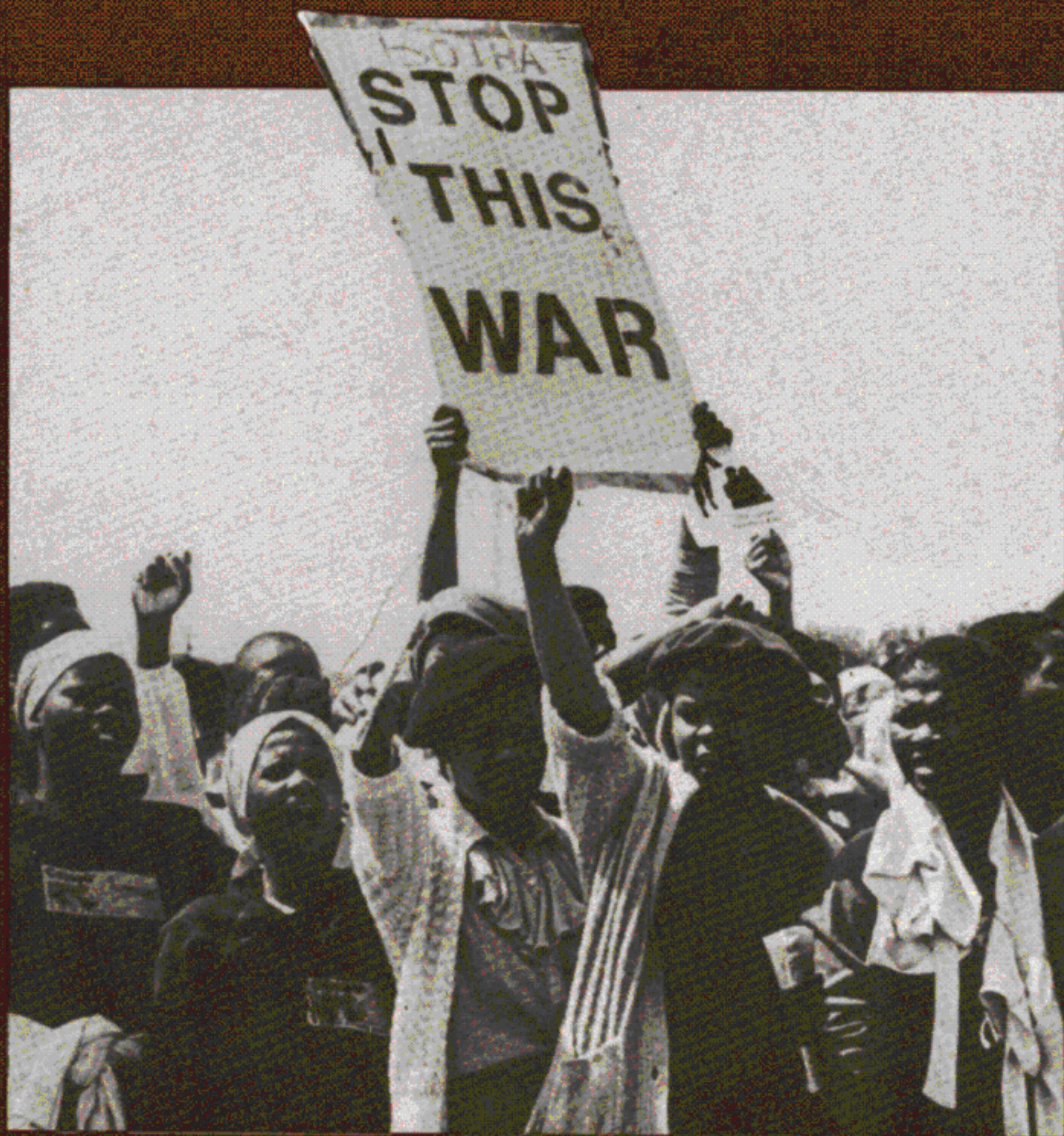


**MAY 1987**



# **SECHABA**

**official organ of the african  
national congress south africa**



**RESISTING THE EMERGENCY**



# SECHABA

**MAY 1987**

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# EDITORIAL

## THE CRISIS DEEPENS

The latest police restrictions which prohibit protests against detention without trial are another sign that the illegitimate Botha regime is not capable of ruling that country. It is ruining the country. This decree derives from the state of emergency declared by P W Botha on June 12th 1986 and "tightened" on September 3rd 1986 by the Commissioner of Police and further expanded on December 11th 1986.

The new regulations ban display of car stickers or slogans on T-shirts, make it illegal to make any oral or written statement or attend any protest gathering. The media are forbidden to publish any reports announcing such meetings, including church meetings. This angered Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

This is happening when thousands of our people are detained — according to Adriaan Vlok, Minister for Law and Order — 25 000 people were detained under the internal security laws but the Detainees' Parents' Support Committee (DPSC) says more than 30 000 people have been detained since the state of emergency was re-imposed on June 12th. Of these 21 are in the death cells in Pretoria. As the struggle intensifies the numbers of those sentenced to death increases. This must stop!

All this is happening when four mining accidents in a week claimed the lives of workers down the pits. This is at time when 13 000 Black railwaymen have been on strike; when trains have been set on fire; when foreign diplomats were called in for 'lectures' by the Department of Foreign

Affairs for the second time in less than a week.

It is not only foreign diplomats who are threatened but also the Front Line States. All this is happening just before the all-White elections.

The aim of these restrictions is simple: to frustrate the campaigns for the release of all political prisoners and to prepare the climate for "fair elections."

The struggle for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners is a democratic demand which tackles the roots of our oppression. It is connected with the struggle against capital punishment. The release of political prisoners is unthinkable without the right to freedom of speech and this logically and inevitably leads us to call for the unbanning of the ANC and the abolition of apartheid.

When P W Botha says: "I am not prepared to sacrifice my rights so that the other man can dominate me with his greater numbers" he is talking the language of White supremacy. He is even against a system of the Westminster type. He is certainly moving against the interests of the majority of mankind and certainly against the interests of our people

It is this reality, this naked truth which steels us to continue the struggle whatever the cost may be. It is this intransigence of the White rulers of our country which makes us determined to intensify the armed struggle. It is this stubbornness of the enemy which forces us to continue saying:

**A Luta Continua! Vittoria e certa!**



# DUAL POWER AND THE CREATION OF PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES

*By Alex Mashinini*

The year 1987, which marks the 75th anniversary of the African National Congress, has already begun. In its long history, particularly in that of the armed struggle of the past 25 years, the organisation has emerged as indisputable leader in the struggle for a unitary, non-racial, free and democratic South Africa. Today, both friend and foe are agreed that the ANC has become central to the resolution of the conflict at present tormenting South Africa.

These 75th Anniversary celebrations will fall within a trying and most difficult period in the movement's history, with qualitatively new and changed conditions of struggle, both in its internal as well as in its external aspects.

Our concern in this article will be confined to the internal aspects of these new and changed conditions of struggle.

## **Specific Elements in the Movement**

The South African revolution has reached a crucial point of its history, a point in which its general movement is increasingly resolving itself as clear and specific elements, each of which needs special attention. One of these is the mushrooming — in both urban and rural areas of the country — of elementary organs of people's power, generally known and accepted as People's Committees.

It has become increasingly clear now, even to the most 'unconcerned' analysts occupied with South African politics, that one of the unavoidable and fundamental premises from which a balanced assessment of that country's political picture can be gained is that there exist in South Africa today two diametrically opposed powers — the power of the apartheid state on the one hand, and (still in its elementary and formative stage) that of the democratic majority, a **people's state in the making**, on the other.

On this question, and on it alone, there appears to be a general but unpronounced consensus

across the political divide. But where controversy sharply arises is on the value relation of this new phenomenon. Some see it as just facilitating an inevitable stalemate, in which the transition from violence on both sides to a peaceful settlement of the conflict would remain the only available avenue to all sides to put an end to the strife devastating that country, lest that society and its warring parties go down in a bitter war of mutual destruction.

This awful scenario is founded on the much-trumpeted theory that both parties lack the means to finish off the other side. According to this theory, the apartheid state has lost the political battle and can prolong and maintain its existence only through force of arms, and the democratic movement, on the other hand, has won the political battle but lacks — and this is unlikely to change — the necessary military might to end this equilibrium and win the war.

At the bottom of this mode of thinking lies the notion of 'peaceful settlement' of the South African conflict, and for various reasons it has gained considerable credence, even from certain government circles in the West. Curious though this may at first seem to us, there are very few reasons to treat this mode of thinking with contempt, since history teaches us how closely connected war is with chance, and how important it is, therefore, to treat it as an art. The calculation of probabilities is therefore essential in the planning of war. We need to be very cautious in the handling of theoretical issues connected with strategy and tactics, since these always involve an elastic number of unknown quantities.

An attempt is made in this article to look a little deeper into the issue of dual power and People's Committees in South Africa. It is significant because a new era has dawned for the South African revolution: the old and decadent apartheid political order is disintegrating and the new and democratic one is emerging.

So far, much has been written on the question



in the journals of the liberation movement, and, partly because the phenomenon is a new one, a lot of controversy has also arisen. The issue of dual power and the creation of People's Committees cries aloud for greater clarity, for enlightenment, guidance and leadership in the whole movement for South African liberation.

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### **Strategic Importance of the Issue**

One of the essential aspects which has been overlooked in the discussion of this issue is that we are not concerned here with tactical and transient problems which, at a certain point in the development of the revolution, will give way to others of a new and higher type. On the contrary, the issue of dual power and the creation of People's Committees should, and must, be seen as belonging only to the realm of strategy. **Their existence signifies that, for the first time after many decades of struggle, the organised material force necessary for the destruction of the apartheid system has become a reality in South Africa.** This is the gist of the matter, and the struggle for the creation, development and consolidation of these organs of popular power is inseparably linked with the success of the revolution.

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### **Mass Participation in the Struggle**

The other point we need to look into is that this new development calls for the liberation movement to make adjustments in its thinking about positions which were previously treated as belonging to the field of 'pure' theory. We are referring to the theory of the South African revolution as **national democratic**, in the objectives which it intends to achieve and also in the driving forces whose duty it is to guarantee the achievement of these objectives. On the basis of objectively existing social, economic and political conditions in South Africa, this theory correctly envisaged mass participation in the struggle to overthrow White minority rule, hence its democratic character. Now, mass participation in the struggle to overthrow White minority rule is something real and objectively existing!

This may sound tautological and simplistic. It is precisely in this simplicity that a host of problems is hidden. Given the fact of mass participation in the struggle, or (which is one and the same thing) the existence of People's Committees, how

do we approach the question of the leadership of these committees? Since they are a **microcosm of a united front**, what should be the content of the ideological struggle, not only to secure the coherence of the committees but also to guarantee the correct political line of the national democratic revolution?

These are no longer questions to satisfy a certain academic curiosity, but are real and practical questions confronting our revolution. The history of revolutions fought elsewhere in the past, and particularly that of the three Russian revolutions of the 20th century, teaches that the mere existence of elementary organs of popular power should not be confused with the readiness of the masses to wage the most resolute struggle for the success of the people's revolution. This can be achieved only through relentless effort to maintain the coherence of these organs as well as to uphold their correct political line.

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### **People's Communes or People's Committees?**

Let us go a little deeper into the discussion of the concept of elementary organs of popular power. This becomes important in view of the fact that a controversy has already arisen on the issue, and to ignore it is to submit to something more noxious than the controversy itself.

In his article, *Building People's Power*, in *Sechaba* of September 1986, Comrade Mzala treats the question as tactical, in the same way as he treats the tactical issue of taking the war into White areas; not as strategically lying at the foundation of our revolution. He advances the slogan of People's Communes instead of People's Committees.

This may appear to be a mere linguistic problem, but it is not, as Comrade Mzala says: "... the term People's Commune defines with political precision an organised political community to which belong hundreds of thousands of residents." (p. 9)

This is exactly where the difference lies. While Comrade Mzala is more concerned with communes "to which belong hundreds of thousands of residents" or, in other words, the "masses," we on the other hand are concerned with elected People's Committees whose primary duty is to see to the leadership of the "communes" or the "masses." After explaining what he means by the term "commune," it is clear for him that there



is no need to create People's Committees "because these already exist, they have long been created by the people in various districts of the country ... because the communes are everywhere, and therefore there is no need to create them." (p.10) For "communes" read "masses."

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### **The Political Nature of People's Committees**

Comrade Mzala fails to relate the administrative tasks of the People's Committees to their political nature "... it has been conspicuously in the administrative sense that the People's Committees in the liberated districts have been asserting themselves." (p.11)

While no one questions the administrative tasks of these Committees (which range from anything to refuse collection!), it would be playing into the hands of the enemy and opportunist elements to expect these committees to assert themselves only in the administrative sense. Let us be very clear about this point. The essence of the committees is that they are political organs and that

they have to be seen and made to function as such. That they have to perform certain administrative tasks is functional to their essence, which is political.

To guarantee their political purpose and to avoid their asserting themselves in an administrative sense only, it is important that certain political and strategic perspectives be considered. To start with, there is a need for a coherent political programme which has in it a stipulated set of objectives which the revolution intends to achieve. In our case, such a programme exists in the form of the Freedom Charter. But its mere existence is not enough. It is of the utmost importance that it should form a political base for each and every People's Committee. This will help to guarantee coherence within the committees, and, above all, to guarantee the political line of all committees.

This principle is inseparably linked with that of inner-committee democracy, which can be guaranteed and achieved only through the democratic election of people's representatives on to these committees.





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## Principled Ideological Struggle

This brings us to the question of the class forces which should be in the leadership of these committees, as well as the need to wage a principled ideological struggle within them. In general, it is true that the existence of these committees suggests that there is in them a broad structural representation of oppressed Black South Africans. But as soon as these committees are seen each as a **microcosm** of a united front, it becomes important that the issue of their leadership should also be considered. As microcosm of a united front, they represent the widest political interests, and their contradictory nature cannot be overlooked.

On this issue, the South African liberation movement has, on many occasions, stated its positions, in which the organised Black working class is seen as having the key to the success of the revolution. This, therefore, should also be the guiding approach towards these committees. A strong working-class content should always be sought for in their activities.

In this regard, Comrade Mzala failed to grasp the essence of the emergence of the organs of popular power. In an earlier article, *On the Threshold of Revolution*, in *The African Communist*, Third Quarter 1985, he writes: "... the national democratic nature of our revolution will obviously influence the class composition of such local organs of self-rule, which means they will absorb the revolutionary elements of the petty-bourgeoisie. Form should not be taken for substance." Here he is prescribing a very dangerous formula for approaching the issue, for what he says is that we should simply ignore the question of the class leadership of these organs, which will be obviously influenced by the revolutionary elements of the petty-bourgeoisie. It is difficult to determine with even the minimum political precision how revolutionary this petty bourgeoisie, or elements of it, can be.

Let us not be overwhelmed by our desire to see our country free, so that we abandon certain fundamental principles upon which our revolution turns. As Karl Marx said in the Introduction to his *Critique of Political Economy*, "Let us not slide into a practice in which good intentions to push forward take the place of factual knowledge."

We alluded to the need to wage a principled ideological struggle within the Committees. Let us go a little deeper into that, and in doing so draw an analogy with a united front, always bearing in mind that a microcosm of a thing can never be identical to the thing itself.

---

## What Is a Front?

A front is a league of autonomous political, cultural, civic and communal parties, organisations, groups and individuals who express similarities of ideas and positions in relation to a given socio-political situation, and act collectively towards that situation on matters affecting common interests. As we have said, a unifying force within a front is the existence of a minimum programme to which all affiliates, irrespective of their ideological stance, pledge themselves to adhere. By definition, a front is a contradictory whole, a unity of opposites. (See Le Duan, *Selected Writings*, Hanoi, 1977, p. 182) While its composition restricts its activities and expansion, it is at the same time its very composition which perpetuates the front. That is, while the limited interests of some parties, organisations and so on, tend to restrict and limit its activities, it is at the same time the unlimited and long-term interests of some of the affiliates which perpetuate it.

This necessarily suggests the necessity of ideological struggles within a front. In fact, it is these internal ideological struggles that determine, not only the aims and objectives of the front, but its very existence. Therefore, the need to conduct a principled ideological struggle within a front is not something divisive, but rather the responsibility of a leading force within it.

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## Organs of Insurrection

All that we have said so far with regard to the political function of People's Committees is closely related to their elementary or primary essence — which is that of being organs of popular power and self-government.

Since they have emerged — and are still emerging — while alongside them there exists as well the old, decadent and fascist political system, it follows that they should also function as organs



of insurrection for the forcible armed overthrow of this old political order. This second function of the committees, as organs of insurrection, should not be confused with the first, that of organs of self-government and popular power, though the two are different sides of the same coin. It is precisely the issue of insurrection that lies at the bottom of this division of functions, which dictates that as organs of insurrection their function, and hence their organisational structures, should be different from that of organs of popular power and self-government. In short, they have to be underground organs.

In the case of South African conditions, the forms of their structural organisation cannot be outlined and fixed here, as they are dependent on concrete conditions. The same structure may perform both functions, or there may be one structure co-ordinating several committees, or two structures existing in one locality but co-ordinating their activities, or a combination of all these possibilities.

It is now clear that the issue of these committees functioning as organs of self-government and popular power on the one hand and as organs of insurrection on the other is not as easy as Comrade Mzala has so far treated it. This is precisely why we still emphasise the creation, development and consolidation of People's Committees. This is precisely the reason why it should be re-emphasised here that the issue of these committees is not tactical and transient, but that it is strategic to the whole concept of a people's war and insurrection. **The committees are an organised material force with the aid of which it becomes possible to overthrow the apartheid state.**

This approach becomes even more important as soon as we consider the history of guerrilla wars waged elsewhere in the past, in which the moment of the transition of the guerrilla forces, from a weak position to that of military superiority over the enemy, signalled the first steps towards victory. But in the South African case, this transition is not likely to take a classical form. However, in spite of this, the same effects of such a transition could be achieved if proper attention and guidance is given to the great revolutionary potential of the People's Committees. It is precisely because of this factor that no efforts should be spared in the creation, development and consolidation of People's Committees.

Finally, it is important to state some of the im-

mediate tasks at present confronting these committees, among which is to guard against:

- Opportunist elements who would like to depoliticise the committees by bogging them down in administrative functions only;
- Elements who pretend to be political, but would not commit themselves to the ideal of a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa;
- Elements who would like to pull these committees into unpopular deals with the agents of the apartheid regime. For the permanent settlement of the South African conflict, nothing should be accepted short of the dismantling of the apartheid system and the right of all to vote through the system of one person, one vote.

The speedy success of our revolution lies in the creation, development and consolidation of these People's Committees, as organs both of popular power and of insurrection.





# THE FIGHT FOR OUKASIE

## A MEMBER OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE SPEAKS

Oukasie, an African area in Brits, is subject to a concerted campaign of murder, arrests, intimidation and extortion in an attempt to get the people to move to a new area called Letlhabile. At the beginning of April, a leading member of the Brits Action Committee was abroad, and addressed many meetings. He answered the following questions that were put to him about Oukasie and the people's organisation there.

### **When was the Action Committee formed?**

The action committee was formed in December 1985. The problem was that the so-called community council called a meeting and told the people that the township was going to be moved by the end of that year. The people decided to hold another meeting the next day, a Sunday, and at that meeting it was decided to form a committee that will fight this removal. We were elected in that meeting. Since then we have been struggling to talk to the government, explaining that moving us now will cause more hardship in the future. And there is no reason for us to get moved. Anyway, the new place is going to be the same as where we are. The only difference is that there will be flush toilets. But it will cause more hardship because at a later stage, when everybody has been moved, it is going to be incorporated into Bophuthatswana, because the border of Bophuthatswana is only about 300 metres away from the township.

The way the bantustans are being run, basically the people lose their human rights in the homelands. They do not have a right to form a

trade union, they do not have a right to meetings at all. There is more brutality in Bophuthatswana. People are being silenced.

### **How many are you on the Action Committee?**

The Action Committee has 12 members. We got some other people from the youth organisation, the women's committee and the parents' organisation. The Action Committee is the superior body. There are smaller organisations which are affiliated to us.

### **Besides fighting the removals what do you do?**

The other aspect we are dealing with is the social life of the people, the welfare of the people I would say. We realised that the police were doing very little about the thuggery in the township. We decided that we should try to do away with the people who harass us. The street committees were the ones who, every time there is a problem, try to solve the problem on their own, to try and talk to whoever is involved and to resolve the problem that has arisen.

On the other hand we are looking at promoting better education in the township. We have been having problems. There was a school whose roof was taken away by a storm. The school committee went to the authorities telling them that we would like them to repair the school. The government was not prepared to repair the school. They said that they have already budgeted so they were not going to repair that school. Anyway we attacked them in the media, for they are trying to get the people disillusioned so that they move. It is very easy, if the schools can be closed down.



What they were doing was encouraging or trying to get politics into education in the township. By so doing they wanted to have the schools moved out to the new township. Because of the attacks we made on them through the media and the support from the public later they said they would repair the school, and it is functioning again.

**What is the main reason why they want to move Oukasie?**

What Chris Heunis, the Minister, said was that it was impossible to upgrade the township and secondly that the place itself is a health hazard. I do not know where he got his facts. We decided last year in March to consult engineers to come and make a survey of the township, to look into the feasibility of upgrading the township. They came up with the response that it would cost only about R3 million to upgrade the township. In a week we will have another expert on communi-

ty health who is going to make a study of the health of the township for the past five years. What we have been told is that Oukasie is not worse than other places. It is just the same as the other places which are not threatened with removal. The only difference with Oukasie is that we are at the doorstep of Whites, conservative Whites, the Afrikaners. That is basically the main reason behind it all. We will try to attack Heunis on the two reasons that he gave for the removal.

The first one is already out of the question because we have already shown that R3 million is nothing compared to the R4 million they spent on the "peace song". The upgrading is not the problem. He cannot come and tell us that the township is a health hazard. We are living there. One other thing that is interesting is that there was the outbreak of cholera which swept throughout South Africa. But there was no case of cholera in our township.



*The T-shirt reads: "Lethabile? We're not going there."*



*One of the obvious signs that the White racist regime is committed to apartheid more than ever is its programme of mass removal.*

*Millions of Blacks have been moved over the years. When the people refuse to leave their land, violence is used, either by the police or by the so-called death squads, that is, special units of the SADF and the SAP masquerading as local residents.*

*Among the most vicious campaigns was the removal of Gugulethu in Cape Town.*

If one tells me that the bucket system is out of fashion, then what about Alexandra, what about Mphupheleli in Natal with the bucket system? It's a new township with a bucket system. There is nothing like a health hazard. Then it means all the people who are using the bucket system definitely do not have to do that.

The other thing is that when this year started, the kids went to the creche as usual. When they got there, they were told that the creche was closed. We went to the local administration manager and asked him. He told us that it was agreed some time last year by the creche committee and the community councillors that it would be closed. We talked a lot and later he agreed we could use the building and the equipment, but the funding would depend on us. And right now we have been looking around to find some sponsors, we have some, not enough, but at least we keep the place running. The South African Council of Churches is being very helpful in that. Well, we have funds to run the creche for five to six months.

By then there were attacks on the government on the issue of the school and the creche. On one Friday afternoon the Security Branch police came to me and told me that the captain wanted to talk to me. And when I was there, I was told by the

captain that if I do not keep my mouth shut they are going to take me to Central Prison because I am causing too many problems for them. But then there was nothing to worry about because the job was already done.

**Were there people arrested in Oukasië under the emergency?**

Yes, a lot of people were arrested. Among them were trade unionists and some members of the Action Committee. In fact it was on the eve of Modimoeng's funeral. Modimoeng is a trade unionist and a supporter of the Action Committee. A hand grenade was thrown into his house and his wife was killed in that attack. On the eve of the funeral, that was on the 11th of June, during the night, the police came and arrested many people. For the whole of that day, I was one of those who tried to negotiate with them for they had too many restrictions on the funeral. There should not be anyone in the streets, there should not be chanting or any singing of freedom songs and that kind of thing. The committee, together with our legal adviser, went to see the police. We talked it over, and there was some arrangement. But they arrested most of the people that night.

The next day, during the funeral, we were told not to march, everyone was to get into cars. Because there was a lot of people at the funeral, close to 30 000 I would say, there was no way we could have enough transport to carry so many people. There were lots of police, some of them on horseback. There was nothing to do anyway. The people had their march, irrespective of what the police would say.

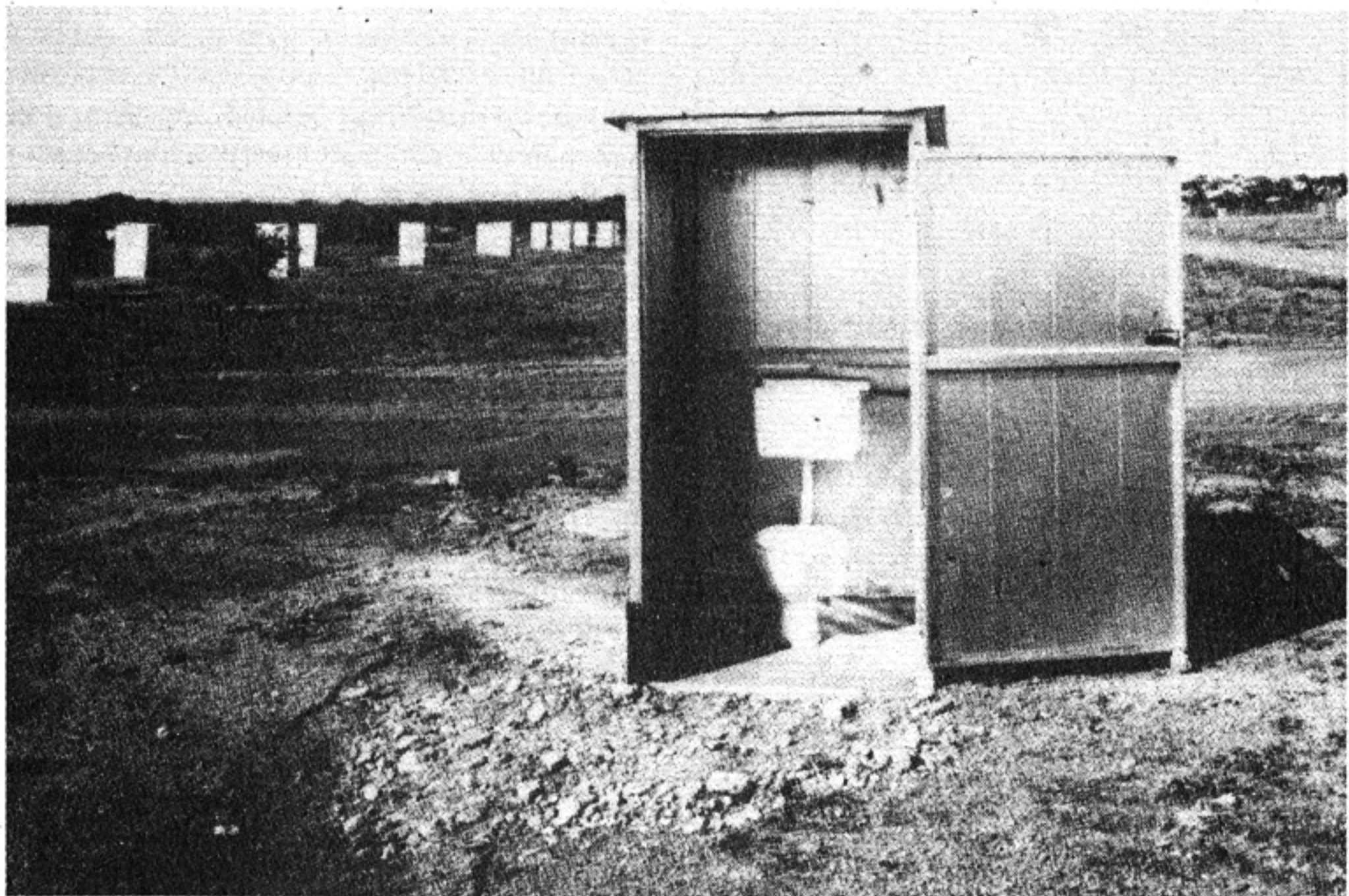
**Do you have an idea of who killed Modimoeng's wife?**

The police claimed they were investigating. Modimoeng said he saw two Whites and two Blacks.

**How is your Action Committee functioning under the emergency?**

It is very difficult. We are really having a difficulty. The Brits police are the worst you can ever find in that area. The churches have been helpful. We actually meet at churches. We meet at prayer meetings right now. Anything we would like to deliver to the people we do in the churches. We are living in very difficult times. One cannot sleep in the same place twice. I only





### *The only service provided at Letlhabile*

sleep in my place once a week, when no one expects me to be there. It is far better during the day, as people can see, but when it's night time everyone's life is in danger. Anything can happen. We have seen too many attacks. My house was petrol-bombed twice. And many of the activists' houses have been petrol-bombed.

### **Who do you think is launching these attacks?**

Although we do not know who is doing it, we do not have opposition in our community. The community relies on us. They really trust us. One can easily judge from what is happening why are only activists the ones whose houses have been attacked? It means opposition, and the only opposition we have is the apartheid regime.

### **What do you think will happen next?**

I think that this thing calls for someone's guts. I think that as long as the majority stay in Oukasie there is nothing that the regime can do. But if they can continue with their tactics of intimidating people then they are going to succeed. Even if they remain in the minority there are those people who have decided that under no cir-

cumstances are they going to be moved. Only over their dead bodies will they be moved.

### **How many people have already moved to this new township?**

At present we have about 6 000 people who have moved to the new township. In Oukasie we have about 10 000 resisting the removal. Anyway, in some cases I do not blame the people who moved. Some of the people are old people who believe that once the White man says you must move you must move. Some people were threatened, more especially the municipal workers. They were taken on tour by bus and told to choose plots. Whoever did not want to choose a plot was threatened with dismissal. Thirdly, it was very hard to stay in the old location because every night there were shootings, explosions, the police coming in. So some people felt their lives were at stake now and had to move. Fourthly, some other people (moved) because of high unemployment. We have about 50% unemployment because some other factories have left, running away from the unions. Brits is one of the most organised areas. The factories are running away and the people become unemployed.



Whoever had a house was promised about R2 000 for his four-roomed house, could easily take that R2 000 hoping to take that money to use while he looks for work in order to build a proper house, which will never work.

**What kind of buildings are in the new township?**

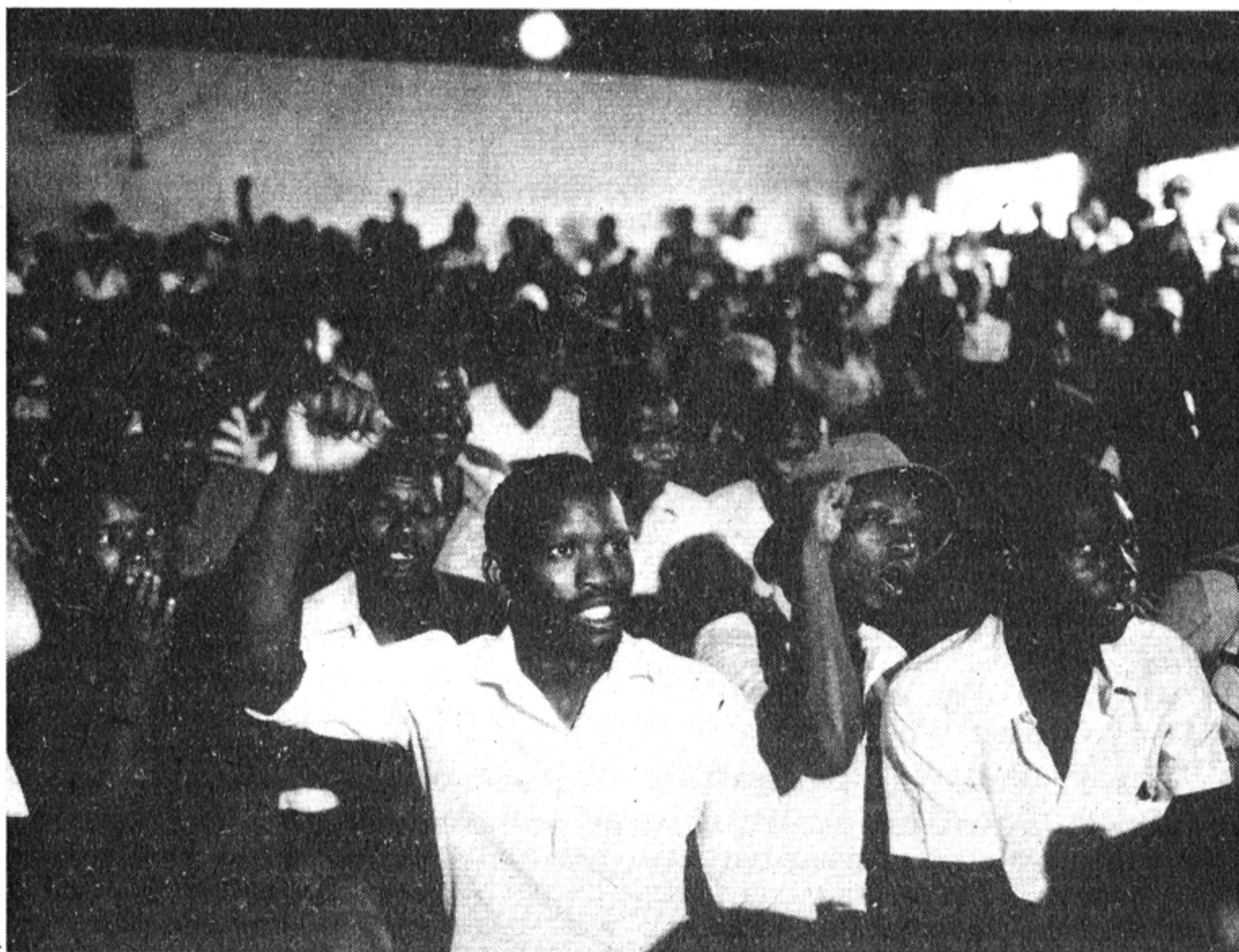
There is a toilet built with corrugated iron, which is a flush toilet, and a thatched house of about nine square metres which is loaned while one is supposedly building a proper house.

**What is the situation? Do you pay rent or is it cheaper to stay at Letlhabile after all?**

At first when you get to Letlhabile, they claim that you buy at a freehold price of R52,80 for 300 square metres. It is impossible for any one to buy land for that amount. It shows that they are cheating. Some people moved there because they were told it would be their place. After the R52,80 you pay something between R6 to R7 for the services which are water and garbage collection. But now the question comes back to us,

because out in the old location we have built our own houses. The only services which they offer to us is a communal tap which is 100 metres from the house and night soil collection which is also done twice a week. And we have to pay R22 a month for these services which are not up to standard. This shows that this thing is a kind of bribery to get people attracted to that place.

When we discuss this with the people who are staying at Letlhabile, I always ask them, "Gentlemen, I don't blame you for going to Letlhabile, but let us face facts and let us discuss this openly. You are not the ones who are responsible for ending up at Letlhabile. The government has not been doing anything about this issue and we ourselves have been quiet. Let us work together because we are all Black brothers, we all know who is our enemy." At first they agreed they would show me the title deeds which I wanted to take and get to the title deeds office to check whether whoever has this land is actually registered in the deeds office. Suddenly all of



*An Oukasië residents' meeting.*





*A people's park in Oukasie*

them vanished, they do not want to give me the title deeds they claim to have. Fortunately, I personally had seen in one of the Afrikaans newspapers, *Die Beeld*, that people are buying plots at a very low price. What is happening is that they don't actually have freehold rights in that place. If they want to have freehold rights they have got to pay more, thousands more. This is a fact. There is no one who has got freehold rights in Letlhabile.

**Given the fact that you are underground, how do you organise?**

One of the most powerful sectors in our organisation is the women. The women are playing an important role. We were stopped from burying our dead in the township. The Roman Catholic Church which is adjoining the township has been

helpful by giving us some land to use for a while to bury our dead there. We tried to talk to the government about that and they said there is nothing they can do. The women were becoming impatient. A week before I left the women had been going to the administration office every day for a week asking for land to bury our dead.

The other thing is that most of the people, most of the street committee members were arrested. We have some other guys who have been sentenced to three years, others have been kept under the emergency. One of them is a young guy, the security police have asked him to say that one of his friends is a member of the ANC. Anyway because of understanding that this guy is fighting through lawyers, they want to release him on condition that he will be a witness.



# ILLEGAL ARMS TRADE

## THE FRG SUBMARINE

*By Abdul Minty*

*The writer of this article is the Director of the World Campaign against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa.*

The western media have so far given very little publicity to the scandal in the Federal Republic of Germany surrounding the illegal deal to provide the apartheid regime with construction plans for the HDW 209 submarine.

The plans for this submarine were originally sold to India, and were subsequently modified for South Africa without India's knowledge or permission. The modifications include extending the length to provide space for releasing frogmen and sabotage units, even at considerable depths. The submarine will also be able to fire short-range missiles, and this makes it a highly effective weapon for Pretoria's attacks against neighbouring continental and island states. With this capability, it would not be too difficult for the racist regime to equip the vessel with nuclear weapons as well.

The negotiations for this deal were initiated in 1982. Two FRG companies were involved: the Howaldswerke Deutsche Werft AG (HDW), which is owned by the state, and Ingenierkontor Lubeck (IKL). Both seem to have been fully aware of the fact that the sale of the submarine blueprints to the apartheid regime (unlike that of most other military supplies) was expressly prohibited by law. Thus, in a confidential memo prepared on behalf of the companies and sent to several government ministers in Bonn in October 1983, the following points were made:

■ The customer would use components made in his own country or imported from other countries, and was "willing to buy steel construction parts" and "possibly some naked sections" to help "the bad employment situation of the German shipyards."

■ The blueprints would go "as microfilm in diplomatic pouch."

■ In the construction, IKL would "change the visible parts" to avoid its being identified as "German design."

■ Reference was then made to an earlier secret deal with Israel, where permission was given in "non-written form" and where the FRG Government "had assured the necessary back-up in case of trouble." The same type of approval was sought for South Africa, where the customer was "willing to wait for several months for a definite decision."

Early in June, 1984, during P W Botha's visit to Bonn, Chancellor Kohl gave him a personal undertaking that he would look into the matter of export permission being granted for the blueprints. Ten days later, on June 15th, HDW and IKL signed the contract for the deal.

### **Call for Prosecution**

When this case was first reported in a Kiel newspaper at the end of November 1986, the World Campaign against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa confirmed some of the facts, and reported the matter to the Arms Embargo Committee of the United Nations Security Council and to the Special Committee Against Apartheid. It cabled Foreign Minister Genscher of the FRG and called for criminal investigations to be instituted and the offenders prosecuted. The Federal Government told the UN and the World Campaign that thorough investigations were being conducted.

As a result of efforts by the opposition parties, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Greens, the Federal Parliament established a special investigation committee on December



10th 1986. This committee was able to reveal many facts, but much of the crucial information is still unknown, and evidence in several vital areas is contradictory. The committee ceased functioning in February 1987, when the old Parliament was dissolved, but both the opposition parties gave public assurances that they would re-establish it in the new session, since its work is not yet finished.

The government's own investigation has been conducted by its taxation office in Kiel, which, in an interim report of November 1986, recommended a penalty of DM50 000 for each of the companies. Presumably it does not consider the offence to be serious, since the maximum penalty available under this provision is DM500 000.

The Federal Government has informed both the World Campaign and the United Nations that it never granted official permission to HDW/IKL to export the submarine blueprints to South Africa and that the companies acted illegally. It maintains that for this offence the companies can be fined through administrative action, or they can be prosecuted if it is established that the offence resulted in "damage to the external relations of the FRG."

Until the end of March 1987, the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs was still maintaining that there was no "severe damage." The matter has therefore not been referred to the State Prosecutor. However, the legal position is clear, from an earlier case when Rheinmetal was convicted in May 1986 for providing South Africa with plant to manufacture ammunition — the Prosecutor can act without waiting for the government to certify "severe damage" to its external relations.

### **Attempted Cover-up**

The danger is that, if the relevant authorities in the FRG proceed simply to impose an administrative penalty, it may become difficult later to secure a prosecution. Meanwhile, the offenders have had all the time they need to destroy all the relevant documents and other information, and to rush through all the transactions.

Since it is impossible for South Africa to make its own submarines, the deal must inevitably involve direct or indirect arrangements to secure components and plant from abroad. Early action can stop these transfers, but there appears to be no concern on the part of the authorities even to

consider this aspect — indeed, there is every indication that those involved in the deal are attempting a major cover-up with help from friends and allies.

It is well known in the FRG that the apartheid regime is a danger to peace, yet it continues to arm the South African military and naval forces, whilst publicly proclaiming that it believes in "peaceful change." At the same time, it is also opposed to anyone's using the one peaceful measure available to the international community — economic sanctions.

The submarine deal cannot be seen in isolation from the supply of Unimogs and other military vehicles, or the MBB helicopters sold directly to the South African police two years ago and which are now being used extensively over the African townships for reconnaissance and transport, and as gunships. All these deals are able to take place as "normal trade," and are not prohibited by the Federal Government.

Even according to the weak regulations in the FRG, however, the supply of the submarine blueprints to South Africa is **illegal**, so the need to secure a prosecution of those who have supplied them is of immediate importance. In delivering the plans by diplomatic pouch, the South African Embassy in Bonn has participated in and assisted the performance of a criminal offence, and this should result in its closure. Australia, Saudi Arabia and others who are negotiating with HDW for major contracts need to be informed of all the facts about the South African deal, so that they do not reward a state-owned company which is so committed to the apartheid regime that it refuses to disclose, even now, all the details of the illegal deal.

The FRG, in many respects, is even more aggressive than the USA and Britain in defending the apartheid regime from sanctions and providing its military machine with vital resources which are often not available from other sources. That is why it is so important for the international community to take effective action at all levels to end collaboration between the FRG and the racist regime in Pretoria.

*Note: The World Campaign asks that individuals and organisations who have protested to the FRG government should keep the office of the World Campaign informed of their actions. The address is: PO Box 2, 1007 Oslo 10, Norway.*



# ANC INTERNATIONAL

## CANADIAN CONFERENCE CALLS FOR SANCTIONS

Comrade Thabo Mbeki, Director of the Department of Information and Publicity of the ANC and a member of the NEC, was one of the invited speakers at a conference, "Taking Sides in Southern Africa," which was organised in Montreal from 27th February to 1st March. Dr Allan Boesak, Patron of the UDF and President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and Comrade Teodato Hunguana, the Mozambican Minister of Information, also responded to invitations to address the delegates.

The conference was sponsored by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, an umbrella body of 150 organisations, and was attended by over 500 delegates drawn from more than 200 church, labour and other groups, from every province in Canada.

The Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark, addressed the conference. He said:

"World opinion is crystallising now in a way that no regime in Pretoria can ignore. Our challenge is to find effective and sustained measures to build that pressure for change."

He added that Canada is seeking to organise "concerted action by several governments." He reported that Canada has acted on all the Commonwealth sanctions drawn up at Nassau and London, and is banning airline links, new investment, agricultural imports, new loans, tourism promotion, imports of uranium and steel, and is placing restrictions on visas.

He also reported that Canada had given almost \$140 million to SADCC projects since 1983, and was giving food aid to Mozambique.

He had reservations about total sanctions, saying that his government was seeking to change an evil social system, not cripple a strong economy, and he advocated dialogue with both the Pretoria regime and the ANC, as a way of bringing influence to bear on both.

## The Conference Goes Further

However, this statement of government policy did not altogether satisfy the conference, whose organisers afterwards issued a press release saying:

"The largest and most representative conference ever held in Canada on Southern Africa today called for the immediate application by the Canadian government of "comprehensive, mandatory economic sanctions" against South Africa.

"This urgent demand for sanctions contrasted sharply with the address to the conference by Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, who indicated the government was not yet prepared to take this action."

The conference also called on the government to move towards official recognition of the African National Congress and to downgrade diplomatic links with Pretoria as a step towards severing all diplomatic relations. It stressed the right of the South African people to "self-defence" against the "systematic violence and repression" of the regime.

Delegates also called for urgent additional Canadian assistance to South Africa's neighbouring states, "in response to the recent appeal by South Africa's nine neighbouring states for help to boost essential production."

Delegates at the conference also resolved to organise and educate in their local constituencies to back these national demands.

## SOLIDARITY IN EGYPT

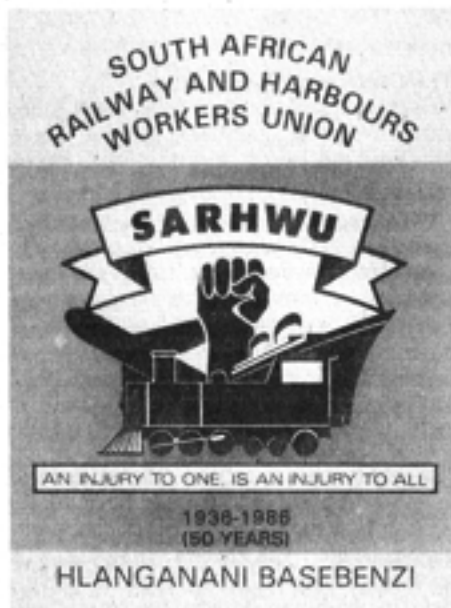
Following on the success of the Release Mandela Campaign organised by the Arab Lawyers' Union in Egypt last year (two million signatures were collected for a petition) the African Society Hall in Cairo, where the 75th Anniversary celebrations were held, turned out to be too small for the number of people who attended.

The meeting was addressed by the ANC Chief Representative in Egypt, Comrade Captain

*Continued on page 18* ►



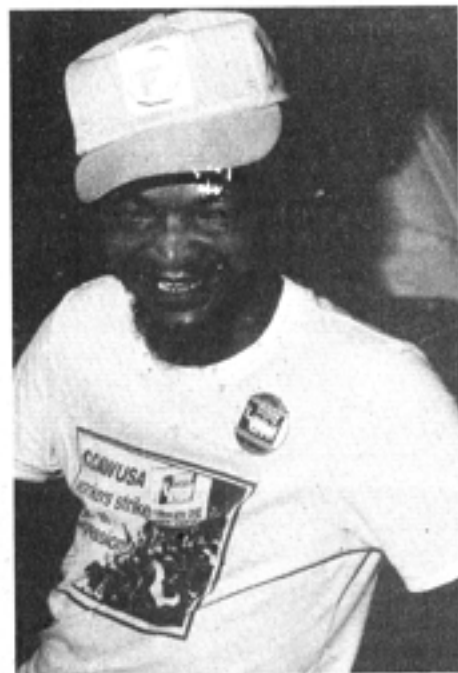
# TRADE UNIONS— BUILDING A UNITED FIGHTING FORCE



The struggle on the trade union front is intensifying. By the beginning of March this year, the apartheid economy had already lost 750 000 man-days through wage-related strikes alone.

This is more than the total man-days lost through strike action during any one of the first five years of the 1980s.

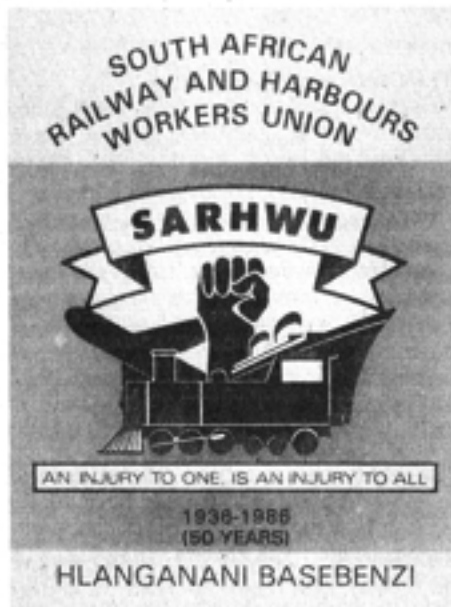
The strikes of 1987 have been organised nation-wide, showing the strength of the national industrial unions that are being built, according to the policy of COSATU.



**ONE INDUSTRY, ONE UNION! ONE COUNTRY, ONE FEDERATION!**



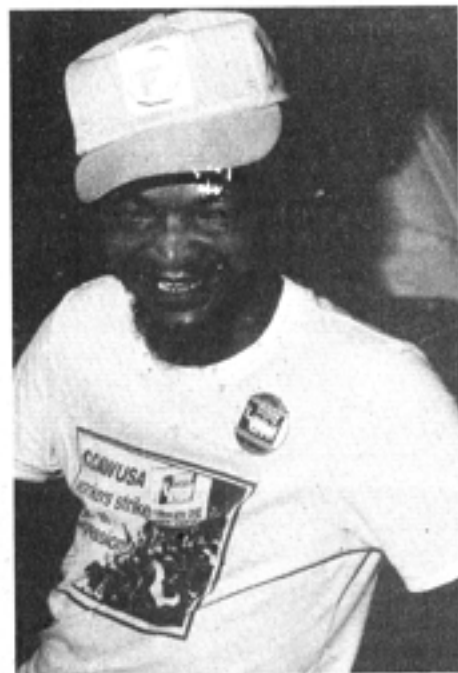
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**ONE INDUSTRY, ONE UNION! ONE COUNTRY, ONE FEDERATION!**



◀ *Continued from page 15*

Lerole. Other speakers included representatives from the Egyptian Government and the ruling party in Egypt, AAPSO, the Union of African Journalists, the African Lawyers' Union, the Arab Lawyers' Union, the United Nations Association of Egypt and the Egyptian Supporters of Human Rights.

### **FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY IN 75th ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

South Africa became an important issue in the FRG elections in January 1987. There was strong feeling against collaboration between the FRG government and the South African regime, especially against the sale to South Africa of arms and military helicopters for use by the South African police, and the supply of plans for the new submarine. ANC speakers were invited to address tens of thousands of people at election rallies and meetings all over the country.

The ANC representative in Bonn, Comrade Tony Seedat, attended a meeting of five MPs from the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of West Berlin, including the SPD spokesperson on South Africa, Herr Verheugen, and Barbara Simons, European Parliamentary spokesperson for the Socialist Group in the European Parliament. In a resolution arising from this meeting the SPD of West Berlin called for total and comprehensive sanctions against South Africa, and for recognition of the ANC as the representative of the South African people.

### **Women's Solidarity**

International Women's Day was once more an opportunity for ANC women to address many democratic organisations in the FRG, including trade unions. An ANC photo exhibition, pamphlets, postcards and so on, on the subject of women in South Africa, were once again in great demand. Thousands of D-marks were collected.

The Democratic Women's Initiative, a non-



*Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jim Clark, greets Comrade Thabo Mbeki of the ANC at the conference, "Taking Sides in Southern Africa" in Montreal. Next to Comrade Mbeki is Comrade Teodato Hungana, the Mozambican Minister for Information, and the Reverend Allan Boesak.*



party organisation of progressive women, is collecting money for a mini-bus for the Women's Section in Lusaka.

## Churches

The Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag is a large festival of independent churches that takes place every two years. In 1979 and again in 1985, speakers from South Africa called on the Kirchentag to support sanctions against South Africa. This year, after appeals from anti-apartheid forces in the FRG and from many of the constituent bodies of the Kirchentag (some threatened to withdraw) the presidium of the Kirchentag closed its account with the Deutscher Bank, a large bank in the FRG that has links with South Africa. The presidium issued a statement reporting on its discussions with the bank, and said:

"The representatives of the Kirchentag Presidium emphasised their expectations that the forthcoming negotiations on rescheduling South African debts will be tied to the following political conditions: revocation of the state of emergency and of press censorship, release of political prisoners allowing the return of exiles, admission of banned political organisations including the ANC and acknowledgment of these organisations as partners for negotiations on the political shaping of a future South Africa."

## Peace Movement

At the time of our going to press, ANC speakers in the FRG are gearing themselves for the traditional Easter peace rallies. Up to 200 000 people will be addressed by ANC speakers at all major rallies.

The peace movement sees the struggle for peace and the struggle for national liberation as natural allies. ANC representatives in this country have stressed that the Pretoria regime is a threat to peace in Africa and in the whole world, particularly because of South Africa's nuclear potential, and that therefore the struggle for freedom in South Africa is part of the struggle for world peace.

## MOURNING IN MOZAMBIQUE FOR FALLEN HEROES

At least 300 people attended a wreath-laying ceremony in the Hlanguene cemetery in Maputo to pay homage to the 13 fallen heroes of the South



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100 weitere Informationen erhalten Sie durch Kontakt mit uns. Adressen sind in diesem Heft zu finden. MBB ist ein Unternehmen der MBB AG, München.

*Early in July 1985, 18 of these helicopters were delivered from the FRG to the South African Police.*

African liberation movement, murdered six years ago by the army of the South African regime, in the attack on an ANC refugee residence in Matola.

Buried alongside the Matola victims is a long-time member and activist of the ANC, Comrade Ruth First, who died as a result of a parcel bomb sent to her in 1982. She had worked as director of research at the Centre of African Studies at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo.

Present at the ceremony were members of the ANC in Maputo, members of AMASP, the Mozambican solidarity organisation, and members of the Mozambican women's organisation (OMM) led by a member of the national secretariat.

A statement made by the ANC at the gravesides pointed out that the state terrorism of the Pretoria regime has also been experienced in all the countries of Southern Africa. It also accused the regime of being responsible for the death of President Samora Machel.



The speaker from OMM referred to the ANC members as "blood brothers" who were victims of the "hideous actions" of the racists, and paid homage to all South Africans who have died at the hands of the apartheid regime. "A just cause will triumph," the speaker said.

The end of the ceremony was marked by a solemn march to the grave of Comrade Moses Mabhida, a leader of the ANC, SACTU and the South African Communist Party, who died in Maputo early last year, and was given a state funeral by the Mozambican government.

### **US TRADE UNIONISTS CAMPAIGN AGAINST APARTHEID**

The ANC has received the following letter, signed by three trade unionists in the United States:

"We work at Chevron Chemical in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, and we are members of the Oil,

Chemical and Atomic Workers' Union Local 4-447.

"We feel American workers have the duty to stand as one voice to tell the truth about the mighty struggle of the peoples of South Africa to overthrow the racist apartheid system. Through our unions we can build immense pressure for full sanctions and for the release of the thousands of political prisoners, chief of whom is Nelson Mandela.

"Accordingly, we have been promoting Mandela's *The Struggle Is My Life* among our workmates ...

"We encourage all other trade unionists to utilise Nelson Mandela's book in the same way. With the words of this great fighter and our own energy we can proclaim the cause, clarify the issues, and promote the organisation of the growing movement against apartheid in this country."

*Picture: Stefano Cagnoni, Report*



*Two British MPs and an ANC delegation laid a wreath outside the South African Embassy in London on April 6th, the anniversary of the murder of Solomon Mahlangu by the racist regime. From left to right: Comrade Steve Gawe of the ANC, Bob Hughes MP, Comrade Solly Smith, ANC Chief Representative in the UK and Ireland, Donald Anderson MP and Comrade Poloko Nkobi of the ANC.*



# SABOTEURS OF SOLIDARITY 'WORKERISTS' IN BRITAIN

By Mervyn Bennun

*This article was written by a member of the ANC who is active in solidarity work in Britain.*

Understanding the nature of the revolution in South Africa is essential to proper solidarity and campaigning abroad; and an understanding of the nature and history of the Freedom Charter is essential to understanding the nature of that revolution. It is striking that, despite the clarity with which the issues have been laid out for many years, there are still people who misrepresent and distort matters. The broad outlines and nature of the national liberation struggle have been determined by the experience of the people — their agony, their struggles, their setbacks, their insight and clarity as to what is needed. To find ourselves confronted today with misleading arguments at a time when solidarity is needed as never before is an unnecessary burden for us to carry.

The Freedom Charter was written by the people themselves in a real exercise of consultation. The African National Congress, together with the rest of the Congress Alliance, initiated a programme in which the people of South Africa were asked to describe the shape the new South Africa was to take, and in a process which was democratic and deeply moving the demands came pouring in. Then, as is described in *Selected Writings on the Freedom Charter*, published by the ANC in 1982:

"For weeks, while the meetings talked, delegates were elected and money collected for fares, a Congress commission faithfully read, classified, indexed and grouped all the demands, all the thousands and thousands of variously sized and variously coloured papers that came through precariously by hand. Could this be freedom, this claim, 'Our location superintendent must be sacked,' or 'Foremen must not swear at us'?"

The struggle for freedom in South Africa is against a special form of colonialism, in which

the colonial power and colonised people occupy the same territory. The struggle to liquidate apartheid and to achieve national liberation thus come together in the struggle to realise the Freedom Charter; but while the Freedom Charter is a powerful and uniting programme for political action it leaves open many questions to be resolved in the course of the struggle.

## **The Charter Belongs to Our People**

One thing, however, stands out very clearly: it is the task — and above all the privilege — of the people of South Africa to define these questions and work out the answers for themselves. Only the people of South Africa as a whole can change the Freedom Charter — if they ever want to. It is not the property of any party; it was drawn up by those to whom it belongs, and it thus transcends party political forces. Whether or not it can be realised only under socialism was not uppermost in the minds of those who wanted an end to passes and brutal pass-raids, a fair wage and decent working conditions, the right to travel across their own country, decent education for their children, homes, hospitals, the right to live where they choose, and many other demands created by the apartheid system.

The power and impact of the Freedom Charter are well brought out by Mzala in his article in *Sechaba* of July 1985:

"It is a revolutionary document indeed because its implementation is impossible without the complete dismantling of the whole State of White supremacy and the political and economic foundation on which it is founded."

He goes on to quote Nelson Mandela:

"For the first time in the history of our country the democratic forces, irrespective of race, ideological conviction, party affiliation or religious belief, have renounced and discarded racialism in all its ramifications, clearly defined their aims and objects and united in a common programme of action."



Mzala points out the implications: the Freedom Charter is not a socialist document but a national democratic one, and adds that socialists in South Africa have a great respect for it, and equally ("if not more than anybody else"), fight for its realisation.

Acknowledging that it is not a socialist document, and was never intended to be, is not a point of criticism or a matter for regret — except to those who reject South African history. Examining the arguments of those who claim that the Freedom Charter is insufficiently 'socialist' — that it is not revolutionary enough, that it fails to point the way to a socialist workers' republic — Mzala draws attention to the pass laws, Group Areas, land dispossession, fascist brutality, low wages and super-exploitation, and continues:

"To ignore this, to favour only the production of slogans that correspond more with one's fancy than concrete reality, would be childish playing at politics, and irresponsibility."

The point being made is clear: the people were thinking about what was wrong with the world about them when they wrote down their demands — it was the problems caused by national oppression and racism which weighed on their minds.

### **Dead Weight of 'Workerism'**

The immense weight of oppression, death and resistance which have to be borne daily, the sheer scale of support for the ANC, the depth of commitment to the Freedom Charter and the understanding of the national liberation struggle have all led to a clarity of vision in South Africa.

Abroad, however, the issues are misrepresented by those who hope to use the South African struggle for their own purposes. We are faced again and again with the dead weight of 'workerism' and the ultra-left. Whatever the subtle distinctions between their various factions, so far as South Africa is concerned, they are united only in their attacks on the Freedom Charter and the ANC and those who stand with it, in the hollow booming of their empty slogans, and in their parasitism. It is worth looking critically at a few examples.

We find, typically, in *Militant* of January 10th 1986, an article by Norma Craven, who tells us:

"The ANC is seen as the traditional political organisation of working people. This is despite the fact that the policies of the ANC leadership

do not clearly show the way forward to workers' rule and socialism. Indeed the ANC leadership has recently moved publicly away from support for the bold demand of the ANC Freedom Charter for nationalisation of the banks, mines and monopoly industry."

To start with, the African National Congress was never a "political organisation of the working people;" it was, is and has to be neither more nor less than the linchpin of the national liberation struggle. The writer's distortion leads her to reproach the ANC and its leadership for not doing what it is clearly not their task to do.

Further, it is not the "ANC Freedom Charter." While the rank and file of the ANC were amongst the 2 884 delegates who brought the Charter into existence at the Congress of the People in Klip-town on June 26th 1955, the Charter belongs to the oppressed people of South Africa as a whole. Indeed, after the Congress of the People, the ANC was advised by Chief Lutuli himself, then its President, that it was necessary to adopt the Freedom Charter for it to become ANC policy.

The writer's distortion opens the door to the lie which follows — that the ANC leadership is moving away from the Freedom Charter and no longer supports the nationalisation of the banks, mines and monopoly industry. Presumably, the 'evidence' for this is that the ANC has met leaders of the business community. But not an inch was conceded by the ANC when it agreed to meet the South African business leaders and others. Instead, by setting out the agenda, the ANC succeeded in driving another wedge into the cracking morale of apartheid — as subsequent events have shown.

### **Empty Sloganisng**

The writer we are quoting echoes similar sneers and empty sloganisng attacks by ultra-left forces within South Africa — notably by the 'National Forum' which drew up the "Manifesto of the Azanian People" in 1983 and of which nothing has been heard since. When we have to work hard abroad this nonsense ceases to be trivial and emerges as malevolent.

The article goes on to describe the ANC as "something outside the country belonging to the exiled leaders."

It must be supposed that the ANC flags, songs and salutes, the courageous people of the townships who have 'unbanned' the ANC and



march under ANC colours in their thousands, the soldiers of Umkhonto We Sizwe, showing with a heroism that makes one's heart stand still that they can move freely amongst the people — **their** people — all these and much more are presumably phantoms "belonging to the exiled leaders." But no — the young people willing to face Casspirs with bare hands if necessary do get a mention of some sort a few lines later:

"Isolated bombings and shootings separate some of the finest young class fighters from the main area of struggle — the mass mobilisation of working people."

What a strange mistake many of us have made — we thought that in the townships, mines, factories — every day in more places — the regime was being steadily and remorselessly brought to its knees by the masses including the finest class fighters, young and old. The regime must be making a mistake, too, putting such vast numbers of soldiers and police into action in what is not "the main area of struggle." But where is it then? Once again, it seems that we South Africans must wait for others to direct us!

Not mentioned are the massive forces of the United Democratic Front, bringing together over

two million South Africans in many roles — as workers, sportsmen, community activists, members of religious congregations, war resisters; the list is endless. Moreover, SACTU is ignored in what is supposed to be a welcome to COSATU and a comment on the history of trade unionism in South Africa.

This writer tells us further that:

"Only a mass ANC built on a socialist programme under the control of the working class can achieve national liberation and democracy."

This is meaningless sloganising. It distracts people outside South Africa from the real support they can give to the struggle for national liberation. It is not the task of others to instruct the ANC on what is needed for democracy, or that it should build socialism in South Africa, or how to rewrite the Freedom Charter or how to follow it; nor is it right for people outside the South African struggle to use it like parasites. The struggle for national liberation in South Africa is one that only South Africans can wage; this is the struggle which unites South Africans, and it is for South Africans alone to determine the political structure of a state defined by the Freedom Charter.





## True Solidarity and its Counterfeit

True solidarity would focus on making that struggle easier by weakening the apartheid regime — and that is the role of the campaign for sanctions. This has been clearly stated by South African socialists themselves when, proudly and unreservedly, they rally to the national liberation struggle under the leadership of an ANC which has committed itself to the Freedom Charter. However, so far from standing by those at the many battlefronts in South Africa, who are working and dying for a socialist South Africa, the ultra-leftists usually ignore them and the South African Communist Party totally when they do not make outright attacks on them. So much for *Militant* and this writer's view of socialist solidarity!

How the struggle in South Africa is misused by the ultra-left for its own purposes abroad is illustrated by Jo Shaw in the June 1986 issue of *Labour Briefing* — another of these publications, a minor one because of its limited circulation, but still revealing the thinking of those who are attempting to sabotage solidarity. The tone is set by the opening words: "On May 1st (1986) militant Black trade unionism in South Africa came of age" — dismissing decades of relentless struggle and experience in one patronising cliché. She describes "the upsurge in Black opposition to apartheid" as having been "orchestrated in part by the ANC's call to make the Black townships ungovernable." She then reveals the squalid truth about the objectives of the 'workerists' and ultra-left:

"Socialists in Britain ... should become involved in the fight against apartheid in order to highlight the unique role of British capital in the oppression of Blacks in Southern Africa, and in order to further the cause of anti-imperialism of (presumably a misprint for 'on') an international scale."

The Anti-Apartheid Movement was founded in response to a call by Chief Lutuli in 1959 for solidarity to aid the national liberation struggle by isolating and thus weakening the apartheid regime. Now we are told that the only purpose of fighting apartheid is to fight imperialism — the struggle against apartheid is reduced to a mere stalking-horse!

## ANC History Distorted

Not only that, but by wrapping this up in the

strangest statements about the ANC, its history is distorted; the ANC certainly called for South Africa and not just the townships to be made ungovernable, but this is hardly the same as "orchestrating" events — the ANC is not a select and elite group of leaders directing from afar. She did not bother to read what the ANC said when it made the call in the NEC message of January 8th 1985:

"To address you, compatriots, on January 8th 1985 is a privilege. For we are addressing a fighting people, who, during a particularly ferocious offensive by the enemy, have accumulated a record of resistance and struggle worthy of our great heroes and martyrs, a people who not only have the resilience that defies defeat, but also the capacity to rise to the challenge of the hour and move on to the offensive, a people with a glorious future to fight for, a tough and brutal enemy to face, an assured and epoch-making victory to win."

It is interesting to compare the statement that the growing resistance is "orchestrated" by the ANC with a comment by another *Labour Briefing* contributor, Charlie van Gelderen, who, in the issue of May 1986, describes the same phenomenon as "spontaneous." This contradiction between two commentators from the same political quarter is natural — neither has the capacity to explain what is actually happening, so they resort to slogans instead.

As if there were any doubt about Van Gelderen's true feelings he attacks the ANC and SACTU (which he calls the ANC's "trade union associate body") as having been in a "sectarian hibernation" concerning the growing strength of COSATU, and approves of its founding conference's having passed resolutions "far in advance of the vague formulations of the Freedom Charter." His hostility to the ANC leads him to describe it as having a "telescopic vision" (whatever that means) which is now having the effect of "beginning to lead some people in the ANC" to "questioning its traditional policies." Who are these people? He doesn't say; but from his hostile position he dares to explain what the ANC's "traditional" policies and its faults are:

"Up to now, the "two-stage" theory of the revolution which prevails in the ANC/UDF has been in sharp conflict with the openly socialist orientation of the National Forum and its affiliates."



"It has become imperative that the workers of our country, together with all the democratic forces, work together to destroy the pass laws — the badge of slavery — and the whole system of influx control ...

"In these and all other campaigns facing our people it is the duty of the democratic forces to work together and consult one another in order to establish the maximum unity in action by all our people."

*ANC, SACTU and COSATU joint statement,  
7th March, 1986.*

To be offered van Gelderen's "solidarity" in the company of the friends he chooses is a revolting experience indeed.

It is abundantly clear that the ultra-left intend to drive wedges between everyone. For example, in the article mentioned earlier. Shaw tells us — without offering a shred of evidence — that:

"... (m)any Black South Africans involved in trade unions while supporting the primacy of the ANC as the central pivot of the national liberation movement, remain sceptical and deeply ambivalent about the programme laid out in the Freedom Charter, which is branded by some as a reforming capitalist document."

A writer in *Militant* of June 6th 1986 says that: "The workers and youth overwhelmingly look to the ANC for a revolutionary lead forming a mass movement which "the present policies of the ANC leaders prevent from advancing to mobilise its full power." We also find examples of how the enemy in Britain is seen to be not apartheid but the Anti-Apartheid Movement itself; pressing the same divisive and ill-founded analysis in which the same attacks are made on the ANC and SACTU, another writer in *Labour Briefing* of March/April 1986 uses it to base a call on Labour Party members "to show how to

build a solidarity movement effectively and then hopefully build a coherent opposition to the present AAM leadership."

### **Outright Lies**

Another theme which appears in *Militant* and *Labour Briefing* is that the ANC is betraying the revolution by agreeing to meet forces such as the Progressive Federal Party, the South African Chamber of Commerce, and the Commonwealth Eminent Persons' Group. A commentator in *Militant* describes "the capitalists" as hoping to involve the ANC in negotiations with the regime, and in as many words describes the ANC as having an illusion that a settlement could be negotiated to remove apartheid. According to *Labour Briefing* this is part of a "balancing act"; and the result, according to *Militant*, "is a bloody stalemate between the classes."

To describe the ANC as being willing to negotiate apartheid away is an outright lie; the ANC has always made it absolutely clear that it will enter into negotiations on nothing less than the handing over of power to the people but not before apartheid laws and practices have been buried. There will have to be talks eventually — unless there is nobody left alive to talk to; and only those whose heroism extends no further than



slogans and poster-paint can possibly have the stomach for that sort of war. Neither writer need worry about the terrible burden of the struggle, so neither refers to the terms laid down by the ANC for any negotiations; and the result is that *Labour Briefing* and *Militant* alike take positions which they hope will drive wedges between workers and trade unions on the one hand and the ANC on the other.

It is not surprising that those who attack the African National Congress end up sounding like each other. Thus we find one commentator telling us that a "two-stage" theory of the revolution ... prevails in the ANC/UDF". By twisting the words of the ANC and the South Africa Communist Party in various publications, this is more fully "explained" by another writer. South Africa:

"must first pass through the phase of 'national liberation'. During this phase a broad national front should be created comprising a coalition of all 'progressive elements' — liberals, churchmen, students and workers under the leadership of a 'vanguard party'".

During this phase this is the ANC, and the "rallying point" is the Freedom Charter. The writer continues:

"Once the 'national liberation' has been achieved and the 'national democracy' has been established the second phase of the revolution takes place under the leadership of the 'vanguard party' of the workers — that is the South African Communist Party".

If the ANC had such a policy or theory, then perhaps that is how it would look — it certainly suits both writers that it should, for it would be doomed to failure. The fact that both see the ANC as the enemy explains why they are in such close agreement with each other. Neither is willing to allow the ANC itself to have a view of its own, or to be heard — they are both determined to teach the ANC political lessons and try to muzzle its voice.

Let us make ourselves clear. The problems of national liberation and the political framework of our new society are being worked out concurrently. The ANC unites all who seek national liberation from the special colonialist structures of our country, and has the right to claim support and solidarity from democrats across the whole world to weaken the apartheid enemy.

## We Shall Determine Our Own Future

South Africans are working out our problems together now — as Nelson Mandela pointed out, the Freedom Charter unites people regardless of their ideological conviction or party affiliation. We cannot possibly achieve national liberation without simultaneously rebuilding the whole of South Africa's political, social, and economic life. However, the two processes — national liberation and reconstruction — while very different from each other are dynamically related and intertwined with each other; each is totally dependant on the other, and to say that either one cannot come before the other means no more than we must advance on both together. Anything else is nonsense.

The meeting in March 1986 of delegations from the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the South African Congress of Trade Unions, and the African National Congress concluded with the publication of a communique of the greatest significance for the solidarity movement abroad. It proclaims the unity of the forces in the struggle for national liberation. It reflects many lessons we have learned during the years.

We have learned that real socialist and communist comrades from South Africa stand by the ANC with grim determination and a blazing confidence in the future. Some have undertaken the gravest duties on our behalf in the struggle for national liberation, and many have sacrificed everything. We have learned to trust such people.

But so far as those who attack us with the arguments discussed above are concerned, they are not even traitors; we never trusted them. They are part of the enemy.





# TWENTY YEARS OF SECHABA

## JOURNAL OF THE ANC

The first issue of *Sechaba* came out in 1967, 20 years ago this year. At that time, the ANC was rebuilding its underground structures, which had been severely damaged by arrests, detentions and trials in the first half of the decade, and Umkhonto We Sizwe was being built into a strong fighting force. The external mission of the ANC had been established and was expanding; the campaign for sanctions was under way; protest had begun against the sale of arms to the racist regime; friends of the South African liberation movement had begun to boycott South African products and campaign against sporting links with apartheid.

There was a need for an ANC journal to be distributed internationally, a journal that would be the voice of the ANC, that would put forward our policies and rally support for the liberation struggle of the people of South Africa.

*Sechaba* itself was an expression of the support shown to us by the German Democratic Republic, one of our most staunch and long-standing allies. The Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee of the GDR undertook to provide for the printing and distribution. From the beginning, the packing and posting has been done by the central distribution agency of the GDR. The printing has been done by the Erich Weinert press, named after a German internationalist hero who died in the 1930s, fighting the fascists in Spain. The production team that prints and assembles each issue has asked to be known as the Nelson Mandela Team, and a picture of Comrade Mandela hangs on the wall in their workplace. Such acts of comradely solidarity by the government and the people of the GDR and other socialist countries will not be forgotten.

The success of the enterprise is shown now in the way the circulation of *Sechaba* has expanded. Though it is banned by the apartheid regime, it is nevertheless being read inside South Africa, as is shown by the fact that some individuals have been arrested and charged for being in possession of copies. Outside the country, the ANC

now has over 20 missions in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and Australia, and bulk consignments go to each of these missions every month. Subscribers include public and university libraries, mostly in North America, Britain and Scandinavia (at some libraries, *Sechaba* is available on microfilm), embassies, political organisations, journalists, and ordinary private people, mostly in the English-speaking countries. Selected articles from *Sechaba* can now be read in translation, in Italian and French editions produced by solidarity organisations in Italy and Canada, in consultation with the ANC offices in Rome and Toronto.

All the organisations and individuals who read *Sechaba* do so because of our politics, because *Sechaba* is the voice of the ANC.

The chief task of *Sechaba* has been to publicise and analyse the situation within the country, and to make public the policy of the ANC.

Over the years, the editorial line has been consistent. *Sechaba* has printed important policy statements, like the annual January 8th message, and statements made by the President, the Secretary-General and the Treasurer-General to the Organisation for African Unity, and other international forums. Lately, as statements are issued after 'talks' between the ANC and other bodies, we have printed these.

*Sechaba* has commented on and analysed the repression within South Africa, and the resistance of the people. It has dealt with the bantustans, for example, starvation, housing, homelessness and resettlement, prison conditions, political trials, health and education and policies for the future, women's struggles, wages, working conditions and the growth of trade unions, the sham elections, the battles in the townships, and many other matters. We have celebrated ANC leaders of the past, and heroes of the present.

In recent years, as more and more members of the ANC have sent in contributions, there have





been debates, like the present debate on the future conduct of the struggle, the role of Umkhonto We Sizwe among the people and the final seizure of power. (It is interesting to see, as long ago as December 1969, an article that argued: "since South African cities have always been storm centres of resistance, urban struggle tactics can be readily integrated into a guerrilla strategy.")

*Sechaba* has carried reports on overseas investments in South Africa, South African economic expansion into other African countries, and the role of the multinationals. Throughout the years, *Sechaba* has demonstrated the ANC's awareness that South Africa is not isolated, that our struggle does not stand alone, that there are struggles for liberation, struggles against colonialism and imperialism taking place elsewhere in Africa and throughout the world.

During the war in Vietnam, we showed our support for the courageous, fighting people of that country; we have expressed our alliance with SWAPO and the people of Namibia; we showed our solidarity with Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in their peoples' fight against colonialism, and since these countries became independent we have worked to expose the efforts of the Pretoria regime to destabilise them. We have shown our support for the Polisario Front, for the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, for the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, for the fight for freedom in El Salvador and East Timor.

We have printed messages of solidarity sent to us by our friends and allies, and reports of solidarity actions in many other parts of the world.

*Sechaba* has always expressed a consciousness that the ANC is part of an international movement against imperialism, a world-wide struggle against a common enemy. In the issue of February 1970, there appeared an article by Comrade Alfred Nzo, Secretary-General of the ANC, entitled, *Our Anti-Imperialist Commitment*, and his words are as fresh today as they were then:

"... the South African racists who cling to apartheid are an integral and key part of the sinister plot of exploitation by the imperialists on an international scale ... There is no other country in the world in which the imperialists have been prepared to relegate their differences to the background and unite their efforts economically, technically and militarily as they have done in South Africa ... the African National Congress of South Africa will not be found wanting in the forums of the anti-imperialist movement nor in action in its own sector, South Africa and Southern Africa ... With the massive assistance of the mighty and invincible anti-imperialist forces, victory will be ours and fascism, racism and imperialism will rapidly approach their day of doom."



# M P NAICKER

## FIRST EDITOR OF SECHABA



The first editor of *Sechaba* was Marimuthu Pragalathan Naicker, popularly known as 'MP', an outstanding political leader and a gifted journalist. The story of his life spans an important period in the development of our movement, from the first mass actions to the beginnings of mass international solidarity with our fight for liberation.

MP was born in Durban in 1920. As a very young man, he identified himself with the struggle against national and class oppression, joining the Natal Indian Congress and the Communist Party, and becoming active in the trade union movement. While still in his early twenties, he left his job to work as a full-time political and trade union organiser.

### **Militant Policies in the NIC**

His strong political stand and his organising ability soon showed themselves in the Natal Indian Congress. He was an activist in the Anti-Segregation Council which, arising from what was called the 'nationalist bloc' within the NIC, campaigned for mass membership and militant policies, and laid the foundations for the subsequent Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946. He also became full-time secretary of the Sugar Field Workers' Union in Natal, and began to make contact with the workers in the cane fields, among the most oppressed and exploited of the South African people.

In 1946, he became secretary of the Passive Resistance Council, planning mass protest against Smuts' 'Ghetto Act,' which sought to segregate Indians by forbidding them to buy land outside areas they already occupied. As a result of the protest, he spent four months in gaol.

He then became secretary of the NIC.

As a political thinker, he saw beyond the liberation of his own national group, and fought for an end to the oppression of all Black people in his country. In 1952, the Defiance Campaign Against Unjust Laws gave expression to an alliance that had been growing between the national organisations. The Natal Indian Congress, the Transvaal Indian Congress and, in the Cape,



the South African Coloured People's Organisation joined with the ANC in this campaign. Together with Comrade M B Yengwa of the ANC, MP was joint secretary of the Natal Joint Action Committee. Thousands of 'volunteers' throughout the country defied the laws; MP was one of them, and was twice arrested and gaoled.

### **Banned by the Regime**

Banned under the Suppression of Communism Act in 1952, he was forced to resign from office in the NIC. He worked in Durban as local editor and manager of the paper *New Age*, which was at that time the voice of the Congress movement.

He continued to organise, and in 1956, he was one of the 156 activists arrested on a charge of treason, a charge connected with the Congress of the People at Kliptown in 1955, where the Freedom Charter was adopted. All the accused spent two weeks in the Fort in Johannesburg before being released on bail, and after that, while on trial in Johannesburg, he supervised the staff of helpers in the *New Age* office when he visited Durban during adjournments.

### **Gaoled Repeatedly**

When the charges against him were dropped, he returned to full-time work, but he was arrested again, at the beginning of the state of emergency that followed the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, and imprisoned for four months. In gaol he attended a Zulu language class run by Comrade M B Yengwa, and learned to speak Zulu well. "He was truly an African," Comrade Yengwa says today. "He understood Zulu culture and understood Zulu jokes."

On his release, MP returned to full-time work again, but the paper he worked on was soon to come to an end. Over the years, it had survived many bannings and changes of name. As the Communist Party paper, *The Guardian*, it had been banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, and another paper, *The Clarion*, had risen in its place. *People's World* succeeded *The Clarion*, after that came *Advance*, and then *New Age*. In the early sixties, after the banning of *New Age*, the paper appeared again, under the name of *Spark*, but *Spark* was extinguished when all its key workers were served with banning orders that prevented them from taking part in the preparation of anything for publication and even from entering premises where publication was carried on.

Those were dark days for our movement. MP was one of the activists who continued to work illegally. In 1963, he was detained under the 90-day detention law, and charged, together with 24 Africans, with furthering the aims of the underground ANC. Seven people were convicted in that trial.

MP was acquitted, but arrested and detained again in 1964, this time under the 180-day detention law. The time had come for him to work elsewhere. After his release, he left the country and went to London, where he was later joined by his wife, Saro, and their children.

### **International Work**

The ANC appointed him External Director of Information and Publicity, and he went to work once more, setting up *Sechaba* and editing it almost single-handed. The scope of his work had broadened yet again; he was concerned with building connections between the ANC and progressive forces throughout the world.

He became a member of the Executive of the International Organisation of Journalists, based in Prague. In 1971, the IOJ awarded him its pin in gold, and in 1976 — a high honour for his services to journalism — the Julius Fucik award, named after a brave journalist who was captured, tortured and killed by the Nazis during the occupation of Czechoslovakia in World War II.

In the course of his work for *Sechaba*, MP travelled often between London and the German Democratic Republic, and it was on the plane to Berlin that he died of a heart attack, in April 1977.

He was given a hero's funeral in London, and messages came from fraternal organisations in many parts of the world. In his speech, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, Chairman of the South African Communist Party and former President of the South African Indian Congress, said MP had been: "... a South African patriot and revolutionary whose life's work was to consolidate the unity of the Black people and all revolutionaries in the freedom struggle."

MP was a tireless worker, a political activist of ability, dedication and integrity. He played an important part in making our movement what it is now, and was the kind of cadre whose memory remains to inspire us today, ten years after his death.



*ON THE DEATH OF A  
SOUTH AFRICAN  
FREEDOM FIGHTER*

*Your warm love, undaunted,  
Was bestowed on Black people in pain,  
The deprived, the downtrodden, the poor  
The oppressed who had nothing at all  
But the hope that you gave them again.*

*Too soon was your passing  
And my weeping was sore  
But in all you believed  
That you knew to be great  
I have joined you once more.*

*The richness of life  
That your sympathy gave  
Seemed to end with the blow  
Of that loss, but your strength  
Still lives on, even after the grave.*

*Many others, inspired  
By you, brave and kind,  
Are striving on, fired  
By your strength and your love  
For the task that another great man left behind.*

*SN*



# BOOK REVIEW

*Apartheid, Imperialism and African Freedom*, William J Pomeroy, International Publishers, New York, 1986

The pace of events in South Africa in the last decade has caused men and women of letters to write. Works have come and gone. This will be one of those that remain. Pomeroy's agility in intermeshing fact, argument and numerical data certainly warms one with the fire of faith.

Treating the interaction between the English and Dutch colonial forces, Pomeroy argues that British colonial rule itself reinforced the oppression of the Black majority, treating them as cheap labour on which colonial fortunes were made. It was cheap labour, he says, which dug out the gold and diamonds in the world's deepest pits. British colonial policies included denial of political rights to Africans, pass laws, job reservation for Whites and other discriminatory acts.

All this explains the ease with which British, American and other interests adjusted themselves to Afrikaner ascendancy to power in 1948. The goal of Afrikaner nationalism and White supremacy demanded the perpetuation of a massive system of cheap labour for super-exploitation, generating great profits and wealth for Whites, nationally and internationally.

Pomeroy proves that sanctions do work. But what has been happening is a deliberate and systematic demolition of all attempts to impose economic sanctions against South Africa.

As imperialist investment in South Africa continued to grow the imperialist defence of the racist system became more determined. Investors' confidence in the durability of the apartheid regime was reinforced by a vast military build-up. A reason had to be sought to justify continued relations with the apartheid regime.

A plan took shape. South Africa was to be the African post of the overall imperialist strategy, an ally of global reaction. For that reason, the US National State Security Memorandum 39, 'Operation Tar Baby,' was born; a US strategy for preserving White supremacy in South Africa and safeguarding investments.

The US took the lead with the aim: "to preserve the complete freedom of US corporations to operate, to maintain unrestricted access to cheaply obtained raw material and labour and to retain or develop anti-democratic structures of local

government amenable to such control." But more than that, South Africa was to facilitate the transformation of Africa into an arena of global international conflict, anti-communism and the cold war.

One aspect of this strategy is a training programme for African civil servants. Another is the libraries all over the continent set up by the US Information Agency, with selected volumes; this vehicle for indoctrination issues tons of free literature, holds seminars and lectures, and, leaving no avenue of influence untrodden, has set up a Voice of America transmitter in Botswana.

All these activities have been tied up with the expansion of CIA operations. According to Pomeroy, there were 40 CIA stations and 3 500 agents on the continent in 1984.

What of 'constructive engagement'? Pomeroy says that under Reagan this framework provided the justification for US-led international reaction to shield racist South Africa from boycotts and sanctions. Proof: South Africa was declared a wartime ally; at the UN, US support for Pretoria has been unmatched; in the first three years of the Reagan administration more arms and equipment flowed to South Africa than in the past 30 years.

Another facet of 'constructive engagement' was an attack on the ANC and SWAPO; a Congressional hearing in 1982 dubbed the two organisations "terrorist" and "Moscow surrogates." William Casey visited Pretoria just after the murder of Ruth First; armed aggression was stepped up in Front Line States, and the Namibian question was shelved when the issue of Cuban troops was introduced; internal repression in South Africa and Namibia was heightened.

Pomeroy concludes his book by showing how apartheid is leading to its own inevitable collapse. He also analyses the failure of the bantustan policy, the inadequacy of reforms, and exposes quite unreservedly the crimes of Gatsha Buthelezi. He deals with the Azanian factor, and finally the mass democratic movement and the role of the liberation alliance led by the ANC.

Lucid, concise and sharp, Pomeroy is no newcomer in the theatre of class struggle. This book is worth reading by everyone dealing with anti-apartheid politics.

PC



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LE GRANGE  
ATTENTION

YOUR TEAR GAS  
RUBBER BULLETS  
WONT STOP THE  
ON GOING  
MILITANT PROTEST