to have God's will of justice, peace and righteousness done and preserved on earth. They are fighting for a manifestation and extension of *shalom*.

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## Does Apartheid Have Rights?

The South African army is illegitimate because the cause for which it has been organised, is unjust, but it is accepted by the western powers as a statutory defence force, and almost all the countries running embassies in South Africa have military attaches to facilitate liaison with the SADF. At the same time, Umkhonto We Sizwe, which has been organised for the just cause of eliminating the murderous evil of apartheid, and is accepted and welcomed by a vast majority of South Africans as their army of defence against the terror of the apartheid regime, has to work in virtual secrecy, and is even called a 'terrorist organisation' in some quarters.

*Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* defines a 'terrorist' as "one who fills the public with intense fear and anxiety." Who is filling more than 30 million



South Africans, and the entire Southern African region, with intense anxiety and fear? Who has been massacring innocent, unarmed civilians repeatedly in Sharpeville and Soweto, in Uitenhage, Mamelodi, Winterveld, Matola, Maseru, Kassinga, Gaborone?

It is a matter of common sense to the oppressed masses of South Africa as to who in fact the terrorist is. This people's judgment was corroborated, when, in July 1988, the US Democratic Party convention adopted a commitment to declare South Africa a terrorist state. Indeed, as synonyms for 'terrorism,' the *Longmans Synonym Dictionary* provides: "...tyranny, despotism, coercion ..." — all the standard descriptions of the Botha-Malan junta.

The "state security, public safety and law and order," which the SADF and the police maintain by killing and maiming, is the security of a state which exists as an affront to the majority of the inhabitants of South Africa, a 'law and order' of legalised state thuggery, and a public safety of apartheid violence.

## Violence Maintains Violence

It is violence to secure a political system that is functioning on a systematic social degradation of a people simply because they happen to have a certain skin colour. It is violence to pass law after law with the sole intention of continual exploitation, dispossession and repression.

Apartheid is not only violent; it is a violence that is being maintained with violence; and the South African parliament, the legislative bureaucracy, is nothing but machinery for the production and administration of the violence that apartheid manifests; the South African regime is declared a violent state, not only as a consequence of its notorious brutalities, but because it is an institution that has been created and has since been militarily maintained against the will and interests of the indigenous people, as well as the democratic majority, of the land. Not only does South Africa signify violence; in essence and reality, South Africa is violence.

Comrade Nelson Mandela was thinking of this when, in reply to Botha's offer of release from gaol on condition that he "renounces violence," he stated:

*"I am surprised at the conditions the government wants to impose on me. I am not a violent man."*

Of course, the commander of the people's freedom fighters for a just peace (*shalom*) cannot be a "violent man." Comrade Mandela put the buck where it stops:

*"Let Botha renounce violence ... let him say he will dismantle apartheid."*

Our central theme throughout this discussion has been carried by two undivorable strands of argument. The first one, which aimed at exposing the ideological dynamics underlying the use of the word 'violence' is poignantly summarised and applied to the South African situation by the Kairos Document:

*"The problem is the way the word 'violence' is being used in the propaganda of the state. The state and the media has chosen to call 'violence' what some people do in the townships as they struggle for their liberation, i.e. throwing stones, burning cars ... and sometimes killing collaborators. But this excludes the structural and unrepentant violence of the state and especially the repressive and wicked violence of the police and army. These are not counted as violence. Even when they are acknowledged to be excessive, they are called 'misconduct' or even 'atrocities' but never 'violence.' Thus the phrase,*

*'violence in the townships' comes to mean what people are doing and not what the police are doing, or what apartheid is generally doing to people."*

Because of this tendency to immoralise the struggle, and on the basis of other related analysis, our conclusion seems, therefore, to be that, in our analytical perception, and, more vitally, in our language, we should be wary of using the word 'violence' in relation to any aspect of the activities of the liberation movement that are aimed at attaining freedom in South Africa.

## **Ethically Positive Terms**

There is a variety of other, ethically positive, terms that should be used to describe in particular the actions of Umkhonto We Sizwe and the masses, who have been left with no other form of resistance to the regime.

It is a serious self-contradiction to talk of 'revolutionary violence,' a copulation of two concepts possessing different ethical values: 'violence,' which is negative, and 'revolutionary,' which is positive.

It is like saying, 'a murderous remedy.' Just as a remedy, essentially, is always aimed at stopping death, and cannot be used for opposite ends (it will no longer be called a remedy, but poison) so our revolution, addressed at the removal of the compounded violence of apartheid, cannot be qualified with concepts descriptive of the same negative reality which it is meant to tackle. An authentic revolution can be violent to the oppressor only to the extent in which the oppressor perceives it to be violating his continued unjust authority over the subjugated masses. Instead of a 'violent revolution,' perhaps some of the contingent phrases could be, 'an armed revolution,' or 'people's defence,' or 'armed struggle' or some such descriptions.

The Kairos Document says:

*"How can acts of oppression, injustice and domination be equated with acts of resistance and self-defence? Would it be legitimate to describe both the physical force used by a rapist and the physical force used by a woman trying to resist the rapist, as violence?"*

# DISCUSSION ARTICLES

This article, and the one that follows it, represent contributions to a discussion about state power in South Africa, and how it is to be seized. We print them both as 'discussion articles,' in the hope that they will stimulate a response from our members.

## OUR VANGUARD AND THE SEIZURE OF POWER

By Sizwe Mkhwanazi

The task of a revolutionary vanguard is to lead the masses, instil them with political consciousness, and ignite the fire of revolutionary sentiment, for it is the masses who are the real makers of history.

In solving the basic question of revolution — that of state power — the vanguard must win the masses to its side. The best, the most revolutionary, vanguard is only a drop in an immense popular ocean, and is powerless if that ocean remains still. The vanguard must ensure it has a constant feel of the sentiments of the masses, and must maintain a dynamic link with them. It is inadmissible for the vanguard to follow the masses blindly, because, as a result of hardships and sufferings, they may sometimes yield to sentiments that in no way advance the revolutionary cause.

This topic is pertinent today, because seizure of power has moved into the realm of practical politics, and questions are being asked about the role of the vanguard and the masses in this process, as well as about the mechanism by which power is seized; and because of the need to understand the correlation between seizure of power and negotiations, in our conditions.

### Vanguard and Negotiations

The armed seizure of political power is the strategic objective of the vanguard of the South African liberation movement, the ANC. This objective has been outlined and reaffirmed on many occasions, and is based on in-depth analysis of the nature of our class and political enemy, the purpose of our struggle, and the character of its motive forces. The inner essence of all these factors still remains unchanged, and I am therefore convinced that our strategic objective also retains its validity.

In whatever we do, we must always have our eyes fixed on this objective, and our methods of struggle, our tactics in general, must be such as to make its realisation possible. There is no ambiguity in the concept of the seizure of power. It simply means what it so beautifully expresses — that power will be forcibly removed from one group and will reside in its adversary. Our strategic approach elaborates more on the primary means of achieving this, that is, through armed force. That is why we talk of armed seizure of political power.

We should not be apologetic about this view. We have long correctly stressed that



the legislation against all forms of peaceful democratic protest, which resulted in the banning of our movement in 1960 and continues today and is clearly shown in the clampdown of February 24th, throws into the foreground the option of armed confrontation with the regime.

Our only path to the seizure of power runs through an escalation of our political and military offensive, in which armed struggle and the building of a revolutionary army occupy a central position. There is no short cut. To imagine otherwise would be because of one of these mistakes:

■ Believing that there has been a change in the fundamental nature and results of the interconnection between class exploitation and national oppression in our country, and that the social, economic and political deprivation of the masses of the oppressed might possibly be redressed without radical changes in the *status quo*.

■ Openly resigning ourselves to a defeatist position, in the face of what appears to be the invincibility of our enemy.

The latter position seems to be Comrade Alex Mashinini's, in the August 1988 issue of *Sechaba*, summed up in this statement:

*"Since we are confronted with conditions under which absolute victory is impossible, conditions under which both sides must necessarily make compromises on certain positions, we can conclude that the outcome of any negotiations that can be successfully conducted must end up in partial victories for warring parties."*

His quick emphasis that follows, on the:

*"... need to appraise the concept of partial victory"*

does nothing — when one follows the argument in his article — to allay one's fears about his starting point.

## **Victory is Possible**

Of course, this should not be seen as dismissing the possibility of a negotiated settlement. To do that would be outright infantile politicking. The crux of the matter is that we should start from the premise that

our enemy is not invincible; that there rests in the hands of the oppressed and democratic forces of our country, with the assistance of progressive mankind, the potential to seize power from the racist ruling clique; and that therefore our primary task is to marshal our material, physical and intellectual resources towards this objective — and certainly not primarily towards the attainment of partial victories.

Perhaps we have begun to see the present state of contest as something permanent, and the present alignment of forces, especially the forces of the enemy and in particular its repressive machinery, as immutable, as the culmination of the confrontation between us and the enemy.

This is wrong. We still have a lot of material, tactical, theoretical and organisational equipment not properly utilised and rusting in our armoury. We have hardly made effective use of the growing negative attitude towards the SADF. Also, we still have a number of decisions which have not been translated into practice, and which are all necessary to give us the break so necessary for our forward advance to seizure of power.

These problems are largely subjective. If they are attended to, then our advance will be a reality in front of us all.

Should negotiations take place, they will be because the regime has realised how desperate its position is, aimed at rescuing something from its sinking ship, while the national liberatory forces are clearly on top and on their way to seizing political power. This is, naturally, a favourable negotiating platform for us, and this is the situation any future negotiations should find us in.

We are not engaging in armed struggle as a pressure tactic for the enemy to come to the negotiating table; we are fighting to seize power. We have to admit openly that negotiations on the basis of Comrade Alex' argument would represent something like an abortion of our revolution. One wonders then, if we were to exhaust ourselves preparing our people for such an abortion, whether we would be worthy of the vanguard role assigned to us by such a heroic and fighting people, a people at present paying dearly for challenging the myth of invincibility of the enemy, and sacrificing

in order to seize power.

## **The Vanguard and the Front**

A prerequisite for the seizure of power is the need for the vanguard forces to form a front of all democratic forces. That will increase the number of people participating in the struggle, while at the same time narrowing the support base of the enemy. In our case it aims at isolating the most racist in the White South African ruling establishment. But we should remember that, while the masses who join the revolutionary forces augment their revolutionary activity, they bring with them the prejudices deriving from their class positions and interests, as well as a low level of organisation and class or political consciousness.

The danger always exists that at critical moments, if the vanguard is not strong, it may be overwhelmed by the masses, who may be susceptible to views that are counter-productive in the longer term. It would be more important for us to ensure that such a front does not fall into outright reformism and a betrayal of those who occupy the lowest rung in the ladder of national oppression and class exploitation — the Black working class, and the landless masses in the South African countryside.

The vanguard must infuse the front with militancy, and shatter the myth that our enemy is invincible — a primary factor that can result in the masses being susceptible to reformist ideas. From their own experience, the masses must see the vanguard as the custodian of their interests. This will help the vanguard exert ideological and political influence on the front.

Looking at the forces lined up for the front in our country, one anticipates a serious battle of ideas for influence. Of course, this is inherent in any front, for a front is essentially a unity of opposites.

For us in the ANC to emerge as leaders in the front, in terms of influence, we must redouble our blows against the enemy. We must build a strong political presence in the country, and work out feasible yet effective campaigns that will weaken the enemy, make the people aware of their own strength, and inspire them to more and

higher battles. Needless to say, we must escalate our armed offensive — bleed the enemy. Key to this is the building of a strong political-military leadership in the country, and a revolutionary army.

## **Building a Revolutionary Army**

Central to the idea of seizure of power in our country is the need to build a revolutionary army. This would form that needed instrument for the execution of revolutionary armed violence as part of a general popular offensive. Events in the past few years have shown that our steady advance has been punctuated by striking and instructive partial insurrectionary phases.

These phases have demonstrated boundless heroism by our people. They have shown a measure of commitment to freedom unprecedented in our country. They have completely vindicated our often-repeated stress on the key weapon — unity — which throws our enemy into panic, and often exposes his concealed vulnerability. They have shown that the 'White monolith' remains so only in the atmosphere of quiescence, and cracks irreparably in the face of our popular offensive.

Yet these phases have exposed some of our weaknesses:

■ The enemy was able to reverse our gains, albeit with limitations. This exposed our inability to defend and consolidate. A striking example of this was the uprooting of organs of people's power.

■ At critical stages, especially when the leadership of the mass democratic movement is removed, we seem to falter, to be indecisive, and differences within the democratic mass weaken our striking power — giving the enemy much-needed space to launch a counter-attack.

■ We have seriously lacked the hammer of our people in arms, led by a competent, well-organised and well-rooted advance detachment.

To defend, consolidate and give political guidance in conditions of extreme repression, like ours, is unimaginable without a strong political underground. Also, to augment this with purposeful, consciously

planned and executed revolutionary violence; to transform and channel most of the spontaneous eruptions into effective, well co-ordinated blows against the racist establishment — these demand the building of a revolutionary army.

## **Political Base**

Perhaps at this stage we should recall the golden rule of revolutionary warfare — that the revolutionary army has to be built on the basis of the political army. That said, it becomes clear that the call of the day is to build a strong political underground:

- that will ensure continuity and purposefulness in our mass political campaigns;
- that will have its finger on the changing pulse of popular mood;
- that will know, on the basis of on-the-spot assessment, how to use each victory as a step to higher victories;
- that will know how to use every possible avenue, legal, semi-legal or illegal, to advance our cause, and through this improve the quality of our mass political offensive.

As the vanguard of our struggle, the ANC has the task of sending some of its best cadres to merge with and reinforce the proliferating internal underground structures, in order to build a solid underground and underground leadership. This needs a lot of planning and careful selection of cadres. I believe the movement has a lot of such cadres, with the necessary conviction, energy, political clarity and experience.

A strong underground in dynamic contact with the mass political movement would help in choosing, earmarking, and generally improving the quality of, the recruits into our revolutionary army. There needs to be close co-operation between the political underground and the units of our organised advanced detachment, whose task it is to build, consolidate and form the core of the revolutionary army, under the guidance of the political-military leadership. The quality of this detachment will thus be greatly enhanced, reducing chances of enemy infiltration, for it will con-

sist mainly of cadres whose loyalty to our revolutionary ideals has been tested, cadres who are familiar with the political guidelines of our democratic struggle.

## **Patriotism and Determination**

We should remember that armed struggle is the most violent form of class or national struggle, and that it entails bloody sacrifice. Therefore, those chosen for the revolutionary army must be filled with a high spirit of self-denial, unshakeable determination and ardent patriotism. If we can ensure good selection of cadres into the revolutionary army, particularly the organised advance detachment, we could then minimise the casualties and drawbacks we suffer in terms of our trained Umkhonto combatants and our internal infrastructure.

The message is that our political underground and political army must be the source of our revolutionary army.

This will certainly bring about a dramatic improvement in our armed offensive, and create the conditions necessary for planned co-ordination between armed actions and mass campaigns.

Here we should recall that our strategic approach to armed struggle is through the waging of a people's war, and correctly so. The art of people's war centres round the merging of the efforts of the political army of the masses with the revolutionary army. To be successful, people's war must have a co-ordinated pooling of political and military efforts, throughout the country. Clearly, until we build a strong political underground, any talk of advance to seizure of power will remain an illusion.

On the other hand, close co-ordination between the political and military offensive, through the formation of effective political-military co-ordinating structures from top to bottom and throughout the country, will ensure, as a starting point, the building of organs for the seizure of power.

Seizure of power will then be a product of protracted but increasingly merging mass political and armed struggles, and a progressively narrowing enemy base, culminating in an insurrection. This will certainly be a difficult course, but certainly worth the sacrifice.

# THE PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE IS OUR GUIDE

By Theresa

I would like to respond to the 'discussion article' by Ronnie Kasrils, entitled, *The Revolutionary Army*, in the September 1988 issue of *Sechaba*.

What struck me in particular is that, though he makes general statements about the need to merge the military struggle with the political struggle, and the need to root the armed struggle amongst the people, Kasrils devotes very little attention to the concrete forms the mass political struggle is taking in South Africa today. I believe this is a crucial error if we are concerned to work out correct strategies and tactics for the armed, as well as for the political, struggle.

The people's struggle, in the form in which it has emerged in the 1980s, tends to combine political activity, especially of a democratic nature, with forms of people's violence — typical of a people's movement in revolutionary times. Moreover, the people's movement is rich with creative initiatives that point the way for the national liberation movement.

My immediate response to the article was: Why all this over-generalisation, why all this rather unhappy self-questioning, when a revolutionary people's struggle actually exists, and is pointing the way forward? Or do we not take the people's struggle — in a concrete sense — seriously enough? Have we become armchair revolutionaries who talk a lot about the people in an abstract sense, but when those ordinary people are actually in the midst of struggle, they suddenly seem to have not

all that much to do with our theory?

## People's Power

Let us have a closer look at the people's struggle as it has developed in the 1980s. In the period 1983-85, it began to bring forth definite organisational forms — the United Democratic Front, with its many constituent organisations, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. Crucial about these organisations was that the people, in the very midst of a struggle which turned on questions of their daily lives (rents, for example), began to create organs of embryonic state power. In other words, the people began to conquer state power.

The aim of these popular organs is to take over the administration of the people's daily lives. In this sense, they represent organs of people's self-determination, and are deeply democratic. At the same time, their task as revolutionary organs that have emerged in a revolutionary situation is to carry the political struggle forward. In the situation of deep political crisis in our country, they are organs for continuing and spreading the people's insurrection. Above all, they incorporate a merging of the political and armed tasks of the revolution.

Kasrils seems to have missed this point. Instead, he sees the merging of the political and armed tasks as taking place in the midst of the national liberation movement, and above all through Umkhonto We Sizwe. In the circumstances, this is somewhat similar to contemplating one's

own navel. Kasrils is of the opinion that the "revolutionary army," the nucleus of which is Umkhonto We Sizwe, is the main organ for "building up the revolutionary forces and seizing power." For him (p. 9), "the creation of a revolutionary army is our most crucial task."

## **Geared to the People's Struggle**

His position undoubtedly has a militarist tendency, especially in the context of the emergence of a people's movement which has already proved its potential in creating organs that represent the highest forms of the people's movement — namely, people's organs of revolutionary power. Of course it is necessary for the national liberation movement, including Umkhonto We Sizwe, to create its own structures, which, among other things, reflect the interlinkage of political and military tasks; but these structures must be geared to the people's struggle; must arise in the course of efforts to link up with the people's struggle, to guide it, protect it and promote it. The people's struggle as it actually exists, of course.

The building of Umkhonto We Sizwe must not become an end in itself, or be seen as the centre of the armed — and political — struggle. At this stage in the development of our liberation movement, it is undoubtedly the people's struggle that constitutes the political — and armed — centre of the struggle. Here the political and military tasks of the national liberation movement have their focal point at this time.

Kasrils insists that the national liberation movement should clarify its strategy, in particular as to how power is to be seized. The people's struggle itself points to the strategic thrust of the struggle in our country, and confirms the national-democratic nature of our revolution.

## **The Nature of the Struggle**

The character of the people's struggle is a more or less spontaneous product of objective conditions, and it exposes the nature

of the struggle: its content, its general direction and its chief tasks. That does not mean that the people's movement can be a vanguard political movement; that should be clear from its spontaneous nature. It is the national liberation movement that must sum up, make more logical and systematic, the people's experience.

What, then, are the people telling us about the objectively determined nature of our struggle? In the first half of the '80s, the people began creating organs to handle questions of their daily lives; organs of self-determination, organs of democracy, and organs for the continuation of the revolutionary struggle. They have emerged where the people live and work. They have emerged in areas of Black settlement, in the urban townships, the villages and potentially in the Bantustan framework.

There have been a number of signs that organs of 'workers' control' have a most important potential in the workplace. They have the character of people's organs of revolutionary power, in the worker context.

It is also of great significance that the people have begun to attempt to take their lives into their own hands in such crucial social areas as education, culture and sport, and to exercise their rights to a religious life. This people's democracy is an integral part of the national liberation struggle itself; the self-realisation of the Black people of South Africa and the African people in the first place, clearly involves a deeply anti-colonial process, a process of national liberation, for this exercise of democracy is tied to organs that constitute local organs of embryonic state power. As we often say, the national liberation struggle in our country is not merely a struggle for citizen rights within the existing state framework, but a struggle for state power.

Even if the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC, is forced, in what will represent a first phase of national liberation, to enter into certain compromises with the ruling class, and even with the apartheid regime, in regard to questions concerning the central state and even the regions, the people's organs of democratic power can ensure the continuation of the process of democratic transformation — and in essentially peaceful forms.

## **MK Must Protect**

In order to be able to perform this role, they must be promoted, strengthened and protected, not only in the present, but in the transition period. The key promoter and protector of the democratic process is the national liberation movement, of which Umkhonto We Sizwe is clearly a most important part.

The people's movement has served to prove, in a concrete manner, the national-democratic, national-liberatory content of our revolution. In their struggle for self-determination, the people demand and actively struggle (utilising political and violent methods) for the removal of the troops and the paramilitary police from Black residential areas and from workplaces. The thrust of the struggle has proved that the people demand genuine self-determination, and not the creation of Black collaborationist political organs that merely act as the Black arm of the apartheid system.

The struggle of the people thus makes clear that they are struggling for genuine self-determination against colonialist and neo-colonialist domination and exploitation. In the course of this struggle, especially where it has been possible to create no-go areas, they have spontaneously set up their own local organs of people's power, including people's courts and a people's militia. How can we afford to ignore this objectively determined response of the people when we work out our strategy and tactics, even when we draw up political platforms? What are the people telling us?

At any rate, it is important to note that the thrust of the people's struggle confirms the national-democratic character of our revolution, in South Africa's special conditions.

## **Special Conditions**

What are South Africa's special conditions? Here we refer in particular to the difference between our conditions and those in other countries of Africa and Asia in which national-democratic revolutions have occurred, or are occurring, or are on the agenda. In South Africa, there exists colonialism of a special type, where imperial-

ist relations have been superimposed on existing colonial relations without dismantling them.

This brings up several fundamental differences when we compare our situation with revolutionary processes in at least most of the countries of Africa and Asia.

■ One concerns the question of the conquest of state power by the national liberation movement. One cannot avoid the conclusion that the attempt to overthrow an imperialist state, which is necessarily closely linked to world imperialism, constitutes quite another task from that of driving out occupation troops of an imperialist metropole situated in another area of the globe, or even toppling a neo-colonialist regime on the soil of one's own country.

■ The other aspect, with which I am here more concerned, is that the socio-economic developments which took place in South Africa in the 60s and early 70s, and which were integrally bound up with the emergence of an imperialist state on South African soil, have, in the context of colonialist relations, laid the basis for a socio-economic crisis in our country, a crisis of a qualitatively different type from the crisis elements existing in the normal run of colonial and former colonial countries. The South African crisis is situated in a national framework; it is a crisis endangering the whole process of capitalist economic reproduction in our country. The socio-economic crisis has laid the basis for a deep political crisis with definite elements of a classical revolutionary situation.

## **The People: A Creative Force**

The special conditions in South Africa have laid the objective groundwork for the appearance of the people on the South African stage as an independent, historically creative force, which — on the basis of new revolutionary forms of democracy — will play a crucial role in realising the national-democratic revolution. The emergence of the people's democratic movement is especially crucial where the national liberation movement, in the context

of imperialist forms of repression, has been severely weakened, driven into prison and exile, and its underground apparatus, as Kasrils confirms, substantially limited.

What does this special situation demand of the national liberation movement? In my opinion, it should be geared to creating the conditions for the emergence, consolidation and spread of the organs of popular power. The people must be encouraged, by all means, political and armed, to feel themselves in a position to take over the running of all important aspects of their lives. This means that the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC and in close co-operation with Umkhonto We Sizwe and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, must lay the political and armed basis for consolidation of 'people's control.' It will necessarily involve many different types of initiative.

■ Umkhonto We Sizwe might support the people's self-defence, through such activities as arming and training, and armed actions which may develop into genuine military actions, possibly including confrontations with units of the South African Defence Force. What is meant here is not simply the protection of life and limb, but the political task of defending the people's mass organisations and the organs of popular democratic power; in general, the right of the people to self-determination. When the people set up defence units, it serves, of course, to strengthen the democratic organs as organs of local state power. Here again we see the close interplay between the political and armed tasks of the revolution; indeed, the merging of the two.

■ The UDF and COSATU might be encouraged to make full use of their deeply democratic potential by avoiding any tendency to bureaucratisation of their structures, by giving guidance, by generalising the people's experience and giving it back in readily accessible form, in regard to the general direction in which they should develop activities in order to strengthen the front of people's democracy.

■ If every effort is made to widen democracy in our country, conditions will be created that give room to the development of the organs of people's power. The harsh repression of the state of emergen-

cy has led to the break-up of many of these organs, or their forced inactivity. More room for manoeuvre will help the people's committees to sprout once more.

Action, not only 'from below' but also 'from above,' is important for the people's struggle. 'Talks' conducted by the ANC, which will serve to widen democratic possibilities, are, in this respect, as 'revolutionary' as defending the people's organs with arms in hand. We demand the lifting of the state of emergency, withdrawal of the troops and paramilitary police from the townships and workplaces, non-interference in the 'homelands' and so on. The realisation of even such minimum demands will serve the people's movement and create more favourable conditions for the liberation movement itself.

## **A Foothold for Armed Struggle**

No doubt my approach to the armed struggle will be regarded by some people as too tame, too 'unrevolutionary,' but I suggest that if we base our armed struggle on the people's struggle as it actually exists, and in general on the realities of our situation, the armed struggle will really begin to get a foothold on the soil of our country. There will be a snowball effect; one form of struggle will lead to another, new forms will develop logically out of already existing ones, and so on. The political and armed struggles will interlink in many varied and new ways, strengthening each other. This is the dialectic of real historical processes. If we do not link up in the first place with the processes that are objectively determined, we will inevitably remain on the sidelines, frustrated, wondering why our influence is so limited.

I suggest that Ronnie Kasrils asks himself whether the "problems" which, he claims, have emerged in relation to the strategy of seizure of power (from above, that is, through a revolutionary army which will seek to overthrow the South African state essentially by military means) have less to do with subjective weaknesses than with the objective conditions in our country I have already referred to. I doubt whether the problems which have existed — over

the past 25 years! — reflect simply subjective difficulties at the level of the national liberation movement. Let's stop bumping our heads against the realities, and take advantage of the emergence of the people's movement!

## **Centred on the People**

My stress on the need to centre the armed struggle on the people's movement does not mean we should ignore other forms, including armed propaganda and sabotage of key installations of the regime. But these must not take place in a vacuum — some of the latter-day actions have begun to appear almost self-defeating, and have resulted, or so it seems, in a relatively high casualty rate. The question of land mines, too, which Kasrils raises, must, it seems to me, be more organically linked with the development of the people's movement.

In all this, I am not denying that attention must be devoted, as a task in itself, to strengthening Umkhonto We Sizwe as the embryonic army of the national liberation movement, as long as we do not conceive of its growth outside the framework of objective realities. The growth and consolidation of Umkhonto will take place, as I have indicated, largely in connection with the defence of the people's movement, and in principle this does not exclude direct military activities — this should be quite clear when we think of the bantustans for instance. Of course the liberation movement cannot ignore the need to strengthen Umkhonto, including in the immediate military sense. Apart from everything else, the national liberation movement must have at its disposal military personnel of a relatively high calibre, who, with their skills, can make a contribution to the defence of a new South Africa. But if we connect such tasks with a conception of a full-scale 'revolutionary war,' we will not even begin to get off the ground.

## **Neutralising Enemy Forces**

Important, too, as Kasrils notes, is the winning over of forces from the Black com-

munity, involved in various military sectors of the apartheid regime, and this will take place in the course of both political and armed struggle. The struggle to win over and neutralise sections of the SADF requires, as Kasrils notes, special measures.

However, I am not in agreement with Kasrils' general approach, in which he envisages the armed struggle as centred on military confrontation with the SADF and the SAP; I believe it should be centred on the political task of defence of the people's movement.

The emergence of the people's movement opens up a path for compromise in South Africa, a compromise which I believe can only take place on the basis of a less centralised conception of political structures and economic policies than the liberation movement has espoused in the past. Indeed, less centralised conceptions would directly serve the interests of the development of the people's movement, laying a favourable basis for its development 'from below.' Moreover, the profile of South Africa's socio-economic relations — qualitatively new as compared with those of the 1950s and early 1960s — suggests, too, possibilities for less centralised conceptions in the field of social and economic policy.

The thing is to see South Africa as it is and to go from there. That is the best way we can utilise the present crisis in our interests.

A decentralised approach would also, in my opinion, reflect more adequately the complex nature of the national question in South Africa. Such a conception, propagated by the national liberation movement headed by the ANC, would serve to isolate the most reactionary sections among the White population, as well as the most corrupt elements in the Black communities.

A compromise solution along these lines would represent a kind of transitional phase in the framework of the national liberation struggle. It would lay a favourable basis for further progress along peaceful lines. The perspective I have outlined emphasises the significance of promoting and defending the people's movement, without which a genuine and principled compromise is not possible.



# OBITUARY

# JOHNSTONE

# MFANAFUTHI MAKATINI

## 1932 — 1988

With deep sorrow and a profound sense of loss, the African National Congress announces the death of Comrade Johnstone Mfanafuthi Makatini. Comrade Makatini, popularly known as 'Johnny,' was director of the ANC's Department of International Affairs and a long-standing member of our National Executive Committee. He passed away on December 3rd 1988, after a short illness. He had been admitted to the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia, the previous Tuesday, with complications arising from a diabetic condition he had been suffering from during the past year.

Born in Durban on February 8th 1932, Johnny was a bright and gifted child. A talented debater at school, he was articulate, with an aptitude for languages — qualities he developed from his mother, Mama Jali, a well-known radio personality.

Johnny attended high school at Adams College, Natal, where he was one of the soccer stars. After matriculating, he went on to train as a teacher. He taught at Mzinyathi in the Inanda area, and was soon active in organised opposition to the imposition of Bantu Education in African schools. Rather than serve under this hated system, he resigned from the teaching profession and registered as a part-time law student at Natal University.

He devoted the rest of his time to organising the people as an activist of the ANC, becoming a key youth and student organiser around Durban and in the rural areas of Natal. He was actively involved in all the ANC campaigns of the period and was arrested on numerous occasions. Johnny was one of the principal organisers of both the historic Pietermaritzburg Conference of March 1961, which was addressed by

Nelson Mandela, and the highly successful anti-fascist Republic Strike of May 1961.

In 1962, Johnny was among the first group of volunteers from Natal to be sent out of the country for military training. In Johannesburg they were joined by volunteers from other parts of the country and Johnny, assisted by Joseph Jack, was put in charge of the combined group. Nelson Mandela, the then 'Black Pimpemel,' gave the group a staggering shock when, wearing a holster with a pistol and looking like an accomplished soldier, he suddenly walked into a room in Dar es Salaam, interrupting a song about him which the group were singing, believing him to be in South Africa. Johnny often referred to that incident, claiming that he had nearly fainted.

Johnny led part of the group to Morocco, with instructions that when the training was completed he should remain in Morocco to receive new groups of trainees, which meant he was our representative in that country. This was the beginning of a record of diplomatic work in the service of the people of South Africa that today stands unsurpassed.

Trudging the streets of Rabat on an empty stomach and thrown out by one landlord after another for unpaid rent, Johnny nonetheless quickly lapped up the French language and within a year he spoke it with surprising fluency. This proved invaluable, and fed into his inexhaustible zeal for discussing apartheid and the struggle with every one he met, for 24 hours if necessary. He now had access to both the French and English speaking worlds, and he exploited these possibilities to the fullest.

In Morocco, he worked with, and struck

up close friendships with, leaders of liberation movements from the then Portuguese colonies, among them Marcelino Dos Santos of Mozambique, Dr Agostinho Neto of Angola and Amilcar Cabral of Guinea Bissau.

In 1963, Algeria became independent. An ANC mission was promptly opened in Algeria headed by Robert Resha, a member of the National Executive of the ANC. Johnny, his vision of the struggle broadened and deepened by fraternal association with freedom fighters from other African countries, was transferred to join Robbie Resha in Algeria. The two made a dynamic partnership. Algeria, which hosted many liberation movements, mainly from Africa, and including the Palestine Liberation Organisation, was a beehive of political activity involving solidarity support for the liberation struggle. Robbie and Johnny proved more than equal to the challenge. The status of the ANC in Algeria rocketed.

Apart from his close friendship with freedom fighters whose countries later became independent, Johnny was an active and leading member of the Pan-African Youth Movement most of whose members grew to hold important positions in government.

In 1966, Johnny succeeded Robert Resha as Chief Representative in Algeria, and soon extended the activities of his mission to cover France, where he became a well-known personality in the circles of the solidarity movement. By this time he was beginning to emerge as one of the ANC's most accomplished diplomats. From his Algerian base he 'invaded' Western Europe, often 'shooting down' meetings the ANC considered detrimental to our cause.

In 1974, Johnny became a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC. He was already a well-known figure in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and in United Nations circles where he earned a well-deserved reputation as an articulate champion of the cause of our people. It was these qualities that contributed to his appointment as head of the ANC mission to the United Nations in 1977 and later, in 1983, as head of our Department of International Affairs.

Johnny's unique flair for diplomatic work flowered during his years at the United Nations. There was no UN diplomat who did not know Johnny Makatini, and few escaped his persuasive tongue. The point was even reached when some accused the ANC of dominating the United Nations.

While establishing strong relationships with government representatives, organisations and people from all corners of the world, and particularly in Africa, Johnny paid special attention to the solidarity movement in the United States. He won millions of friends and supporters for our struggle, not least among them the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

After the 1985 National Consultative Conference of the ANC, Johnny transferred to Lusaka to give personal attention to his departmental responsibilities.

Johnny Makatini was an indefatigable organiser and campaigner on behalf of the African National Congress. He worked tirelessly and travelled ceaselessly on our work throughout Africa and to many parts of the world in pursuit of a single goal — the liberation of our people. This took its toll on his health, but, despite the appeals and remonstrances of his colleagues, he stubbornly persisted with a rigorous schedule of appointments and meetings. The very weekend before he went into hospital, he had returned from strenuous missions to Nigeria, Mali and Egypt, which he had continued with even after he began to feel unwell.

With the departure of Comrade Johnny Makatini, the African National Congress and the oppressed people of South Africa have lost a most dedicated and talented fighter and leader who gave his whole life in the service of his people and country. His passing leaves a gap in our ranks which will be difficult to fill. His shining qualities will continue to inspire his colleagues and the younger generation with the added determination to complete his life's work.

Comrade Johnstone Mfanafuthi Makatini is survived by his wife, Valerie, and a five-year-old daughter, Nandi, as well as by his mother, three brothers, and a sister. To his entire family the NEC of the ANC expresses its condolences.

**Hamba Kahle!**

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