

# The African Communist

NO 57 SECOND QUARTER 1974

**BANTUSTANS  
BLACK  
POWER  
THE WHITE  
OPPOSITION**

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## **THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST**

*Published quarterly in the interests of  
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Marxist-Leninist thought throughout  
our Continent, by the  
South African Communist Party*

**No. 57 Second Quarter 1974**

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## EDITORIAL NOTES



# CAPITALISM, OIL & THE THIRD WORLD

Oil! How many millions of words about it have poured out in parliaments and boardrooms, in press, radio and television since the oil producers began to flex their oil muscles for intervention in the war on the shores of the Suez Canal. Every aspect of oil, of price, volume, production, reserves, future, alternatives, has dominated the politics and economics of the non-socialist world. And will doubtless continue to do so for some time to come; for suddenly the seemingly rugged monolith of modern imperialism has had its under-belly exposed, and shown to be soft and vulnerable. Oil which formerly smoothed and lubricated the machines of western technology has suddenly disclosed a contradictory capacity to jar the works into disorder.

To understand the whole significance of the matter, and to evaluate every influence which oil will have in our world in the years ahead will

be a long task, and difficult. But clearly some of the present theorising is too facile, or even dangerously misleading.

In the main imperialist countries, for example, where economic conditions generally are worsening and approaching in many respects to crisis levels, it is too easy to explain it all away as a result of "the oil crisis". As though, if only the Arab states had not decided to cut back supplies of crude oil as a lever on the west to seek a settlement of Palestinian claims to their homeland – if only the oil producing states had not decided to impose steep rises in the price of their crude oil, the whole economic decline would not have happened.

Too simple! Too deliberately misleading! The near crisis which grips the western world was in the making long before the war in the Middle East, long before oil supplies were cut back or prices raised. The signs were to be discerned in every facet of life, even if not so assertive and unmistakable as they are now that the instability of oil has been added. Now everywhere, even in the heartlands of western imperialism where only yesterday there was talk of "economic miracles", unemployment is beginning to rise steeply from those high levels which have been accepted as a chronic incurable disease of the system. Production levels generally are in decline; but paradoxically – revealing the real parasitic nature of the system – prices rise ever more steeply as earnings decline. The gravest declines take place in the vital productive industries – steel, coal, machines – while the 'growth industries' become increasingly the parasitic inessentials like advertising and merchandising. Essential social services, transport, education, posts, telephones and refuse removal, are crippled by inadequate financing and stumble to ever lower levels of inefficiency; at the same time record profits – loot beyond the dreams of the great train robbers – are being scored up, not by the industrial tycoons of yesteryear, but in the parasitic fields of property speculation, company take-overs and mergers which contribute nothing to the general welfare of the people.

These sicknesses are not new. The germs were discerned and described accurately by Marx over one hundred years ago. In their incubation period, it was possible to find a justification in the fact that whatever else capitalism did, it promoted a rapidly expanding system of production and thus made goods and services more widely available than had ever been dreamed of before. But the germs have now incubated; and the disease has eaten away whatever living growth there was.

The system is now moribund, its productive thrust spent. Not because of the shortage of oil, *but in spite of the recklessness with which oil has been consumed*; not because of the high oil price, *but in spite of the low prices foisted by powerful imperial cartels on weak, often feudal producers*. Capitalism is the sickness of the western world; not oil.

## OPEC

Oil has been one of the most important and profitable of all fields which western imperialism opened up for exploitation in the less-developed areas of the world. For decades the oil was seized, almost at will, by vast capitalist cartels, backed by military and political power. Unwilling local rulers were ruthlessly overturned, servile local tyrants installed in royal and quasi-royal thrones without regard to the wishes of the people. Oil flowed out in ever greater quantities to fuel the industrial empires, the armies, navies and airforces of the west; in return, the producing states have remained under-developed, their people generally poor, deprived, uneducated, even though some of their puppet rulers disported themselves in the sort of wealth epitomised by the Arabian-Nights-style party given last year by the Shah of Iran to celebrate himself. Of all the profits from foreign investment reported by Britain, Holland and the USA in 1971, 39% were derived from oil. The parasitic nature of western imperialism, feeding on the body of the colonial producers, has never been more explicit than in what oil has made of western imperialism and what it has made of the people in the producing countries.

It would be comforting to believe that that parasitic relationship had been ended by the recent actions of OPEC. Comforting but facile. OPEC was formed in 1960, when the international oil cartels were forcing down the price to be paid to the producers for their oil. For the next ten years, OPEC succeeded generally in arresting the decline in price per barrel, but produced little change in the overall relations between the producers and the cartels. But since 1970, the picture has begun to shift more significantly. So far as Middle Eastern producers are concerned, per barrel payments rose from 1970 to 73 by some 70% – impressive, even though the gains were minimised by the simultaneous devaluation of the dollar. But more significant than price gains have been the moves by Iraq, Libya and Algeria to nationalise their oil

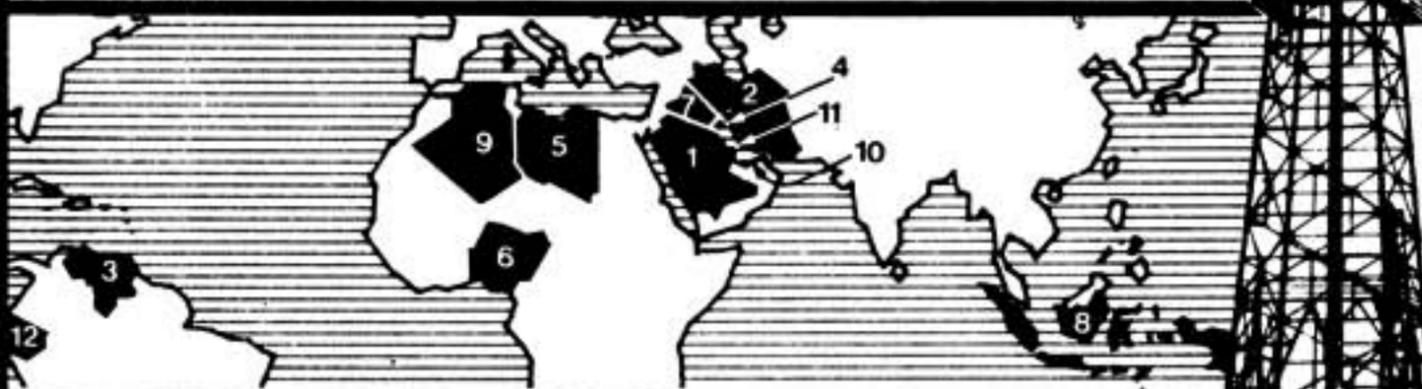
# ABC of OPEC

## Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries

Founded: September 14, 1960 HQ: Vienna

Secretary General: Abderrahman Khene (Algeria)

Aims: To unify oil policies within the member countries



M173

### Production 1972 (In thousand metric tons)

Members	Production 1972 (In thousand metric tons)			
	50,000	150,000	250,000	
1 SAUDI ARABIA	[Bar extending past 250,000]			287,490
2 IRAN	[Bar extending past 150,000]			251,310
3 VENEZUELA	[Bar extending past 150,000]			167,200
4 KUWAIT	[Bar extending past 150,000]			151,480
5 LIBYA	[Bar extending past 100,000]			108,210
6 NIGERIA	[Bar extending past 100,000]			90,410
7 IRAQ	[Bar extending past 50,000]			69,580
8 INDONESIA	[Bar extending past 50,000]			53,850
9 ALGERIA	[Bar extending past 50,000]			52,340
10 ABU DHABI	[Bar extending past 50,000]			51,100
11 QATAR	[Bar extending past 50,000]			22,950
12 EQUADOR	[Bar extending past 50,000]			3,490
<b>Total OPEC production</b>				<b>1,309,410</b>
<b>Total world production</b>				<b>2,612,690</b>

Cardinal rule: 'Member countries should not benefit from each other's misfortunes.'

installations; Iran followed in 1973.

The relationship however remains unequal, even after nationalisation has taken back the wells from the foreign cartels. However skilfully or determinedly the producing nations bargained for an acceptable price, in the end the whip hand was held by others. Oil must be produced; if it is not, left beneath the soil it remains a paper 'asset' of the sort only company directors understand – incapable of satisfying any single aspiration of the people who live above it, incapable of changing in any way their age-old conditions of poverty. The producer nations cannot use it themselves, for the era of imperialism has left them without any industrial base or technology needing more than the tiniest amounts. Perhaps in time they will develop their own demand for oil as their societies advance; today they can only trade it abroad at the best possible terms, so as to be able to buy from abroad the manufactured goods of the west. At prices the west will fix. Those prices are already rising steeply to redress the rise in oil prices.

### **TO THOSE THAT HATH**

It is impossible to attempt to estimate what monetary wealth will accrue to the oil producing countries from the new price rates. The figures stagger the imagination, even though as an Arab commentator has observed bitterly, for every 10 cents going to the producer countries on each gallon of petrol, twenty or more are going to the consumer countries in tax. Nevertheless, the Shah of Iran interviewed by British television speaks confidently of future levels of Iranian wealth only formerly dreamt of by the ruling class of the British Empire, in the days when the sun allegedly never set upon it. Perhaps so. One estimate forecasts that the Middle Eastern members of OPEC by 1990 will be receiving an oil income of between 150 and 200 thousand million dollars per year, compared to 23 thousand million last year.

There are, however, aspects of this windfall which recall that biblical essay in political economy, which predicts that “. . . to those that hath shall be given. But from those that hath not shall be taken even that which they hath.” Those that hath not, in the oil equation, today include all the under-developed countries, the former colonies of Africa, Asia and Latin America, except those fortunate few who possess oil

resources. These, the majority of the 'third world' nations will have to purchase the oil needed so desperately for their development; and pay the new, higher prices. If the new oil situation, then, is initiating a redistribution of income between the oil producers and the great consumers, it will also make more acute the inequality of income between the oil producers and the rest of the developing nations. The rich will grow richer, and the poor poorer.

India for example faces an oil bill which was \$415 million last year, will be \$1,350 this year and \$1,630 next. Payments on this scale are beyond her resources; there will have to be a steep reduction in her imports of oil, and since much of this is used to make fertiliser, there are real prospects of a steep reduction in fertiliser production, a fall in food production, and real threat of serious famine. In Africa the problems are not different in kind, only in scale. Between them all, the developing countries of Africa consumed only 49 million tons of oil last year — a little more than Holland, less than half that used by Britain. Even before the last round of price increases, and even at their minimal level of consumption, developing Africa cannot meet the new prices without catastrophic setbacks. Ghana's bill, for example, it is estimated will go up from \$25 million last year to \$85 million by next year — at the same level of consumption. And Kenya's from \$40 million to \$140 million. Thus, without special devices to change matters, the new found wealth of the OPEC countries spells new, even more crippling levels of poverty for the rest of the under-developed world.

The colonial peoples have always been the victim of the 'scissors' effect of imperialism — on the one hand a lowering of their income by imperialist manipulation of raw-material prices on the world market; on the other increasing expenditure, through rising prices for manufactured goods imported from abroad. Oil left alone to the vagaries of the capitalist market place, exemplifies at its swiftest and most brutal, the slashing destruction of the 'scissors' effect on the third world.

African governments, conscious of this new threat, have put forward several plans; amongst them was the proposal that a specially low oil price should be set for sales to the less developed countries. That proposal has been quickly extinguished. It has been made clear that, "because of the nature of the world oil trade" such a policy of differential pricing cannot work. Chiefly it cannot work because the international traffic in oil is still in the hands of the western imperialist

cartels, the so-called 'multi-nationals' – Standard Oil, Mobiloil, Texas and Gulf of the United States, BP and Shell of Britain and Holland, and Compagnie Francaise de Petrol. The producers may control what goes on within their own borders and between the wells and their ports. But once the oil is on the high seas the multi-nationals take over, operating almost as a law unto themselves unrestrained by governments. It is for this reason that, at the height of the Arab restriction on sales of petrol to the USA, tankers were still leaving British ports carrying Arab petrol to the USA. It is for this reason that despite the proclaimed restriction on Arab oil supplies to South Africa which is almost totally dependent on Middle Eastern supplies, tankers from the multi-national shippers continued to dock and offload at South African ports, allowing consumption to go on with only the smallest restrictions.

The multi-national oil monopolists bestride the capitalist sector of the world. Whatever the producers might propose on price, imperialism will dispose. Oil imperialism is not a philanthropic undertaking; it is cold hard business. If the producing states sell some oil cheap, the cartels which monopolise the refining and transporting of it abroad will turn that very cheapening into increased profits; let the poor of the undeveloped world look after themselves! For this reason, African consumers can look to no differential prices to solve their real desperate economic needs.

As the only feasible alternative yet proposed, it has been suggested that OPEC set up a fund to aid the development of black Africa. A figure of \$1,000 million is being discussed. The sum sounds impressive. Yet it amounts only to one tenth of the totally inadequate economic assistance to the poor countries from the highly industrialised last year. And this year, with the industrialised countries themselves in the grip of encroaching crisis and their own financial houses in disorder, economic aid is likely to be severely cut back. So the OPEC fund, when it is established, will be plugging some of the gaping holes through which Africa's resources are draining away to the more advanced, industrialised and wealthy. It will not be filling them.

If these are words of scant cheer, they are needed to correct the euphoria in many African and pro-African circles, which have been bemused and dazzled by the sudden riches – and thus also influence – which accrue to the oil producing countries. Certainly, there is real cause for satisfaction. For after decades as the playthings and victims

of the imperial powers, these countries with their tiny populations, have taken back what is theirs. Justice is thus being done; and the process of national liberation from imperial domination is being advanced. Greetings to their gains! And more power to their independence!

And yet there is no room for euphoria. Wealth and riches there will be, for some. Something – often not enough, but yet something of that wealth will spin off to lighten the lives of the ordinary people of the producing nations, to ease the crushing burden of their poverty, to raise their standards of education and of health, to restore their culture and their dignity.

But in the end, it is not wealth of natural resources that tells, or even monetary wealth accumulated in national coffers, as any miner from South Africa's gold reefs will know. What tells is not what wealth, but whose? Not volume of production, but what sort of society produces it; not prices charged in the commodity markets, but what are the class relations within the society. Capitalism has always produced – at one end of the social scale – vast accumulations of wealth accompanied by extravagant expenditure, luxury and ease; it has also produced – in greater quantity and more universally – extreme poverty, mass hunger at the other. The accumulation of wealth has not led to a levelling upwards in the social and economic conditions of peoples, but to a greater and still widening gap between rich and poor. It is the nature of the system. Those who own the means of production feed on the exploitation of those who have nothing to sell but their ability to labour – a relationship which, however well disguised in trade treaties and market-place jargon, remains that of parasitism.

Can the new oil fortunes change all that? The Shah of Iran, asked by a British television interviewer to explain what his country will do with its rapidly accumulating capital resources, said bluntly "We will invest them in your country just as you once did in ours". If this is the way things are to be, it might make some change only on the surface, not in the essence of our world. Some of those who yesterday wore rags might wear silk; and vice versa. But for the majority of the peoples of the world, what sort of change is that? Capitalism remains sick and parasitic wherever it is, as incapable of making a stable, secure and expanding life for the working people of Iran as it is currently showing itself to be for the working people of Britain or of the slums of New

York. In the end the issue is one of class relations within the society.

The deepening crisis in Western capitalism proclaims again that our world has outlived the old moribund social order. The contrasting stable and steady advance of standards of life in the socialist world proclaim that here – in the direction of socialism – lies the immediate future of mankind.

Oil has made the chronic instability of the capitalist world even more unstable. This is the time when working people everywhere need to be persuaded that their dreams of liberation cannot be achieved through international oil manipulation. And that there is no other way out now to reconstruct our world without the ugly sores of imperialism than there was last year – through the transformation of the class structure of society, and through transfer of the wealth of society to the social ownership of the working population.

The only cure for capitalism remains socialism. Oil notwithstanding!

## OIL, IMPERIALISM AND SOUTH AFRICA

Towards the end of November, 1973, the foreign ministers of 38 African countries meeting at an emergency session of the Council of Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity appealed to the world to impose “a total economic embargo and in particular an oil embargo” against Israel, South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia. The resolution adopted by the Council of Ministers stated that they were “convinced that the evil acts of colonialism, the racist and segregationist regimes of southern Africa, and the expansionist designs of belligerent Israel are part of a co-ordinated policy in an attempt to encircle and dominate the entire African continent”.

In support of the Arab countries’ struggle against Israel, one African country after another severed relations with the Israeli Government in the weeks following the October war, and today Israel has hardly a friend left in black Africa outside Banda’s Malawi. In response to the OAU appeal, the 16 Arab governments who attended the Arab summit in Algiers a week later voted to impose an oil embargo as requested. The unity in the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab countries and Africa was closer than ever before.

Why, then, has South Africa apparently suffered less from the oil crisis flowing from the October war than many a Western country accepted by the Arab countries as friends? True, there were some restrictions on motoring – an 80 kilometre per hour upper speed limit (50 kph in built-up areas) and no night or week-end sales of petrol. But by the end of January, 1974, South Africa felt itself so secure that the Minister of Economic Affairs, S.L. Muller, was able to announce (a) the lifting of the speed limit in built up areas, and (b) the countermanding of the proposed petrol rationing scheduled for March 1st, 1974. Muller said that though the oil supply position was far from satisfactory, the fuel conservation measures had yielded favourable results and the Government felt that the cost of petrol rationing would be so high and would involve so many potential disadvantages that it should, if at all possible, be delayed or avoided.

The only Southern African country to be hard hit by the oil crisis in the early months after the October war was Rhodesia, which introduced rationing at the end of January. Rhodesia imports all its oil from South Africa and Mozambique. Since both these countries had up to then managed to avoid rationing, it would appear that Rhodesia's move was related more to her general shortage of foreign exchange flowing from the UN sanctions campaign than directly to the Arab boycott, though this may have been the last straw. The increasing guerrilla attacks on the Mozambique-Rhodesia railway were undoubtedly also an important factor, threatening one of the Smith regime's vital lines of supply.

South Africa's comparative immunity to the oil embargo is due to a variety of factors. First, about 80 per cent of the country's energy requirements come from sources other than oil, mainly cheap coal mined by underpaid slave labour, and hydro-electric power, with the prospect of more to come from Cabora Bassa, the Kunene project, the development of vast uranium deposits recently discovered, and natural gas from Pande in Mozambique.

Of South Africa's annual oil consumption, about 10 per cent comes from the oil-from-coal plant SASOL, and the Government has announced plans to increase SASOL output by about 40 per cent. This possibility of building a second SASOL is also under consideration.

The remainder of South Africa's oil comes from the Arab states and Iran. In 1972 South Africa imported nearly 100 million barrels, of

which Iran supplied 37.8 million, Saudi Arabia 23.9 million, Iraq 18.3 million and the small Gulf states of Qatar, Oman and Abu Dhabi the rest. Iran is not only not a party to the Arab boycott; she is also a partner in South Africa's refinery Natref at Sasolburg, and therefore unlikely to do anything to harm her own interests bound up in the South African oil industry.

The South African Government has also been stockpiling oil for years in anticipation of a possible boycott, and her reserves are variously estimated at between two and three years' supply.

But the main reason for the failure of the Arab oil boycott to bite more deeply are the obstacles in the way of the Arab countries in their proclaimed resolve to turn off South Africa's oil tap. We may be fairly sure that no Arab oil is poured into tankers marked 'destination Durban'. No, Arab oil is sold to the multi-national oil companies, and how they dispose of it nobody knows. Even if the multi-nationals were to accept Arab stipulations that none of their oil was to be shipped to South Africa, it would merely be replaced by oil from American, Angolan or Venezuelan wells, for one thing is certain: the multi-nationals would never harm the South African oil industry because they would merely be harming themselves.

The *Financial Mail* reported on November 16, 1973: "South Africa, internationally, is small beer in terms of consumption. But it is a stable market, price controlled, and the international majors that operate here (Mobil, Shell, Caltex, BP, Total, Esso and Sonap) enjoy doing the business. With a capital investment approaching R200 million, sales of refined petroleum products last year went well over R1,000 million." All but one of South Africa's crude oil refineries are owned by the internationals, and even that one depends on supplies from and deliveries to the international network in South Africa.

One can only guess at the enormous profits made by the oil companies from their South African trade, for they will not tell you themselves. A recent confidential report on the operations of Caltex (jointly owned by the American companies Texaco and Standard Oil) admits that "the total Caltex Oil investment in South Africa is approximately 100 million dollars in marketing and refining operations", and adds: "The operations of Caltex Oil in South Africa have been profitable, but Caltex Oil does not publish its annual earnings; its figures are, however, reflected in the consolidated financial statements of its owner com-

panies. The profits of Caltex Oil are considered to be competitive and proprietary information.”

Caltex tries to justify its presence in South Africa by the specious claim: “Caltex Oil is a substantial taxpayer in South Africa, and to the extent that such taxes were used by the Government of South Africa to finance its national health, educational and other social programmes, Caltex Oil indirectly contributes to the support of such programmes.”

By the same token – and more important from our point of view – Caltex contributes to the South African Government’s defence, police, prisons and apartheid budgets which swallow a far larger quantity of the country’s taxes. If this is to be the criterion, then all the international oil companies are guilty accomplices and major props of the racist South African regime, and they know it.

The report also boasts of the donations made by Caltex to ‘good causes’ in South Africa totalling 127,400 dollars, of which 7,000 dollars went to the South African Foundation, the big business apologist for the South African regime. To reverse a well-known slogan: Not only must injustice be done, but it must not be seen to be done!

The South African share of the oil trade in the Republic is growing, and the bigger it grows, the more the interests of the multi-nationals and the apartheid regime will become intertwined. Moreover, the ‘deurmekaarboedery’ extends beyond South Africa’s frontiers. South Africa already has interests in Angolan oil. In 1969 a South African consortium headed by the Afrikaans General Mining and Finance Corporation (linked with the Anglo-American Corporation) signed an agreement with the Portuguese company Angol under which the South Africans obtained a 50 per cent share in Angol’s concessions. Angol itself is linked with the French company Total, and is engaged in projects involving most of the other multi-national companies in Angola. South African interests are also engaged in the search for oil in Mozambique.

The lesson of all this for the freedom movement in South Africa, for its allies in Africa and the Arab world, is clear. The African-Arab attempt to impose an oil embargo on South Africa has been suffocated by the multi-national oil companies, who ignore all moral considerations in their ruthless pursuit of profit. This does not mean that the admirable fraternal Arab response to the appeal of the OAU countries for an oil embargo was wrong or that the boycott must now be abandoned. On

the contrary, what is now called for is that the Arab and African countries should take all possible steps to ensure that the boycott becomes effective. This they can do by using their new found strength to prevent the oil monopolies from sabotaging the Arab intentions.

The problems posed by the oil boycott demonstrate once again that the struggle against apartheid is inevitably linked with the struggle against imperialism the world over. South Africa plays in Africa essentially the same role as Israel in the Middle East as a bastion of world imperialism. On October 14, the *Sunday Times* reported that General H.J. van den Bergh, security adviser to the Prime Minister and head of the Bureau of State Security (BOSS), "believes that the survival of Israel and South Africa are linked.

"At his first meeting with the Prime Minister after his return from a visit to Israel earlier this year, he told Mr Vorster: 'As long as Israel exists we have hope. If Israel were to be destroyed, South Africa would also pass from this world'."

The Arab-Israeli conflicts have exposed Zionism as a weapon of imperialism in its struggle to perpetuate the exploitation of the countries and peoples of the third world. Apartheid South Africa is another weapon of the same bore and calibre in the imperialist arsenal. The October war and its aftermath have demonstrated that the countries of the third world, in alliance with the world communist movement, are more than a match for the imperialists provided they maintain the unity of action and purpose which was so magnificently demonstrated in that period.

## **LIBERALS UNDER THE LASH**

Last February, seven white students and one white university lecturer were banned by the Vorster government in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, together with eight black officers of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and the Black People's Convention. Since then there have been over 70 banning orders issued, the majority of them against members of SASO and BPC, but also against activists in newly-formed organisations such as the Black Community Programme and the Black Allied Workers' Union. Always when repression strikes in South Africa, it strikes first at the radical blacks.

But this time, the repressive drive extends — as inevitably in South African affairs it will — to the white opposition as well as the black. If the banning of eight whites at the universities represented an attack on radicals — though the extent of the students' radicalism is not very clear — the attack which has since been launched on those associated with the Christian Institute, the Institute of Race Relations, the church-sponsored Sprocas committee and the National Union of SA Students is unquestionably a drive against the moderate, the liberal opposition; one would be hard put to find evidence enough to convince even the most right-wing of observers that there is any radicalism here.

Yet the government has gone to extraordinary lengths to attempt to snuff them out. It has appointed a Parliamentary sub-committee under the chairmanship of an undistinguished party hack from the Parliamentary caucus, Mr Alwyn Schlebusch, to conduct an inquiry behind locked doors into the affairs of these organisations; and in the face of the refusal of several officers of these organisations to testify at the secret Star Chamber hearings, it has doggedly persecuted them through the courts, and sentenced some of them to fines and/or imprisonment. Thus the first liberal victims of the apartheid juggernaut await only the outcome of their appeals to the higher courts, before becoming the first moderate liberal democrats to tread the path previously reserved for radicals, communists and members of the Congress — through the gates of South Africa's prisons.

In a broad historical sense this progress — if that is the word — better, this progression, was inevitable. It was foreseen, in fact, in a statement issued in 1950 by the first group of real communists to be 'listed' under the Suppression of Communism Act. We are the first, they stated; but inevitably *everyone* of whatever political creed who opposes apartheid, will be dragged into the net of Nationalist persecution. If the moderate liberal opposition to apartheid failed to listen then, and failed then and subsequently to raise their voices in defence of communists and Congressmen, they have opportunity now to ponder their mistakes, and regret them. Their turn has come, as it had to. Thus far, in their refusal to bend before the threats of reprisal, in their determination not to co-operate in their own immolation by the Schlebusch Commission, they have shown the sort of courage that is needed in the face of apartheid. Here perhaps is being laid the beginnings of a new white resistance to the government which is long overdue.

But the reason for the government onslaught on white liberal circles is not to be explained simply by the fact that it was an inevitable progression from the attack on communism and on the national liberation movement. The onslaught takes place *now* because South African developments have forced the Government to desperate measures. Resistance on many fronts, strikes, disaffection and protest have grown up in the past few months on a scale unknown for over ten years. The government reaction is to be seen always violent, always reliant on force alone – in the shooting of miners at Carletonville; in the constantly increasing expenditure on the military and security forces; in the serious large-scale military ‘anti-guerilla’ exercises on the northern borders. All these are part of a get-tough policy, which is the only policy this government can conceive; apartheid cannot be defended by argument or persuasion; and its whole basis and its specious self-justification prohibit any meaningful concessions in the granite front of white supremacy.

Nothing perhaps has alarmed the government so much as the recent mass strike wave amongst black workers, which still throws up constant turmoils and clashes. The Vorster government had developed a method of dealing with its opponents; banish, proscribe or imprison leaders and activists; outlaw organisations; prohibit gatherings and leading organisations. The recipe served in the past when they were dealing with movements like the Communist Party and the African National Congress, whose leaders were there for all to see, whose members and activists were known, photographed and indexed over years by the security police. With the present strike wave, things are different. If there are organisations at work – as surely there must be – they have learnt lessons from the past and do not reveal themselves; if there are leaders, as surely there are, they too have learnt and so have their followers, and they do not come forward into the limelight to be identified and then struck down. The recipe of tough repression, developed by Vorster when Minister of Justice and perfected by his minions when he was Prime Minister, no longer works. The gestapo is without an obvious scapegoat.

And yet they are victims of their own propaganda. For years they have ascribed every protest, every opposition to ‘agitators’ and subversion – never to conditions of life or to popular discontent. So too now. If there are strikes, there *must* be ‘agitators’. If there are agitators

and subversives, the strong arm of state must strike them down! It is the fate of the white liberals that at this time the bully boys can find no other victims, no other 'agitators' or inciters of strike and turmoil than these well-intentioned Christians, so far removed in reality from revolution and violent struggle. This is their tragedy – that they have been forced, unwillingly, into the role of martyrdom for the liberal conscience. It might well also be their triumph.

For within South Africa something stirs. The Rev Beyers Naude and the Christian Institute might not move men to revolution; but the example they and others are setting in the face of victimisation gives another nudge, another small motion to the slow emergence of determined white opposition to the government. The white front, once so solidly united in hostility to the black opposition, shows the first signs of deep internal dissension; the white liberals take the first steps towards principled refusal to co-operate with the government. For the first time, the censorship strikes out to ban an Afrikaans novel, written by one of the foremost Afrikaner intellectuals of the day; and for the first time some of his fellow writers are stung to protest at the ban. The protests, the moves towards open confrontation are timid, feeble. They are like the first steps of the infant – uncertain, stumbling, unclear of direction. And yet they foretell what will be happening tomorrow, proclaiming – like the voice of Galileo – that despite everything their world moves! In the dialectic of the South African struggle, black action gives rise to white government reaction, and this in turn, however feebly, to white counteraction.

## THE SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTION

At about the time this journal will be circulating, there will take place on April 24 what the South African racists please to call a general election. For some readers the event will already be in the past tense when they read these words.

Or rather, the non-event. A general election which is not general because only the 17 per cent of the population whose skin is white are allowed to vote, and the black 83 per cent are automatically disfranchised.

The outcome of the election was never in doubt. There are now 171 seats in the House of Assembly – 165 for South Africa itself (160 in the 1970 election) and six for South West Africa. At the previous election in 1970 the ruling Nationalist Party lost a few seats as a result of the defection of its right wing element represented in the Reconstituted Nationalist Party (HNP).

The breakaway HNP won no seats in that election, but its ultraracist propaganda persuaded many right-wing Nationalists to abstain from voting, and the result was that the opposition United Party won a few seats from the Nationalist Party for the first time since the accession of Dr Malan to power in 1948.

Some of the more optimistic of the UP members began to think that the tide was turning their way, and the shadow Cabinet Ministers began to dream of treading the corridors of power after spending 26 years in the wilderness. Since 1970, however, the Nationalist Party has managed to restore unity in its ranks, while in the last 18 months it has been the United Party which has been split from top to bottom by a quarrel over the race question between its liberal and conservative wings, its *verligtes* and *verkramptes*, as explained in the article on page 77 of this issue.

The pre-election strength of the parties in the House of Assembly was: Total number of seats 166, of which the Nationalist Party held 118 seats, United Party 47 seats, Progressive Party 1 seat. All these parties have been in the field again, plus the HNP and a new Democratic Party headed by the former Nationalist Cabinet Minister Theo Gerdener.

While the HNP stands to the right of the Nationalist Party, the Democratic Party stands between the Nationalist and United Parties and calls for a consensus between the two on the race question. Traditional loyalties and past precedents make it inevitable that the smaller parties should be eliminated, though the Progressive Party's Mrs Suzman has always been a special case.

As for the United Party, racked by division as it has been, lacking a meaningful racial policy and with intense personal bitterness amongst the leadership, it stands no chance of coming to power either now or in the foreseeable future.

To the black majority watching such elections, one fact stands out – all the contending parties, in one form or another, embody the concept of white supremacy – yes, even the Progressive Party, whose policy of

qualified franchise, though ostensibly non-racial, would still leave White power intact because the number of blacks who could meet the qualifications demanded would be minimal.

Furthermore, the Nationalist Party left nothing to chance. The new electoral delimitation, which added 5 to the total of South African seats, also strengthened the position of the Nationalist Party at the expense of the opposition by still further unloading the rural constituencies and overloading the urban ones. The result is that it takes almost twice the number of voters to return one United Party candidate in the urban areas as it takes to return one Nationalist candidate in the rural areas. This is the reason why the Nationalist Party can win 75 per cent or more of the Assembly seats with barely 60 per cent of the total votes.

Even for the Whites, then, there is no real democracy in South Africa. All the elections are rigged in favour of the pro-apartheid minority.

## MURDER MOST FOUL

The murder of South African Students' leader Abraham Tiro by a parcel bomb delivered to the house at which he was staying in Gaborone, Botswana, on February 1st, was undoubtedly the work of the 'dirty tricks' department of the South African Bureau of State Security BOSS.

Tiro first attracted attention when, as President of the Students' Representative Council at Turfloop, he bravely delivered a stinging attack on Bantu Education in the presence of the dignitaries attending the university's graduation ceremony in 1972. Later he became permanent organiser of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) and was elected President of the Southern African Students' Movement at its first conference in Lesotho.

A living witness to the failure of Bantu Education to produce a generation of brain-washed black stooges devoted to the twisted theory of separate development, Tiro was a marked man. Sacked from his first school job at Soweto, harassed by the police, he sought asylum in Botswana, only to be cruelly done to death by an assassin's bomb.

A statement issued by the Office of the President of Botswana on February 5th placed the blame for his death fairly and squarely on the white racists of South Africa. It said:

“The Government of Botswana has been deeply shocked by the brutal murder of Mr Tiro.

“Mr Tiro had, during the last few years of his life, been an outspoken critic of a so-called South African way of life under which Black South Africans are subjected to racial discrimination and many other indignities. And in speaking out against the denial to Black South Africans of their human rights, Mr Tiro had incurred the deep displeasure of certain powerful circles in South Africa.

“Mr Tiro’s sudden and cruel death will in no way detract from the validity of his criticism of the politicians in South Africa. Nor will it intimidate others from speaking out in that country.

“For its part, the Botswana Government strongly condemns the inhuman and dastardly manner in which Mr Tiro’s life was taken. The Botswana Government wishes to state unequivocally that this kind of terrorism will not make it change its attitude towards those who seek refuge in Botswana from oppression in their own country.”

## **STOP PRESS**

As this issue goes to press, we learn of the explosion at Liberation Centre in Lusaka which led to the death of John Dube, the Deputy Representative of the African National Congress, and the injuring of ANC members Roy Kembelo and Max Sisulu, son of Walter Sisulu who is serving a life sentence on Robben Island.

It is now apparent that the South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS) or its agents are embarking on a systematic campaign directed against members of the liberation movement.

The deaths of our comrades will not intimidate or deter the movement from continuing the fight for liberation. Rather will it increase our determination and resolve to continue the struggle at all levels until freedom is ours. The names of Dube and Tiro must be added to the long list of martyrs in the people’s cause, men and women who have been tortured, maimed and murdered by the White racists because they

have dared to stand up and fight for freedom, equality and justice for their people.

This outrage again demonstrates that the enemy will stop at nothing to maintain the evil system of White domination. We are more than ever convinced of the justice of our cause and the need to answer the enemy in the only language they understand – that of armed revolution.

We pledge to continue the struggle for liberation until the blood-stained era of apartheid, torture and death has been ended and the new world of brotherhood and co-operation outlined in the Freedom Charter has been ushered in.

## PROFITS AND LOSSES

“The latest figures from the Department of Statistics in Pretoria covering profits of the country’s manufacturers show, as most of us suspected, that in the quarter ended with last September, net profits continued their rise; they reached virtually R220 million, not far short of 50 per cent up on the comparable 1972 quarter” – *Star, December 29, 1973.*

“The gold mines of South Africa’s seven major mining houses earned a massive R1,476 million from gold sales in 1973, an increase of 60 per cent on 1972’s income of R924 million” – *Star, January 16, 1974.*

“Figures released in Pretoria yesterday by the Department of Statistics show that between December 1972 and December last year the Consumer Price Index rose by 10 per cent. The food-only index rose by a whopping 17.1 per cent – the biggest increase on record . . . The 10 per cent rise in the CoL means that 75 per cent of the increases granted at the beginning of last year to about 200,000 workers in the public sector have been wiped out” – *Rand Daily Mail, January 23, 1974.*

# **Bantustans; Black Consciousness; White Opposition**

**Some views on aspects of South Africa's problems as seen by members of the South African Communist Party's Central Committee.**

*In our last issue, No. 56, we published a report which was to be presented by the Chairman Dr. Y. Dadoo on behalf of the secretariat to a plenary session of South African Communist Party. The report was titled 'South Africa – A Time of Challenge'.*

*During discussion of that report by the meeting which ranged over a wide spectrum of topics, the analysis of events in the report was unanimously endorsed. A number of important decisions on the implementation of the main tasks of the Party were taken.*

*We print below extracts from some of the points raised in the Central Committee's discussion, particularly with reference to the matters which provoked most debate. The illegal nature of the Party does not allow the individual speakers to be named. But the fact that the majority of them are leading activists in the trade unions, the national liberation movements and in Umkonto we Sizwe lends significance to the individual views expressed.*

## DISCUSSION ON REPORT

**COMRADE A:** Of late many divisions have shown themselves within the white camp whose import we should not exaggerate because they do not reflect contradictions which are fundamentally antagonistic. Nevertheless the divisions are important and we must pay a little more attention to their significance. A few passing examples are: the tensions within the UP symbolised by the recent Steyn-Schwartz split; a slight departure from a crude exposition of the policy of white leadership and much talk against so-called petty apartheid. These symptoms of division in the white camp also present certain dangers to the liberation movement because, in part, some of the recent tendencies are an attempt to woo reformist elements amongst the Black people in favour of compromise on reform. There have been many signs of a growth of understanding between the United Party, the Progressives and certain Bantustan leaders. A fundamental question to ask is whether we are not seeing at least the seeds of a convergence between the African middle class and the white bourgeoisie in order to delay the struggle and to give a longer life to white domination. In this sense the policy of 'sops' constitutes a danger.

In the Bantustans there is the danger of the growth of a middle class which is benefitting from separate development and will begin to support it. These elements are flirting with the Progressives, and the UP. It is significant that the majority of the candidates in the recent Transkei elections who stood on behalf of the Transkeian National Independence Party were retired teachers, businessmen, etc. There is growing evidence that this group is regarded as a potential ally by the white state and that many of them will only too easily lend themselves to becoming part of an anti-Communist front.

Another significant factor is the increasing recognition by the Vorster regime that the Africans, Indians and Coloureds must play a more significant role in the police and armed forces. In order to give them at least a superficial stake in the system of white domination and to obtain their collaboration against the liberation forces, we can expect the granting of more and more concessions in non-fundamental spheres.

The report ought to have analysed in greater detail the significance of the growth of multi-national corporations and the danger that these corporations will constitute even after independence. We are all aware

of the ever-present threat of these corporations to the whole of independent Africa and the way they attempt to undermine Africa's resolve to support real liberation. We must pin-point this danger more than we have in the past.

The strike movement of early 1973 has been correctly analysed in the Report and characterised as historic. We must also record that in one sense, despite the inspirational work of our party and the national liberation movement which has contributed to the growing ferment, our party and the national liberation movement were unable to take maximum advantage of the ferment and to provide effective and speedy leadership. This highlights the need to spread and entrench our illegal apparatus on an even greater scale. Of course, we know that there were levels of co-ordination, but many of the events also developed along spontaneous lines.

The strength shown by the Black proletariat has attracted the attention of circles from the imperialist world. The visit by the British TUC delegation shows a tendency to take advantage of the Black proletariat's potential and to organise them along reformist lines. We must be on our guard against this. This underlines the fact that amongst the most urgent tasks facing the whole liberation movement are the intensification of our presence among the people and the strengthening of the legitimate trade union organisation of the oppressed people – SACTU.

In the Bantustans too we must make our presence felt more effectively and be in a better position to give people guidance during elections and in general to mobilise them against the governments' Bantustan policy. I agree wholeheartedly with the analysis in the Report on the question of the Bantustans. In the face of the increasing talk of a South African Federation and the indirect acceptance of permanent separation, we cannot underestimate the dangers of the emergence of separate nationalisms. We must work out more effective slogans to counteract these tendencies. When the Chiefs met recently they did not come to grips with the real issue. We must as never before intensify our popularisation of the concept of one South Africa based on the principles of the Freedom Charter.

**COMRADE B:** The Bantustan leaders are causing damage to the struggle. Some speak very well about the problems of the people. But in the end their approach is that the fate of the

people must be left in the hands of those appointed by the government to speak for them. I agree that a man like Buthelezi is not an Uncle Tom. He has won a certain amount of respect not only from the Zulus but from a broad section of the South African people. There is less likelihood of a man like that accepting unprincipled compromises if he can be made to feel the pressure of the people. We must stop the 'go kahle' attitude to the Bantustan leaders and not be afraid to criticise them openly when they do things which undermine the struggle.

**COMRADE C:** It is important to devote more attention than in the past to political and ideological work.

A policy of Vietnamisation is taking place inside the country. The ruling class wants to base this process of Vietnamisation on a Black middle class in the knowledge that it will follow a reformist line – a line against the participation of the popular masses in solving the problems of the country, a line that is despondent, that is afraid of armed struggle. A middle class is being created of civil servants, police officials, magistrates, traders etc. The report is correct in emphasising the reformist role of the Bantustan administrators as a whole. The acceptance of the Bantustan scheme is an acceptance of a solution in the interests of the white minority government.

Similar processes are taking place in the towns. For example at a recent meeting Punt Janson, the Bantu Administration Minister, posed the prospect of the transformation of the lives of the Black people in the towns through co-operation with the government. On the trade union front it is clearly the intention of the government, supported by TUCSA and reformist elements outside the country, to ensure that any trade union movement which is created amongst the Black workers can be manipulated within the interests of the White state. Here too Africans are being used to play the White man's role. The same tendency is present in the sporting field, where the government is using some Africans to break SA's isolation. A further indication of this process is the activity of ASSECA\* which has established contact with groups in the US and is putting forward the line of the gradual evolution of rights and powers. Thus the government is attempting to create spokesmen for apartheid amongst Africans on a broad front.

\*Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the African People.

Simultaneously there appears to be a growing movement in white politics which publicly poses the possibility of a different course and tries to draw Africans close to white political organisations. For instance, the last UP Congress questioned the wisdom of continuing on its traditional line of 'White leadership' and spoke more and more of the need 'to share power' with the Black people. The well-publicised Conference on Federalism in East London was dominated by Progressive Party spokesmen. There is increasing talk of reform of the pass laws, and of the need, expressed by government spokesmen like Janson, to get Africans to join hands with Whites.

All these tendencies are connected with the level of the mass struggle. The sharper the struggle, the greater the speed with which the whites will seek to conclude agreements with sections of the African people. Some Africans may be given a better stake in the system in order to be encouraged to defend it more effectively. In short, all this shows that there is a desperate urge in the White camp to find an alternative to the genuine national liberation movement in order to maintain its grip on the social and economic structure.

All this underlines the importance of the role of the working class and its political expressions within the national liberation struggle. Our party has a special role and it will become progressively more important because of what is taking place within the economic structure. The rate of monopolisation is growing and it will have a significant effect on the politics of the country. The Black working class is becoming more concentrated in larger groups at every level of the economy. More and more White workers are being removed from the actual productive processes and put into purely supervisory positions. This process increases the importance of the African working class in the areas of skilled work. They have become less dispensable and less replaceable. It increases the stability of the working class and therefore adds a new dimension to the significance of this most revolutionary force for future struggle.

**COMRADE D:** The Report is one of the most elaborate documents that has been produced in recent years and it is important that its contents are conveyed to the broadest section of our people.

The document has dealt in some detail with the Bantustans, but I

want to emphasise the need to make more clear than we have in the past the reasons for the emergence of the Bantustans. So far in our discussions, what has emerged is a strong feeling against the role being played by the Bantustan leaders. We should not allow such feelings to prevent us from working out a way in which we deal with them without pushing them into the enemy camp. Of course, we must expose the true meaning of the negative things that they say. But when they say things with which we agree, we should support them and point the way to the real solution. We should not overlook the possibility that some of them will, in different situations, throw their weight behind the masses.

Comrade A is right when he emphasises the urgent need to popularise the Freedom Charter. We must remember that a new generation has grown up which, because of the illegality of the national liberation movement, has not had a full opportunity to become aware of the policies of the liberation movement. I agree with the characterisation that what the government is trying to do is to Vietnamise our people. A middle class is being created which will create a safety valve. The attempts to achieve collaboration between the government and sections of the Black people is not unique to South Africa. Of late similar devices are being created by the Portuguese in their colonies including the creation of the Aldeamentos (strategic hamlets). The only answer is the mobilisation of the masses.

Perhaps the report should have dealt in slightly more detail with the insidious role of South Africa in the Western Imperialist *chain*, particularly in Africa.

Is there a prospect of winning the Whites over to our cause? The report does refer to the need to take advantage of the divisions of the White community and, with appropriate safeguards, to win over those White democrats who may be prepared to side with the national liberation movement. It is my belief that our struggle will be helped by creating a situation within which the contradictions inside the White camp are harnessed in our favour. We must keep the door open for all forces who are prepared to work with us. Whilst our policy is clear about the *African* content of our struggle, we must also not ignore the importance of the oppressed minorities. We witnessed a cracking of White morale in the immediate post-Sharpeville emergency. We should in our propaganda make clear that those who are not against us can be with us, and that the door remains open to those who are prepared to cut themselves off

from support for White domination. We must of course avoid old type talk of 'multi-racialism'. When the power of the people asserts itself there will be many in the enemy camp who will begin to vacillate, and it is important that they are made to feel that they can have a future in a truly democratic country.

**COMRADE E:** The situation at home is a process; it is a continuously developing situation. We must avoid looking at the position statically and fight the tendency to proceed with our political work without looking back or looking forward. We must get more of our cadres involved in a detailed study of the various aspects of the South African situation. They could provide a flow of material to enable the leadership to keep the situation under continuous dialectical review. We must be able to open people's eyes not only to what is but how it is developing. This approach as we have seen, is extremely important in areas like the Bantustans.

We must give more profound attention to what is happening amongst the Black working class. They are being wooed by TUCSA, the British TUC, some US bodies, the ICFTU, etc. The monopolists, the multinational corporations and their representatives are adopting new tactics to divert mass pressures. We need a strong trade union movement in South Africa. I agree that our national liberation movement could have played an even bigger role in the events which occurred in the industrial field in 1973. It is also vital that the economic aims of the workers actions should more and more be seen by them in their relation to both short-term and long-term political perspectives. Workers must act not only for higher wages but on other major questions such as the pass laws, political prisoners, forced removals, etc. This is why it is so essential that SACTU as part of our general liberation movement be strengthened.

**COMRADE F:** TUCSA is inciting reformist groups outside South Africa to help 'organise' the Black workers. At the moment our attitude to works committees must be an uncompromising one. They are intended to divert attention from the urgent need to build real trade unions.

I agree in general with the points that have been made on the Bantustans. Perhaps one of the best services the Bantustan chiefs are rendering the government is in allowing themselves to be used for the encouragement of foreign investment in South Africa, and in the Bantustans themselves. We know that without a strong economy South Africa would not be what it is, that the greater the economic development the more intense has the political repression been. We, of course, are not against economic development but we must expose more and more the theory that somehow economic development will by itself bring about a fundamental change.

It is important that the present confrontation between the Bantustan chiefs and the government on the question of more land for the Bantustans be transformed into a much broader demand and not restricted to so-called traditional areas.

**COMRADE G:** It is of fundamental importance that our movement as a whole achieves a clear characterisation of the Bantustans and the role which has been allotted to them in the government's attempt to perpetuate White domination. There are tendencies even within our broad front which tend to exaggerate the progressive potential of the Bantustans.

No doubt the Bantustan leaders have made a great impact. Even people who are in our movement have been confused. Some look on Buthelezi as a Messiah. I believe that we would be making a mistake if we approached the question of the Bantustan leaders as if they were just confused people. They are the hope of the White monopolists in and outside of South Africa. At least objectively this is the role they are playing whatever they might think about themselves. Perhaps as a follow up of the analysis in the Report, more work should be done to analyse the sort of class interests that are represented by the Bantustan chiefs.

**COMRADE H:** We have long had declassed elements who have been prepared to collaborate with the enemy. You have examples in the Portuguese territories even today. We should, of course, be on our guard against the treacherous role which collaborators can play. I believe however, that talk of Vietnamisation in the sense of

creating a Thieu-type puppet is an exaggeration. By the very nature of the White state it has not got enough to offer to social classes amongst the Africans in order to get them to become reliable allies. In Vietnam there was a big indigenous bourgeoisie and the imperialists had a social base. Without wanting to be complacent I don't believe that there can be a meaningful alliance between the White bourgeoisie and the Black middle class. I doubt whether they would get support even from the Chiefs. This does not mean we must not be on our guard. The danger is that the masses could be confused by such elements. In our attitudes to the Bantustan leaders we must take care not to become too sectarian and judge them by our own strict standards. We, as part of a liberation movement, advocate a revolutionary point of view and we cannot bargain with the White state on the question of the correct way forward. But we must understand the ideological limitations of the Bantustan leaders which results in the adoption of contradictory postures by them on a number of vital questions. There is a clear lack of logic between their demanding the release of prisoners one day, and the next day supporting foreign investment in South Africa. This is a sign of ideological confusion. The great debate which is breaking loose is on balance a hopeful sign and is helping to create the ferment which South Africa has witnessed in the last few years. It is the task of our movement to argue with some of the more well-meaning Bantustan chiefs and to try to convince them.

We must not underestimate the way South Africa is affected by the general international economic crisis. The very same processes which underlay the strikes at the beginning of 1973 will be there in 1974 and later years in possibly even sharper form. We must devote more of our propaganda to the economic question affecting the workers including unemployment and the unending inflationary processes.

# **RESOLUTIONS**

## **OF THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY.**

### **FOR PEACE & LIBERATION**

The Central Committee notes the major developments in the international situation that have taken place since its last plenary session, marked by a decisive shift in favour of the forces of peace, socialism and national liberation; against war, imperialism and reaction.

The developments are reflected in a greatly improved international climate of detente, and peaceful coexistence.

The heroic people of Vietnam, backed by the unstinting support of the USSR and other socialist countries and by the world democratic movement, have gained a brilliant victory. The invaders have been compelled to withdraw their forces and end their open intervention. Despite attempts by the Thieu puppet regime and its supporters to sabotage and undermine the Paris and related agreements, the way has been opened up for the democratic unification of Vietnam and the establishment of peace and democracy all over Indo-China.

Imperialism has been forced to retreat from its cold-war positions in a number of important areas and to recognize the principle of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems.

The USA has negotiated a number of agreements with the USSR envisaging progress towards disarmament and co-operation in trade and research. The capitalist blockade of the GDR has been completely broken down. The FRG has had to come to terms with the Soviet Union and socialist Europe.

These developments have helped to lift the shadow of a nuclear catastrophe threatening all peoples of the world. They also create more favourable conditions for the struggle of all oppressed nations and classes striving for national and social emancipation.

Great credit for the world-wide advance of the progressive forces is due to the peace initiatives of the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union. Basing itself on its ever-growing strength, potential and cohesion and guided especially by the Peace Programme adopted by the 24th Congress of the CPSU, the world socialist community has won major victories for the cause of peace.

The sustained struggles of the international working class, national liberation and other democratic movements are a vital factor in the forces against imperialism and war.

We are confident that the continued vigilance of the world peace forces can defeat those tendencies within imperialism which favour a return to world confrontation.

The unity and might of these forces was reflected in the historic Moscow Conference of Peace Forces in November 1973. Never before has so broad and impressive a gathering of representatives of the world's peoples assembled and agreed upon the pooling of their efforts for peace, against imperialism and oppression. Our Party, recognising that the fight for world peace is a necessary part of our struggle for national and social liberation in our country, pledges its support for the fulfilment of the decisions of this great Congress.

## CHILE

The bloody events in Chile show that reaction and imperialism have not relinquished their aim to halt and reverse the forward march of the peoples by every possible means.

The traitor military junta, backed by US monopolies and the CIA are trying to drown in blood the most important movement to transform the lives of the poverty-stricken masses of Latin America since the Cuban revolution.

We declare our complete solidarity with the working masses of Chile, with the Communists, Socialists and democrats who have been murdered, tortured and imprisoned in the course of the fascist plot to

destroy democracy and overthrow the legal government of the martyred President Salvador Allende.

We demand the release of Luis Corvallan, general secretary of the Communist Party of Chile and of all imprisoned patriots and democrats.

We express our full support for the determined fight of the Chilean people, led by Popular Unity, for the overthrow of the fascist junta and the restoration of Chilean democracy on the road to socialism.

### **ON THE MIDDLE EAST**

By their aggressive, annexationist, anti-Arab racialist policies, the Zionist rulers of Israel, acting as a bridgehead for US imperialism, have created a constant situation of tension in the Middle East. They bear the full responsibility for the renewed outbreak of war in October 1973 which cost thousands of lives and threatened an international war.

The Arab peoples, particularly of Egypt, Syria and Palestine, by their patriotism courage and military ability, and relying on the consistent and highly-effective assistance and technology of the Soviet Union, as well as the unity of the Arab states, was able to deal a devastating military and political blow at the Zionists. The prospects for a just and stable settlement in the Middle East have been opened up, following the cease-fire resolutions of the Security Council of the UN.

Our Party aligns itself firmly with the just cause of the Arab peoples. We uphold the brave stand of the Communist Party of Israel, led by Vilner and Toubi. We call for firm international action to ensure Israeli compliance with the cease-fire orders and Resolution 242 of the Security Council. We demand the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab lands and the guarantee of self-determination for the Palestinian Arab people.

### **FOR UNITY & FREEDOM IN AFRICA**

The African peoples' struggle for social progress, peace and the liquidation of the survivals of colonialism, racialism and neo-colonialism, has made significant advances. The 10th Anniversary Session of the Organisation of African Unity confirmed this trend and adopted measures to

strengthen it further. It has successfully contributed to the solution of territorial disputes and other areas of conflict between African states which weakened their unity in the face of imperialism. The African states have taken a common stand in negotiations with the EEC. They have unanimously rebuffed Vorster's crude attempt to penetrate African states under the cover of opening a dialogue with them.

The cause of African freedom scored a major success with the declaration of the independent Republic of Guinea-Bissau which has won recognition from the majority of states of the world. This historic declaration marks a culmination of the prolonged and heroic fight of the people of the country, headed by the PAIGC, and is a significant contribution to the inevitable defeat and destruction of all the forces of colonialism and racialism in Southern Africa. We demand the withdrawal of all Portuguese forces from Guinea-Bissau the Cape Verde Islands, and universal recognition of the Republic.

The peoples of the countries of Southern Africa, under the leadership of their national liberation movements, and using both military and political methods of struggle, continue to deal deadly blows at the Unholy Alliance of Vorster, Smith and Caetano. Our Party, in firm alliance with the liberation movement centred in the African National Congress, will intensify its efforts to raise the level of unity and militance of the people and hasten the struggle to a victorious conclusion. This is our main contribution towards the cause of all-African freedom and unity, and towards world peace.

### **ON MAOISM**

The South African Communist Party vigorously condemns the unprincipled policy and tactics, based on anti-Sovietism, of the leadership of the Communist Party of China. It has betrayed Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism and embarked on a path of accommodation to imperialism.

The Maoist group openly allies itself with NATO, the EEC and the most reactionary forces in the world. It brazenly incites these forces against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Its false theory of the 'two super-powers' is designed to isolate the national liberation movements from their natural and most steadfast allies, the

socialist community, to confuse and split these movements and weaken the united fight against imperialism.

The contemptible actions of the Peking leaders as exemplified by their support for Pakistan against Bangladesh, their approval of Numeiry's murder of Sudanese Communists, their haste to recognise the Chile junta and their negative stand in the Security Council towards Soviet efforts to advance the Arab cause, expose the great-power chauvinism and nationalist ambitions of the present Maoist leadership.

Our Party rejects the opportunist concept of neutralism in the so-called 'Sino-Soviet dispute'. We shall continue to fight actively against efforts to spread the disruptive theories of Maoism, especially in Africa.

### **ON THE FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID**

The Communist Party expresses its profound appreciation to the Socialist countries, the independent states of Africa, and to the working class, democratic and humanist forces of the world, who have given generous assistance to the fighting liberation movements of Southern Africa and helped expose the role of imperialism in sustaining the South African, Rhodesian and Portuguese regimes.

We call on the world's workers to uphold the correct decisions of the ILO-UNO Geneva Conference on Apartheid held in June 1973, to mobilise all the progressive forces for the implementation of these decisions, and to combat all tendencies to appease the white racialists of Southern Africa and their imperialist backers.

We resolve that our Party, in conjunction with the entire liberation movement, should take the most energetic steps in the period to place in the forefront of the agenda of the international community: the complete isolation of the Pretoria racialists in every sphere, as being totally unrepresentative of the great majority of our people.

### **THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT**

Reaffirming its historic and unvarying principle of proletarian internationalism, the South African Party considers itself an integral and inseparable detachment of the world Communist movement. We shall

ever uphold and work for the unity and cohesion of the movement.

To this end the Party will work consistently to strengthen its links with fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties on a bilateral and multi-lateral basis. It mandates the Executive to take or support suitable initiatives to ensure timely discussion and agreement within the world Communist movement as a whole of new tasks and problems placed on the agenda by history.



*Communique:*

## **SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY DELEGATION VISITS FOUR SOCIALIST COUNTRIES**

A delegation of the South African Communist Party, headed by Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, the Party Chairman, paid friendly visits to the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union. The visits were made on the invitation of the ruling parties of the socialist countries. The SACP delegation, which included the Assistant General Secretary and several members of the Central Committee, was warmly received throughout its tour.

Fraternal talks were held with leading Central Committee members of the Bulgarian, Czechoslovak and Soviet Communist Parties, and of the Socialist Unity Party of the GDR. Among the representatives of the socialist countries who participated in discussions were comrade Ivan Abadjiev (secretary of the CC of the BCP), comrade Vasil Bilak (secretary of the CC of the CCP), comrade Herman Axen (secretary of the CC of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany) and comrades Suslov and Ponomarev (secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee). In the German Democratic Republic a discussion also took place with the First Secretary of the SUP, comrade Erich Honecker.

In all cases, talks were held in a warm comradely atmosphere, and a spirit of fraternal unity prevailed. The delegations exchanged views on a broad range of questions related to the activities of their Parties; the development of the international Communist and Workers' movement; the struggle of nations for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism; the world-wide anti-imperialist struggle; and other present-day problems of international relations.

Comrade Dadoo gave information on the state of the struggle of the South African people for freedom, with an assessment of the great strike wave of 1973 and the rising mood of militancy inside the country. He emphasized the determination of the SACP to work together with the African National Congress to unite all democratic forces in a broad anti-imperialist liberation movement for the overthrow of White Supremacy, oppression and exploitation.

The SACP delegation expressed its profound gratitude for the many acts of solidarity and with assistance to the South African peoples' struggle which had been made by the host countries, their peoples and Parties, in pursuance of their policy of proletarian internationalism. The SACP delegation hailed the success of the working people of these countries, who were building advanced socialist societies under the leadership of their respective Parties.

Joint communiques issued after the respective meetings expressed mutual satisfaction at the identity of views, and the common desire of the Parties concerned to further strengthen their ties and relations.

A delegation also met the German Communist Party in the Federal Republic of Germany in a very warm and cordial atmosphere.

In a joint communique both parties appealed to the democratic forces in the FRG to join efforts for the following demands: No investments of the FRG in South Africa! No support of the Apartheid regime through deliveries of arms! No labour emigration to South Africa! Severance of diplomatic, cultural and sporting relations with the Apartheid regime!

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# Nationalism and Internationalism in South African Liberation

by F. Meli

**“Resistance movements cannot afford the luxury of McCarthyism . . . We are not playing at politics, we are bent on liberation.”**

**A.J. Lutuli: ‘Let My People Go’.**

In all economically developed colonial countries there emerged two movements which ran parallel to each other, but were dialectically interconnected in the confrontation with the common enemy. These were the national democratic movements on one side, and the proletarian movements on the other. In South Africa, like in all colonial countries, capitalism did not originate as a result of internal development, but was imposed by colonialism, especially in the era of imperialism.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in the last third of the 19th century accelerated the development of a capitalist economy in South Africa, and thousands of skilled workers were imported from Europe. They brought along experience in trade unionism and political organis-

sation, and also socialist ideas.

African nationalism emerged in the second half of the 19th century as an ideology of the young intellectual strata of the African society. This embryonic national consciousness expressed itself in a demand for church reform and the formation of so called 'separatist' African churches. There was also noticeable an unquenchable thirst for knowledge amongst the Africans and the emergence of newspapers in African languages. This phenomenon was not just an expression of 'cultural nationalism' but a political demand and an assertion of national pride. It was also at this time that Africans began to question the written history of South Africa and demand its revision, expressing a view that African and indeed South African history should be written from the point of view of Africans. African nationalism was motivated by the historical necessity of uniting all the anti-colonial forces, especially the intelligentsia and peasants. The African working class was still in its infancy. These early endeavours culminated in the formation of the African National Congress on January 8, 1912.<sup>1</sup>

### **CLASS AND IDEOLOGY**

African nationalism is not a homogeneous ideology. This is due to the fact that it is not an ideology of one class. There is in it a chauvinistic trend of the frustrated petit-bourgeois elements who, by rejecting a front with the other organisations ('we will go it alone'), objectively play into the hands of the white state machinery. There is also the reformist wing within the intellectual circles which seeks reforms without revolutionary changes. The third group is the radical wing of revolutionary democrats who represent the interests of the urban poor and peasants. Though all the three trends in African nationalism have manifested themselves in the ANC at various times, the dominant wing – historically speaking – has proved to be that of the revolutionary democrats. Nelson Mandela characterises the nationalism of the ANC in the following words:

"The ideological creed of the ANC is, and always has been, the creed of African Nationalism . . . The African Nationalism for which the ANC stands is the concept of freedom and fulfilment for the African people in their own land . . .

“During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against White domination and I have fought against Black domination.”<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note the similarity of thought between Mandela and Lenin, who has this to say on this point:

“The bourgeois nationalism of *any* oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed *against* oppression, and it is this content that we unconditionally support. At the same time we strictly distinguish it from the tendency towards national exclusiveness.”<sup>3</sup>

*In short African nationalism is an ideological and political reflection of the unsolved national question; an inevitable product of the apartheid society; a reaction to an age-old oppression; the first form of national consciousness.*

Colonialism deformed the mode of production in South Africa – and not only in South Africa – and hence deformed the class structure of African society. There emerged an African society composed of pre-colonial formations, sickly capitalism, and a broad and differential strata of non-proletarian elements including aspiring bourgeois elements. These objective factors coupled with subjective factors like racism, racial chauvinism, reformism, tribalism etc. affected the development of the relationship between African nationalism and proletarian internationalism in South Africa.

The ANC in its formative years, though not an organisation of the so-called elite, was not yet a mass organisation. It was composed of intellectuals and chiefs representing the rural population. The working class element was still weak. This explains the dominance of the reformist trend in the ANC during the years of its formation. In 1913 during the great upheavals and strikes by white workers against class exploitation, the ANC annual conference in Kimberley adopted a resolution dissociating itself from the industrial strikes of the white workers “and preferred to seek redress for their grievances through constitutional rather than by violent means”.<sup>4</sup> Surely among the factors that contributed to this reformism and negative reaction were the rejection of the

Africans by the white society, and the failure of the white workers to include grievances of Africans in their demands.

## SOCIALISM & NATIONALISM

On the labour front, the socialist movement in South Africa showed some inconsistency in its attitude towards the Africans. At the first conference of the International Socialist League on January 9, 1916, S.P. Bunting proposed the abolition of the colour bar, and the raising of the standard of African workers to that of the Whites as the prerequisite for the emancipation of the working-class in South Africa. This proposal was accepted and included in the League's Provisional Constitution. Yet in the same Provisional Constitution one comes across a contradictory clause demanding the prevention of the "increase of native wage workers" and expressing the need to assist the African workers to "free themselves from the wage system".<sup>5</sup> This deviation from the principle of class solidarity was due to the social composition of the League which was an organisation of skilled white workers, still in its infancy, without any mass base or experience, and ideologically heterogeneous; indeed some of its members had not yet freed themselves from white chauvinism. But this was not and could not be a permanent situation.

The internationalist proletarian elements *within* the League made their presence felt. What is proletarian internationalism? By proletarian internationalism we understand the conformity of the national duties and class interests of every formation of the international working class movement with its international obligations towards its class brothers in other countries, to the international communist movement, and to people fighting for national self-determination.

In South Africa proletarian internationalism was not only the basis for relationship between different formations of the international working class movement, but was and remains a means to check tendencies of racial chauvinism and expressions of national exclusiveness and tribalism. The *internal* functions and duties of proletarian internationalism in South Africa were and remain:

to draw a demarcation line between the reformist parties and revolutionary internationalists. This was realised in 1915 when the internationalist elements broke away from the opportunist

Labour Party to form the International Socialist League;

to work out a clear-cut policy and attitude of the communists towards the oppressed black people as a whole, and the black proletariat in particular;

to orient and educate the young, racially-discriminated and nationally-oppressed black proletariat in the spirit of internationalism as opposed to tribalism. This was done through pamphlets whose message was: "Let there no longer be any talk of Basoto, Zulu or Shangaan. You are all labourers. Let labour be your common bond";

to support the organisations of the black people such as the ANC, which fight for national self-determination of the Africans.

These duties were understood by the most advanced elements in the socialist and labour movement of South Africa. As early as 1915 the organ of the International Socialist League. 'The International' then edited by D. Ivon Jones, commented in an editorial: The Parting of the Ways:

"An internationalism which does not concede the fullest rights which the native working class is capable of claiming will be a sham. One of the justifications for our withdrawal from the Labour Party is that it gives us untrammelled freedom to deal, regardless of political fortunes, with the great and fascinating problem of the native. If the League deals resolutely in consonance with Socialist principles with the native question, it will succeed in shaking South African capitalism to its foundations. Then, and not till then, shall we be able to talk about the South African proletariat in our international relations . . ." <sup>6</sup>

## THE START OF ORGANISATION

The International Socialist League organised African trade unions. Strikes of African workers were organised jointly with the ANC. Not only did the Africans flock to ISL meetings, but the leaders of the ANC such as Grendon, the editor of the ANC organ Abantu-Batho,

spoke at these meetings. In May/June 1917 the ANC held its annual conference at Bloemfontein. According to the bourgeois press of that time Sol Plaatje, the Secretary-General of the ANC, made a 'poisonous attack' on the Government and on Arthur Barlow of the Labour Party.<sup>7</sup> The ISL on the other hand viewed Plaatje's stand differently:

"It is gratifying to see a native leader standing up fearlessly without mincing words. It is a sign of awakening in the native workers generally . . . ."<sup>8</sup>

Pamphlets educating the masses in the spirit of internationalism were distributed by the League. In 1918 the leaflet 'The Bolsheviks are Coming' states:

"Remember that an injury to one is an injury to all, be he black or white. While the black worker is oppressed the white worker cannot be free. . . . This is Bolshevism: the Solidarity of Labour."<sup>9</sup>

It is not the aim of this author to assess in detail either all the measures taken by the South African socialists to organise African workers or the impact made by the ANC on South African socialists at this time. *One thing we would like to stress is that the mutual relationship between proletarian internationalism and African nationalism which took the form of contacts between the South African socialist movement and the ANC is the most dynamic episode and the most inspiring chapter in the history of the labour and national liberatory movement in South Africa.*

When one considers that in 1910 South Africa was declared a dominion within the Commonwealth (like Canada, Australia, New Zealand etc.) and that the national oppression of the Africans was reduced to an "internal affair of an independent state", one properly appreciates the historic significance of the formation of the ANC in 1912. This lies in the fact that the ANC expressed a demand for the solution of the national question, whose main content was and remains the liberation of the Africans. On the other hand the historic merit of the International Socialist League lies in the fact that by overcoming reformism and accepting proletarian internationalism as its creed, it laid the basis for closer co-operation between African nationalists and Marxists. These early pioneers of internationalism at the tip of what

was then 'The Dark Continent' were not only brave but also far-sighted. They held the banner of internationalism high in consonance with the best representatives of the international working class movement at a time when the Second International had betrayed internationalism under the leadership of racial chauvinists.

### TOWARDS A CLEAR IDEOLOGY

Proletarian internationalism in the liberation movement of South Africa was not only significant for practical politics but was above all an ideological weapon in the search for theoretical clarity on the *nature and character of the South African revolution*. Let us take for example the 'Declaration of Principles' adopted by the annual conference of the International Socialist League of South Africa on January 5-6th, 1919. This document is significant not only for its internationalist outlook, but because it is the *first* Marxist programme on the African continent. One notices in it a genuine attempt to apply the lessons of the October Revolution to concrete South African conditions.

The Declaration declared the dictatorship of the proletariat to be an immediate goal in South Africa. It was a tactical mistake. But its *acceptance* was not only an *historical inevitability* but correctly removed any basis for vestiges of reformism. It led to a leftward development of the socialist movement which reached its climax in 1921 with the formation of the Communist Party of South Africa.

When the International Socialist League affiliated to the Comintern in Moscow in 1920, the South African socialists had finished a long journey – the journey to Lenin – and thus identified themselves completely with the world revolutionary forces of our times whose *centre* was and remains the Soviet Union. With the help of the Comintern the CPSA managed to put in proper perspective the *three stages of the South African revolution* and rectified its erroneous orientation on the dictatorship of the proletariat (1919) or the 'Workers' and Peasants' Republic' (1925) as an immediate goal.<sup>10</sup>

In 1928 the Comintern advised the CPSA to adopt the slogan "The Black Republic as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' government with full protection and equal rights for all national minorities". The acceptance of the slogan of the Black Republic, that is, the national

liberation of Africans in South Africa, as the *immediate goal* and prerequisite for future development, laid a firmer basis for unity between communists and non-communists in our movement. According to Lerumo,<sup>11</sup> the slogan of the Black Republic “contains little that is not in essence in our Freedom Charter”. The path to this realisation was not an easy one – it was bitter, contradictory and full of set-backs. Though these problems were national *in form*, they were international *in character*. Basing himself on Russian experience Lenin wrote in 1907:

“Our Party’s serious illness is the growing pains of a *mass party*. For there can be no mass party, no party of a class, without full clarity of essential shadings, without an open struggle between various tendencies, without informing the *masses* as to which leaders and which organisations of the Party are pursuing this or that line. Without this, a party worthy of the name cannot be built, and we are *building it*. . . . Personal bitterness, factional squabbles and strife, scandals and splits – all these are trivial in comparison with the fact that the experience of *two tactics* is actually teaching a lesson to the proletarian masses, is actually teaching a lesson to everyone who is capable of taking an intelligent interest in politics. Our squabbles and splits will be forgotten. Our tactical principles, sharpened and tempered, will go down as cornerstones in the history of the working class movement and socialism in Russia.”<sup>12</sup>

## ANTI-COMMUNISM – THE DIVIDING WEDGE

Anti-communism was introduced to the African liberation movements from outside by international imperialism, West European ‘Labour’ parties, and reactionary Afro-American organisations. The social base for anti-communism has been among the chiefs, right-wing leaders of the national liberation movements and trade union organisations, and the right-wing intellectuals. African society is not as ‘classless’ as some people want us to believe.

In the 1920’s the South African liberation movement found itself caught up in a whirlwind of anti-communism. In an interesting article Teresa Zania<sup>13</sup> has successfully explained the sources of this anti-communism. What we would like to add is that after the October

Revolution and with the rise of national liberation movements and trade union organisations in the colonial world, the 'Labour' parties were forced to abandon their policy of passivity towards the liberation movements, and decided to bore from within so as to divert these movements from their militant positions. In South Africa this tactic was successful as the case of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union and Kadalie shows. In the same article Teresa Zania shows that in this campaign Kadalie misused African nationalism in trying to drive a wedge between black and white communists, by directing his main blow of attack not at imperialism but at the white communists!

The chiefs too were not passive in this witch hunt. (I have explained this in an earlier article on the history of the ANC.<sup>14</sup>) What has not been sufficiently stressed was the role and attitude of the right-wing intellectuals in the liberation movement. Following in the footsteps of their West European counterparts, the 'Labour' leaders, and their mentors the missionaries, right-wing African intellectuals looked down upon the African workers, *more especially upon those who became communists*. With characteristic intellectual arrogance they despised the African workers, calling them "an illiterate native sprinkling of Communist dupes" as D.H. Tyamzashe of the ICU expressed himself.<sup>15</sup> Professor Thaele of the Cape ANC even moved a resolution in 1930 in a members' meeting barring the communists from speaking at Congress meetings,<sup>16</sup> surely a violation of the ANC constitution! These right-wing intellectuals even went further. They toured the country appealing to African tradition and spreading a story that the Communist Party desired the abolition of chiefs! This demagoguery concealed the fact that it was the Government and not the CP that had abolished chieftancy by making the chiefs into paid servants of the government, tools of the white exploiters, the Native Recruiting Corporation, the Chamber of Mines and Boer land owners.

Credit must be given to the left-wingers within the ANC, especially Josiah Tshangana Gumede, a sincere patriot and no communist, for their uncompromising struggle against the imperialist poison of anti-communism in our movement. The masses understood his message and responded by electing him as President-General of the ANC and E.J. Khaile, a known communist, as Secretary-General.

It was at this time that the membership of the Party rose from 200 to 1750, of whom 1600 were Africans. *The right-wingers through their*

*anti-communism had isolated themselves from the masses.* Those African workers who joined the Party at this time were the best representatives of their class. Let us take Johannes Nkosi for example. Born on September 3, 1905 Nkosi worked on white farms and later became a 'kitchen boy'. He took part in the 1919 strikes and in 1926 joined the Party. As a member of a trade union affiliated to the African Federation of Trade Unions he was elected organiser for Durban in 1929 "and from that time never ceased to push forward the cause of the Durban workers".<sup>17</sup> Nkosi was murdered by the police at a demonstration in Durban on December 16, 1930 at the tender age of 25. In his last pamphlet discovered after his death (written in Zulu and translated into English by Albert Nzula) he wrote:

"Never under the sun has a nation been so shackled with the chains of slavery. We are not even allowed to voice our opinion on the state of affairs in our motherland. Why not awake and stand on your feet, Africans? Men, women and young people, we must support the organisations that fight for our freedom."<sup>18</sup>

This and many other examples of the young and brave African workers disprove Tyamtashe's statement that the African workers who joined the Party were "an illiterate native sprinkling of communist dupes". They not only constituted the majority of the Party, but had joined the Party out of the conviction that this was one of the organisations "that fight for our freedom"

## **BOURGEOIS & PROLETARIAN THEORY**

In the post-Sharpeville period there was a mounting tide of police terror, government repression and general destruction of the last vestiges of bourgeois unity in South Africa. Many black intellectuals found themselves on the horns of a dilemma, whether to fight back or to submit. Some took to underground activity within the country, living illegally; others were sent or decided to go overseas. Some continued to use the pen against apartheid while others remained angry nationalists; some committed suicide while others became susceptible to bourgeois theories of the most reactionary kind — a semi-tragic situation. Let us

take Lewis Nkosi for example. Nkosi maintains that the 'tsotsis' (thugs and drop-outs) are the most revolutionary section of the African society because — in his own words — they are "tough, reckless as well as fearless and in the future they will form the most formidable guerilla commandos in South Africa".<sup>19</sup>

Though it would be wrong to maintain that all tsotsis are lumpen proletariat or that all drop-outs automatically become tsotsis, Nkosi's theory reminds us of the Fanonist theory that the lumpen proletariat is the most revolutionary section of the African society. If this is so, the criminals, bank robbers, thugs, prostitutes — in short the de-classed elements should form the core of our movement. This theory undermines the leading role of the working class in our movement.

Why should the working class lead? Firstly we may mention the character of our epoch. Since the October revolution of 1917 we are living in an epoch of transition of capitalism to socialism on a world scale; the epoch of the general crisis of *capitalism* and triumph of *socialism*; the epoch of fierce class battles in the developed countries; an epoch characterised by the downfall of the shameful colonial system and successes of the forces of national liberation. If the bourgeoisie as a class was a driving force in the 19th century development, surely in the 20th century it is the working class that is an epoch-making force in the world revolutionary process. Capitalism has not only been pushed to an historical defensive but has lost all its historical initiative. It is not yet a 'paper tiger', but the initiative in society has passed from its grasp.

Secondly we may mention the position of the workers in South African society. The African workers are *the* producers of material wealth, that is, the main productive force. Their growing numbers explain their growing influence in African society. Though they acquire national consciousness before they realise their class position in South African society, the African workers are aware of the fact that African nationalism is a stage in the development of their political consciousness. Their way to proletarian internationalism is via African nationalism. The development of their class consciousness can only mean making them aware of their historic mission as grave diggers of capitalism and builders of a new society. They are the carriers of the liberating ideas of proletarian internationalism — an ideology which knows neither national nor ethnic boundaries.

Walter Sisulu, the Secretary General of the ANC, himself a worker, expressed this sentiment (in a slightly different context) at the Rivonia trial when he told Percy Yutar, the White prosecutor: "I wish you were an African. Then you would know . . ."

The theory of a tsotsi vanguard is anti-working class because it rejects the leading role of the working class in the South African revolution. It is unacceptable because it undermines the political organisations of the South African workers e.g. ANC, CP and SACTU. This 'hippy' theory is unscientific because it is against the general laws of social development, which led Marx to declare in the *Communist Manifesto*:

"Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is the really revolutionary class."

## INTERNATIONALISM & THE FREEDOM CHARTER

If in this article we dealt mostly with proletarian internationalism, it is because we have discussed the question of ANC internationalism in an earlier article in connection with the 60th anniversary of the ANC. This is not proletarian internationalism – because of the simple fact that the ANC is not a proletarian party. But the ANC has a long tradition of internationalism which is as old as the ANC itself, and influenced by proletarian internationalism.

The adoption of the Freedom Charter at Kliptown in 1955 concretised and gave form and shape to the internationalism of the ANC. The Freedom Charter has a deep *philosophical content* which reflects itself ideologically in our movement in the form of African nationalism and proletarian internationalism. This is explained by the fact that the Freedom Charter does not erect a Chinese Wall between the solution of the national question, and the solution of social or rather class questions. The philosophical content of the Freedom Charter lies in the conviction that our suffering is due to the fact that the means of production are owned by a few who exploit the masses; and its *humanism* finds expression in the rejection of exploitation of man by man and the acceptance of the principle of *equality of all* irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex. This is internationalism!

According to the Freedom Charter the prerequisite for the attain-

ment of these goals is the nationalisation of monopolists and the redistribution of land. In short, the present state machinery should be *dismantled*.

The universal character of the Freedom Charter is that it combines anti-imperialism with internationalism, and the struggle of the South African people is seen in its international context. Talking about the internationalism of our movement we should state frankly that the *liberation of South Africa* is the duty South African revolutionaries are called upon by history to fulfil as a contribution to the storehouse of world revolutionary theory and practice. To achieve this gigantic task we need to educate the masses in the spirit of a *freedom* which is intertwined with *internationalism*. Lenin was driving this point home when he wrote:

“National antipathies will not disappear so quickly: the hatred – and perfectly legitimate hatred – of an oppressed nation for its oppressor *will last* for a while; it will evaporate only *after* the victory of socialism and *after* the final establishment of completely democratic relations between nations.

“If we are to be faithful to socialism we must even now educate the masses in the spirit of internationalism, which is impossible in oppressor nations without advocating freedom of secession for oppressed nations.”<sup>20</sup>

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*David Ivon Jones, one of the pioneer socialists of South Africa, foundation member of the International Socialist League and later of the Communist Party of South Africa, died of tuberculosis in a sanatorium in the Crimea on May 31, 1924.*

*The poem we reproduce below was first published in the "Communist Review", a journal of the Communist Party of Great Britain, in July 1924.*

---

### PLUVIOSE

*(In Memoriam D. Ivon Jones)*

See how the veld is blood-red: full the spruit,  
Furrow and donga as with sanguine rain –  
(Even as a flood-mark of our strife and pain,  
Bitter, yet sweet) – o'erfull in sluit on sluit;  
That what we sowed be harvested – ripe fruit,  
Honey of bees and yellow growth of grain.  
Thus nature's cycle: how can be in vain,  
Comrade, your life's endeavour and pursuit?

So, too, is Ivon one with those that fell,  
Brothers whose blood has stained the veld in fight –  
(How are their names still hallowed in our ears!) –  
Boer or Briton, Bantu – black or white:  
Thus shall be quenched the smouldering fires of hell,  
Thus shall be harvested the golden years.

*L.A. Motler*

(Note: *Pluviose* is derived from the Latin word *pluvia* meaning rain.)

# **On the time for Armed Struggle**

## **SOME GENERAL LESSONS OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN THE PHILIPPINES**

by  
**William J. Pomeroy**

Since the great revolutionary wars of liberation began earlier in this century, few issues have drawn more controversy in revolutionary and pseudo-revolutionary circles than the question of armed struggle and of how and when to employ it. On the one hand examples can be cited of disaster following premature rushes into armed struggle, while on the other hand there have been failures of movements to realise revolutionary potential by holding back from armed methods.

Certainly it is a fact that over the past quarter of a century, one of the outstanding features of world developments has been the readiness of large numbers of people to accept and to participate in what is commonly known as the highest form of revolutionary struggle, the armed struggle. For both the mass of the people, and those who have ruled and oppressed them, this is the truly great point of social crisis, the outcome of which can lead to a sweeping change of political power.

Because of the decisive results that can follow from an armed smashing of the main instruments of power held by a ruling class or a foreign oppressor, some of those who acquire a revolutionary outlook are eager to move to the stage of armed struggle; and their concept of it as the highest form of revolutionary struggle causes them to cast discredit upon other forms as 'less-advanced', as amounting to collaboration with or capitulation to the class enemy.

Too often the aura of glory associated with taking up arms has obscured hard prosaic truths and realities in the interplay of forces in period of sharp struggle.

The armed liberation struggles that began in Africa, particularly in the southern part of the continent in the early 1960s, could and did benefit from the experiences and the lessons, the successes and the mistakes, of the revolutionary wars that had preceded them, in Asia, Latin America and elsewhere. Today, lessons from the strategy and tactics and experiences of FRELIMO, MPLA, PAIGC, ZAPU, ANC and others are already being studied with hopes of application by revolutionaries in other countries.

## LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

*This analysis and understanding of the revolutionary experiences of others is indispensable in the intertwined circumstances of the contemporary world. There are a number of conclusions that can be drawn from such studies. Perhaps the first and most important is that conditions vary greatly in the countries concerned, and that strategy and tactics in each case have started from these, and must start from these. Furthermore, certain conditions of crisis in the ruling order together with mass preparation for advanced struggle must exist before armed struggle is possible or feasible. No responsible revolutionary would contend otherwise after the abundant evidence of relatively recent history.*

Another conclusion of significance is that a system or a ruling order defeated and overthrown by armed revolution is in most cases unlikely to regain power; but a revolutionary movement defeated in an armed struggle is invariably able to recover soon and to resume the contest for power, in forms armed or otherwise, until victory is attained.

The fact that stands out from the latter conclusion is that while

armed struggle may be the highest form of revolutionary struggle, it is the be-all and end-all of a revolutionary movement, which may move from less-advanced forms to the highest form and back to less-advanced without losing either its vanguard role or its sight of main goals.

One of the major arenas of revolutionary armed struggle in the contemporary period has been in the Philippines, location of the Communist-led Huk movement. The experiences of the revolutionary movement in the Philippines offer an interesting example of the complex, varied and fluctuating processes that may occur in a liberation struggle.

For a period of 32 years, since the beginning of 1942, the Philippine national liberation movement has known constant armed struggle of one form and degree or another, particularly the main sectors of it under the guidance of the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (PKP). At times this has reached the extent of full-scale revolutionary war on a regional or on a national scale; at other times it has had the character of small unit actions.

Contributing to this fighting spirit of the Filipino people is a long history filled with astonishingly numerous instances of armed uprising, insurrection or full-scale revolutionary war. During the 378 years of Spanish colonial rule, from 1520 to 1898, over 200 recorded cases of armed revolt occurred, culminating in the great Revolution of 1896, the first genuine colonial revolution in Asia. During the 48 years of US colonial rule that followed the US imperialist seizure of the country from Spain, lasting from 1898 to 1946, Filipinos in nearly 50 other separate episodes took to arms for liberation or against abuses, including major nation-wide guerrilla wars against US conquest and against Japanese occupation during World War II. Since the neo-colonial independence of the Philippines in 1946, not a single year has passed without armed struggles in one part or another of the country, particularly the major Huk guerrilla war for national liberation lasting from 1946 to 1956.

## TWO SIDES OF THE BALANCE SHEET

Some observers may be tempted to draw a conclusion from this that the Filipino people have a very high political and revolutionary consciousness, and that decisive numbers of them will at any given time

readily move to the highest form of revolutionary struggle, provided a determined leadership is prepared to make such calls or demands upon them. This would be an ill-founded assumption.

The impressive record of militant struggle by the Filipino people needs to be set beside the fact that none of the revolutionary wars and uprisings was really successful in achieving its aims. The vast majority of these had no clear-cut aims but were temporary episodes, of a millenarian character, or of spontaneous upsurge, or of sporadic revolt, in which conscious or well-developed revolutionary movements did not figure, and which were either quickly or soon suppressed. However, even when effective and skillful leadership of a high order *did* exist, as in the case of the Revolution of 1896, in its continuation into a war against US conquest at the turn of the century, and in the two major Communist-led guerrilla wars of the recent decades, the armed struggles did not end in triumph for the people's cause, and were followed by an ebbing of the revolutionary tide.

Although the Revolution of 1896, begun by an organised revolutionary movement called the Katipunan, shook Spanish colonialism to its foundations, it did not succeed in overthrowing Spain's rule, which itself succumbed and surrendered to the conquest of a more powerful, predatory US imperialism.

The next important appearance of a revolutionary army in the Philippines did not occur until the beginning of 1942, after Japanese invasion in World War II. In the intervening time a deeply-rooted working class movement had been organised among urban workers and poor peasants, with the main leadership coming from the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* or PKP (Communist Party of the Philippines, founded in 1930).

The organised peasantry were located chiefly in the central provinces of the main Philippine island of Luzon, in Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bulacan and Tarlac. Militant peasant unions had developed there because the semi-feudal tenancy relations were more extensive and abusive in that region and because it was relatively close to and influenced by the trade union movement in the city of Manila, the Philippine industrial and political capital.

Guerrilla warfare of a revolutionary type against Japanese occupation would not have taken place without these pre-conditions of mass organisation and Communist leadership, experienced over a period of years in

a multitude of strikes, demonstrations, legal battles and class-based electoral campaigns. The *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon*, or *Hukbalahap* (literally Army of the People Against Japan), the PKP-led guerrilla army that was built and that numbered 15,000 to 20,000 soldiers by the end of the war, was mobilised mainly out of the pre-war peasant unions, the *Kalipunang Pambansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Pilipinas* (National Association of Philippine Peasants) and the *Aguman Ding Maldang Talapagobra* (General Workers' Union), augmented by Communist trade unionists and intellectuals from Manila.

In the Philippines, resistance to the Japanese was very widespread; guerrilla units of one kind and another developed not only in Central Luzon but existed in every region. These were mostly set up in loyalty to the colonial regime and were led by US army officers, Philippine colonial army men, conservative Filipino politicians and similar ruling group elements. For the most part these units were relatively passive until called into action in co-ordination with the re-invading US forces in the latter part of 1944; in the case of their leaders at least, they were hostile to the *Hukbalahap*, which was the only guerrilla force that organised and politicalised the masses, set up underground governments, and functioned as a revolutionary movement.

A revolutionary armed liberation movement was possible against Japanese fascism only in areas where Communist-led mass organisations and their struggles had previously existed. The PKP-led *Hukbalahap* made errors and had shortcomings in feeling its ways in guerrilla struggle, and these retarded the movement's growth; expansion into areas was also made difficult, and occurred to a very limited extent because prior mass organisational work had not been done and because anti-Communist guerrilla units were established in such areas; these impeded access to the unorganised masses. Within the context of the anti-fascist struggle, it would have been disunifying and of aid to the Japanese to carry a fight to such units (although some clashes did occur). At the end of the war, therefore, the organised Filipino masses with a revolutionary army were localised in an area not much larger than that of the pre-war mass movement. However, the organisation, political consciousness, combat experience and general maturity of the movement in this area had been raised to a far higher level.

In recent years ultra-left elements, dismissing the validity of anti-fascist concepts, have attacked the PKP for not opposing US imperi-

# PHILIPPINES

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**South  
China Sea**

Luzon

**MANILA**

Mindoro

Negros

Panay

Palawan

Mindanao

Sulu  
Archipelago

**Sabah (MALAYSIA)**

**INDONESIA**

**Pacific  
Ocean**

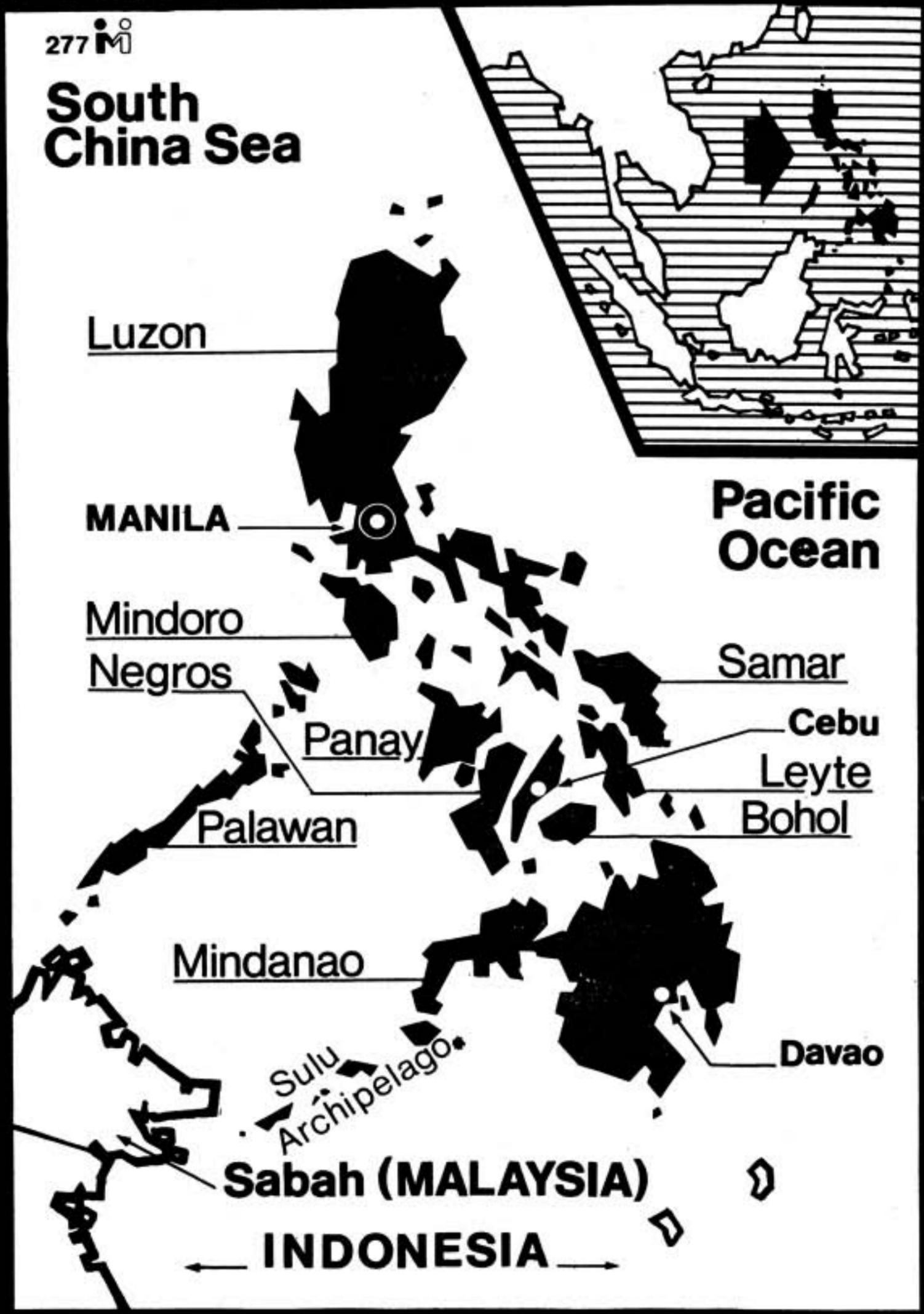
Samar

Cebu

Leyte

Bohol

Davao



alism as well as Japanese imperialism during World War II, and then for not converting a war-time guerrilla struggle immediately into an armed struggle for national liberation against a continued US imperialist presence. Questions raised against the anti-fascist struggle as such scarcely deserve an answer. Criticism of the post-war national liberation struggle is another matter, and requires answering.

### COMBINING LEGAL WITH ILLEGAL

At war's end the PKP was confronted with serious problems of strategy and tactics. In relation to the Philippines as a whole, PKP organisation, influence and the Huk movement it had built were confined to a relatively small area. Independence of the Philippines, negotiated before the war by the conservative Filipino ruling groups, was scheduled to occur soon after the war, in July 1946, so that a national liberation issue was muted. The neo-colonial intentions of the 'independence' were understood by very few Filipinos, the majority of whom, after a very harsh Japanese occupation, were inclined to welcome returning US forces as 'liberators'. A euphoria of peace and independence pervaded most of the nation. Conflict existed only in Central Luzon, where US imperialism, aware of the limited scope of the revolutionary movement, deliberately sought to provoke a 'peace and order' situation as an excuse for suppressing it.

To meet this situation, the PKP adopted a legal, parliamentary struggle programme, to rebuild trade unions and peasant unions and to extend them as widely as possible, and to develop a nationalist, anti-imperialist united front political force. This would help consolidate existing bases and reach to and educate wider masses of people. A united front political party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), was set up with PKP assistance to participate in elections, especially the national election of April 1946. At the same time, however, the *Hukbalahap* veterans retained their arms, refusing to surrender them to the US colonial regime or to the handpicked neo-colonial government of Filipino collaborators to whom independence was delivered; they used their arms for defence against landlord-directed assaults that had begun on the organised peasantry as soon as US authority had been restored. The PKP conducted armed defence of the mass organisations and of

organised barrios (villages) while trying to expand the broad movement by every legal form.

This period, in other words, was marked by a transition from full-scale emphasis on the highest form of revolutionary struggle to a main emphasis on 'less-advanced' forms. A central aim of this shift was to be able to reach and organise masses of people, especially those new to organisation, as quickly as possible, and to awaken them to the realities of the neo-colonial independence.

The period when this was freely possible after World War II was relatively brief, from mid-1945 until August 1946. Nevertheless, some very important work was done. The new peasant union, the *Pambansang Kaisahan ng mga Magbubukid* or PKM (National Union of Peasants), brought peasant organisation to a new height in Central and Southern Luzon and began to reach beyond these regions; the new trade union movement, the Congress of Labour Organisations (CLO), rebuilt unions not only in Manila but in provincial towns and established fraternal links with other union federations elsewhere in the Philippines; and the Democratic Alliance achieved at least the framework of a national party. In general, the spread of the mass movement and its component parts was faster and wider in this short period than in the nearly four years of guerrilla existence.

The height was reached in the election of April 1946 when the Democratic Alliance candidates for Congress swept the elections in the Central Luzon provinces and made a strong showing in peripheral provinces, for the first time putting an anti-imperialist bloc in the Philippine Congress (it held the decisive balance in the voting on the neo-colonial legislation demanded by the US to enable continued imperialist control of the country).

### **AGAIN TO ARMS**

Much of the subsequent successful expansion of the Huk movement in the armed struggle that broke out in August 1946 was due to the organisational and contact groundwork laid in this brief period of legal, parliamentary struggle. For example, the creation of a Huk armed force outside of Luzon in the central islands, especially on Panay Island, was largely an outcome of the links established in 1945-1946 between the

CLO on Luzon and the Philippine Labour Federation based on Panay. Huk expansion forces in the armed struggle of the late 1940s and early 1950s tended to follow the path of the PKM, CLO and DA organisational work done in 1945-1946.

It was the success of the PKP-influenced mass movement in legal, parliamentary struggle, while peasants in Central Luzon continued to retain arms, that caused US imperialism and its neo-colonial allies to arbitrarily oust DA congressmen from office (on grounds that a 'peace and order' problem existed in their constituencies and caused voter terrorisation) and to embark on savage military suppression of the popular movement. The objectives of this 'mailed fist' campaign that began in August 1946 were to smash the armed peasant units in Central Luzon and to drive the anti-imperialist movement out of the arena of legal struggle.

*The post-war Huk armed national liberation struggle began, therefore, not as a planned uprising but as armed defence against suppression.* At first it was not a total fascist policy imposed by the government; while military suppression went on in the Central and Southern Luzon provinces, legal mass work could still be carried on, especially in the trade unions, but also in most other ways in Manila and other cities. In this mixed and confused period, characterised at the outset by the demoralisation that usually accompanies the beginning of harsh government suppressive measures, the PKP had to struggle to overcome disarray in its organisation and to develop under fire a new strategic and tactical line to fit the new situation. On the one hand, a PKP demand was made for a 'democratic peace' around which manoeuvres were conducted to expose the true nature of the neo-colonial regime nationally and to win sympathy and allies for the Huk movement; and on the other hand the armed struggle was strengthened in the rural areas for any eventuality.

As the neo-colonial government between 1946 and 1948 became progressively more discredited for its brutal suppression policy, for its corruption, for its electoral fraud, and for a steep economic decline that was the consequence of rapacious US imperialist economic domination and exploitation, a debate occurred with the PKP over the conduct of the struggle; the question was whether or not to give the main emphasis to armed struggle and to the revolutionary overthrow of the neo-colonial regime as the central issue.

In May 1948 those favouring armed struggle as the main form of

struggle won overwhelming support in PKP organs and assumed full leadership of the movement. A policy was pressed of all-out nationwide armed expansion by Huk forces, the name of which was changed from the anachronistic war-time *Hukbalahap* to *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan* or HMB (Army of National Liberation).

Expansion was carried out by military-political teams, 50 to 100 strong, that, utilising mountain and jungle trails, fanned out from Central Luzon base areas. These in time established bases in wholly new regions previously unreached by left-wing movements, created barrio support organisations, and recruited members for both the armed forces and the PKP. From an original five base provinces the HMB expanded to and set up bases in 27 provinces between 1948 and 1951, under the circumstances a remarkable achievement.

In January 1950, following a particularly fraudulent election that caused national outrage, the PKP and HMB declared the existence of a revolutionary situation and called for the armed revolutionary overthrow of the 'imperialist-puppet regime'. All organisational activities of a legal, peaceful or parliamentary nature were dispensed with, and all possible PKP members and supporters were thrown into the development of the armed struggle. The movement was imbued with the perspective of a relatively short struggle, with the estimate of a deteriorating situation for the neo-colonial regime from which no recovery was considered possible.

## SUMMING UP

These estimates and aims proved to be illusory and unrealisable. The Huk national liberation struggle in the Philippines in this period failed to attain its goals, failed to convert a strategic defensive situation decisively into one of strategic offensive, failed to consolidate or to maintain its expansion bases, and, between 1950 and 1956, suffered a disastrous defeat.

In its subsequent assessment of the reasons for this, the PKP has criticised the following:

the erroneous estimate that a revolutionary situation existed at the beginning of 1950 and that the existing regime could no longer rule in the old way;

the reliance on armed struggle as virtually the only form of struggle and the abandonment of other forms of struggle that were not only feasible but essential for mobilising the masses;  
the tendency for the PKP to proclaim its hegemony over the national liberation struggle, and the corresponding failure to develop an anti-imperialist national democratic united front;  
an underestimation of the intervention by US imperialism to aid its neo-colonial allies.

Although US troops were not employed against the Huk movement directly even from the extensive US military bases in the Philippines, the Philippine government army was totally armed, equipped, organised, trained and directed in counter-insurgency operations by a large Joint US Military Advisory Group, which controlled the Philippine army and intelligence services under a Mutual Assistance Pact. With no outside aid from international allies whatsoever, the HMB was not able to match the firepower and technological capability of its opponents.

Primarily the PKP was at fault for failing to give serious attention to the question of international support, either moral or material, for the liberation struggle. However, the island character of the Philippines, without a border with friendly countries or areas where guerrilla forces could retreat, regroup, rest, train or create supply lines, was a basic factor in the military situation, as was the many-islanded archipelago itself which was an obstacle to expansion and to mobility of the HMB.

Military disadvantages were perhaps less significant than the fact US imperialism was able to put forward an appearance of reform in measures that swayed large numbers of the Filipino people at a critical stage. From 1950 onwards such reforms as a toning down of the more flagrant corruption and electoral fraud, a moderation of the more brutal methods of terror and suppression by the government armed forces, and an adoption of land reform legislation all tended to affect the masses, including those in the Central Luzon provinces. None of these measures were serious, deep or lasting, least of all the gestures at land reform; but the fact that significant numbers of people clutched at them hopefully (a tendency most noticeable in middle strata of the population) indicated that the PKP estimate that the people were no longer willing to be ruled in the same way was premature.

In the early 1950s the HMB and the PKP were decimated by repeated government military operations, suffering extremely heavy

losses in armed forces and political cadres. One of the first disasters, due to faulty security measures and to overconfidence, was the capture in October 1950 of the PKP secretariat, at the time in charge of directing the struggle. In most of the new regions, expansion forces were wiped out, and so many had been sent out on expansion assignment from the Central Luzon bases that these were gravely weakened as well. In the PKP, the entire central committee and political bureau elected in 1948 were either killed, or imprisoned, or in a few cases became passive or renegades; the central committee and political bureau members chosen to replace them in 1951 suffered the same total fate. Similar devastating losses and attrition occurred among cadres of secondary rank.

The decimation of party cadres and the resultant weakening of the organisational structure of the Party and of discipline led in some cases to the degeneration of Huk armed forces into banditry and gangsterism. Worst of these cases was in western Pampanga province where a former Huk cadre, Commander Sumulong, built his own domain of 'protectionism', mulcting the peasants while making deals with landlords, reactionary politicians and police, and with US army commanders at the huge Clark Air Base. Sumulong and his associates pretended still to be Huks and to lead a 'people's army', while committing deprivations that were publicised in the reactionary press as "Huk activities". The Sumulong gang persisted until 1970, when both PKP armed anti-gangster action and government harassment caused the surrender or liquidation of its leaders.

## **ORGANISATION – THE DECIDING FACTOR**

When the armed struggle of this period had been subdued or had subsided, it was the original base areas of Central and Southern Luzon that remained relatively stable. In the expansion areas little remained of a mass movement that had not had time to grow strong. *These experiences tended to confirm a belief that solid and stable mass bases were those that had been built not so much by armed struggle as by the long and patient work and experience of organisation and education around the daily life, needs and demands of the people.*

In guerrilla struggles where liberated areas are possible, the organisation of people and their real involvement in mass work, productive

effort or self-government during the armed struggle is feasible. In the case of the Philippines, however, it has not been possible in the modern period to achieve liberated areas. Both the *Hukbalahap* during World War II and the HMB operated in and attempted to maintain an underground movement in the same territory where government troops were based and moved freely and where the ruling government functioned. The geographical features of the Philippine islands permitted easy mobility and relatively rapid operations of the government forces, and prevented militarily permanent or stable bases for Huk forces. In the course of the struggle in the post-war period, US and neo-colonial forces improved the advantages they had, building military roads into and crisscrossing Huk base areas, draining swamps that had been guerrilla refuges, and gridding the country with counter-guerrilla facilities, reducing further any liberated area potential.

The nature of guerrilla activity itself had to undergo changes as this occurred. During the Japanese occupation — i.e., in a war against a foreign invader — it was possible to maintain large guerrilla units of up to regimental size, and to bivouac in or very near the barrios. This meant very close relations with the people. Large unit, barrio-based forces were possible in the early post-war period, too; but as the US and neo-colonial forces perfected their tactics, guerrilla forces were compelled to base themselves deeper and deeper in mountains and jungles, and to curtail the size of units, thus undergoing considerable isolation from the people. This process continued until the large guerrilla unit of even platoon size became risky and vulnerable, making the small unit mandatory, although with carefully-designed tactics it became easier to keep close to or to live among the people.

An observable aspect of total or overwhelming emphasis on armed struggle is that mass participation in struggle may actually diminish, although it is usually believed that mass support of guerrillas has the opposite characteristic. Armed guerrillas represent as a rule a small percentage of the population. Their participation is of a high order; but for most of the remainder of the people in Philippine conditions all but limited underground organisation and activity are banned, especially during the large scale evacuations that occur. During the peak of counter-insurgency, when guerrillas may be driven into isolation from the masses, the masses may also suffer isolation from politicalisation and lack the organised means of resisting a terror coupled with 'reforms'

*The question of forms of organisation for those not holding the guns becomes of major importance.*

By 1956 the PKP had shifted its main emphasis from armed forms of struggle to legal, parliamentary forms. This was not wholly dictated by weakness and setback: a new situation had developed in the Philippines, in part stimulated by the long Huk struggle, in which a nationalist movement, particularly of bourgeois nationalist elements, was growing and coming into conflict with the neo-colonial policies and methods of US imperialism. The possibility of broad united front work and of creating new forms of mass organisation as well as the revival of old forms was becoming increasingly apparent.

### **TO GO BACK – AS WELL AS FORWARD**

As in 1945, this was a transition by the PKP from the highest form of revolutionary struggle to 'less-advanced' forms. It was possible to cling to armed struggle on a minor scale, with the orientation that the conditions in the country could deteriorate again and make masses of people ready for it; but to have continued to make this the *main* concentration would have meant even greater isolation from the masses in a period when extensive mass organisation along other lines was possible. The line adopted was above all based on the necessity of utilising forms which maintained the closest contact with the masses. Armed forces that were not completely dissolved were kept in being on a small unit scale, chiefly in a security capacity, to protect underground cadres (the PKP has remained constantly underground, outlawed by an Anti-Subversion Law that provides up to the death penalty for violation), to protect organised places from infiltration by enemy intelligence agents, and to carry out people's justice against traitors, spies and criminals.

In the decade between 1956 and 1966 the PKP was able to rebuild itself and to set in motion a massive open national democratic movement. Old cadres emerging from prison or being reactivated after a period of demoralised passivity played a part in this; but the main organisational thrust came from a large number of new young members who had been both inspired by the example of the Huk struggle and aroused by the frustrations of a neo-colonial independence.

A new peasant union, the *Malayang Samahang Magsasaka* or

MASAKA (Free Association of Peasants), arose and spread rapidly in the old Huk base areas of Central and Southern Luzon, augmented by the failure or non-implementation of the 'land reform' introduced on paper to win people away from the Huk movement in the early 1950s. New anti-imperialist trade union leaders came to the fore in the cities to oppose the class collaborationism that had been foisted on the labour movement following the outlawing of the Congress of Labour Organisations in 1951. A new type of broad nationalist organisation, the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism, activated intellectuals, businessmen and middle class groups. Most vocal of all were new youth organisations of militant nationalism which drew large numbers of student youth as well as worker and peasant youth.

With the organisational base laid, this movement grew by leaps and bounds between 1966 and 1972. One of the most important features of this legal mass movement was that it developed successfully not only on Luzon but on all the other main islands in the Philippines — Cebu, Negros, Panay, Mindanao and others. The organisation and influence of the PKP was able in this period to reach much further and more broadly than in the days of Huk armed expansion.

US imperialism and reactionary Filipino neo-colonial interests, alarmed by this development, set out, as in 1946, to smash the popular mass national democratic movement. From 1969 the 'Nixon Doctrine', as elsewhere in Asia, prepared the ground for a fascist-type militarist system in the Philippines that would have as one of its chief aims the abolition of democratic liberties, including suppression of the legal mass movement.

### **DISRUPTION FROM WITHIN**

However, the key tactics for putting this into effect were devised and carried out within the mass movement itself. The instrument used was a group of young Filipinos who professed to follow the precepts of Mao Tse-tung, and the issues involved were those of armed struggle. From 1968, following the expulsion from the PKP in 1967 of the only leading cadre who had advocated Maoist concepts and who had used sordid intrigue to try to capture the Party organisation for his ends, a Maoist organisation was developed with Peking endorsement, which attempted

to divert the national democratic movement into immediate full-scale armed struggle for the overthrow of the government.

Usurping the name of the 'Communist Party of the Philippines', which itself was calculated to cause much confusion among the organised masses and the people in general, the Maoist group in 1969 set up its own 'New People's Army' and called for armed struggle as the only revolutionary path of the Filipino people, claiming that a 'revolutionary situation' existed. Being a group wholly of petty-bourgeois students, the Maoists had a major problem of creating an armed force among the peasantry to carry out Mao's mechanically-transferred theory of "surrounding the cities from the countryside"; the solution arrived at was to form an alliance with a split-off band of the Sumulong gang.

From the outset the Maoist group devoted its main attention to an attack on the PKP, calling PKP leaders 'renegades' and 'revisionists' for not accepting the most extreme of the Mao Tse-tung theories on armed struggle, and finally resorting to betraying the names of PKP leaders to government intelligence agencies and to employing violence against PKP members and followers. The activities of the Maoists duplicated and had open encouragement from the general international line emanating from Peking of splitting left forces and of pursuing ultra-left tactics; they would have had little effect however, but for the enormous publicity given to them by the imperialist and neo-colonial press and other media in the Philippines, and for the collaborative arrangements offered and entered into with them by reactionary neo-colonial political forces, including in particular Catholic Church groups. These allies of Maoism, with the CIA playing a leading part, projected the Maoist group as the 'genuine revolutionaries' in the Philippines, and denigrated the PKP as having sold out, abandoned struggle or ceased to exist.

These tactics, vigorously abetted by US imperialism and its allies, caused serious divisions in the national democratic movement, especially among the student youth who were its most vocal and articulate sector and susceptible to ultra-radical slogans. Among the organised peasants and workers the effect was very slight. The 'NPA' significantly failed to establish itself in Central Luzon, where the peasants were the most advanced in the country in struggle and organisational experience, and it was compelled to retreat from that region and seek refuge in the relatively remote northern province of Isabela.

The 1970-1972 period in the Philippines witnessed great turbulence.

Neo-colonial political factions – Nacionalista Party, Liberal Party and the Catholic Christian Social Movement – fought each other for the privilege of partnership with US interests in shaping the authoritarian system called for by the ‘Nixon Doctrine’, and increasingly resorted to their own armed forces and ‘warlordism’. All factions, including the US imperialists, desired a climate of violence to justify a ‘strong-man’ grip on power. In collaboration with the Liberal Party and Christian Social Movement, the Maoists were drawn into and used in the power struggle. Most of all, US imperialism sought to goad the Maoist and ‘NPA’ not only to split the national democratic movement but to push it into adopting armed methods prematurely so that it could be bloodily suppressed, as occurred in Indonesia.

In this situation, the PKP worked to mobilise the people for the defence of democratic liberties and against the imposition of fascism on one hand, and against the adventuristic unity-wrecking line of the Maoists on the other that played into the suppressive plans of imperialism. Some PKP members, in the belief that Maoist ultra-left slogans and actions had to be matched in order to keep the PKP in the vanguard and not lose leadership of the people; were provoked into committing and publicly claiming PKP responsibility for armed actions. The ideological struggle against adventurism and provocation had to be waged within the PKP as well as among the masses.

### THE THEORY OF STRUGGLE

The *PKP* theoretical organ *Ang Komunista* (February 1971) replied to Maoist provocations and attacks in this way:

It is not armed struggle *versus* parliamentary struggle that is the issue, but whether ‘armed struggle is the only way’ or a revolutionary Party should learn to combine both forms of struggle. On this issue, as in others, we stand firmly on the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. We uphold the principle of *combining* parliamentary and armed struggle; the exact combination depends, of course, on the prevailing political situation . . .

Parliamentary struggle does not mean putting up candidates for elective positions in order to transform the nature of neo-colonial government. It simply means laying stress on utilising whatever

democratic rights are available. Strikes, demonstrations, leafleteering, factory gate agitation, etc., form part of parliamentary struggle.

In our circumstances parliamentary struggle is not a method of capturing state power and smashing the old state machine. It is merely a technique of breaking the Party's isolation and conducting revolutionary work under extreme conditions of illegality . . . Our Party has always maintained that, in the Philippine context, armed struggle is an indispensable aspect of revolutionary strategy . . .

We do not entertain the illusion that the neo-colonial ruling classes in the Philippines will ever give up their power and privileges peacefully. The seizure of power can only be accomplished through an armed uprising. But we reject the undialectical thesis that 'armed struggle is the only way'. Armed struggle is doomed to certain failure without popular support, and in building popular support we must utilise other forms of struggle allowed by real circumstances.

In our assessment of the existing balance of forces, the time for a strategic offensive has yet to come. We are still at the stage of preparation and the main form of struggle is legal or parliamentary struggle. The principal tasks are the politicalisation and organisation of the masses, including the most backward sectors who up to now constitute the vast majority. The armed struggle must be waged even today but it occupies a secondary and subordinate role in relation to the parliamentary struggle. As the revolutionary process develops, however, the armed struggle will steadily gain importance until objective conditions shall dictate that it be adopted as the main form.

This whole period terminated abruptly in September 1972 when President Ferdinand Marcos moved decisively both to eliminate his neo-colonial rivals and to suppress the national democratic movement. Declaring a state of martial law, he assumed supreme dictatorial powers, suspended representative government, elections and the activity of political parties, outlawed the principal national democratic mass organisations, forbade free speech or assembly, and banned the right to strike or demonstrate.

In his martial law proclamation, Marcos justified his step wholly on the ground that the 'NPA' posed an immediate threat of the armed overthrow of the government. The adventurist and provocative Maoist armed struggle line had fulfilled the role designed for it by imperialism, and had provided the excuse for suppressing the promising Filipino

mass movement before it could reach the stage of seriously challenging the neo-colonial government.

The 1946 and 1972 periods had similarities in the strategy and tactics of imperialism and its neo-colonial allies in suppressing national democratic mass movements of the Filipino people. In both cases imperialism actively worked to create a 'peace and order' situation in order to force the revolutionary movement into armed struggle in unfavorable circumstances not of its own choosing, revealing that the greatest imperialist fear was of the potential of open mass movements. Having succeeded in suppressing the armed struggle of the HMB in the 1950s (it was used in US military circles as proof of the validity of counter-insurgency methods), imperialism was prepared to provoke or manufacture armed struggle in the early 1970s out of confidence that it could be dealt with and made use of to smash the national democratic organisations.

Since the imposition of the martial law dictatorship, the Maoists in the Philippines have continued to insist that the armed struggle is the main form of struggle today, and to call for the armed overthrow of the dictatorship. Although this has been called for insistently since 1969, it has failed to evoke a response from the Filipino masses. Lacking this response, the Maoists have turned increasingly to an alliance with Catholic Church sectors against Marcos, a tendency that is still related to the intrigues of US imperialism which, not fully satisfied with Marcos and having contradictions with him, fosters an opposition as a lever of control.

The PKP, refusing to be involved in neo-colonial power struggles, has adopted the line in a time of difficult semi-fascist conditions of utilising every possible form of activity to maintain close links with the masses. It finds it possible to work amongst the masses, to bring to them its programme, and to work toward its proclaimed goal of helping to create 'a national united front of all exploited classes, of all patriotic and democratic forces'. In February 1973 the PKP held its underground 5th Congress in Central Luzon and adopted a new programme in which the Party's attitude toward forms of struggle was defined in this way:

The PKP is the party of the Filipino working class. It rejects putschism, coup d'état, foco guerrillaism and anarcho-terrorist revolutionism that stands apart from the sentiment of the masses. It does

not sanction any political activity that attempts to split the masses from their vanguard party.

It is to the interest of the masses that the road to revolution is without bloodshed, and they desire that the transfer of power from the forces of imperialism, feudalism and monopoly capital to the political parties of all exploited classes be peaceful. The conditions for violence are necessarily determined by those who possess the instruments of violence, namely, the ruling circles of imperialism, feudalism and monopoly capital. The PKP and all revolutionary forces must be vigilant and must always be in a state of preparedness in every way to prevent the enemies of the people from obstructing the people's way to peaceful revolutionary transformation of our society. The PKP upholds the right of the people to use force against those who use force against the people.

The PKP has proven its readiness and capacity to lead the Filipino people in the sharpest and most advanced of struggles, in which thousands of its best members have given their lives. From these it has drawn the lesson, however, that the overriding need is to maintain close links with the masses, in city and countryside, to draw them into every possible kind of mass organisation and activity, and to involve masses in struggle in which they have the sense of participation. Revolutionary armed forces must serve as a detachment of the mass movement, but the highest forms of revolutionary struggle are those that occur when the greatest masses of people are resolutely set in motion for change.

# **NEW TACTICS ON THE WHITE POLITICAL FRONT**

**by John Brown**

Even a casual observer of the South African political scene could not have failed to notice a quite remarkable shift in political postures as far as Vorster's Government and the white constitutional 'opposition' are concerned. Over the past four years we have heard talk of 'dialogue' between the black masses and their white rulers. Liberals and others have been calling for a federation in which 'power sharing' would be the order of the day. Even the Prime Minister, Mr. Vorster, has come before audiences, hand-on-heart, asking: "Who am I, to underrate the humanity of another?"

It is of course tempting to dismiss these attitudes as the time-buying artifices they really are, but this is simply not good enough. The contradictions of the South African situation have given rise to two major political forces engaged in a life-or-death struggle for power. The most significant of these two forces comprises the oppressed African, Indian and Coloured masses who constitute the vast majority of our working class and who are engaged in a struggle to achieve the national liberation of all the country's peoples. The second force is composed of the White

ruling class, the Nationalist Government, the Government's lackeys in the United Party along with the arch-facists in the Herstigte Nasionale Party and the Government's alleged opponents in the Progressive Party and the bourgeois press. No serious revolutionary analysis can afford to ignore trends and developments in either of these two camps. While it is clear that the politics of the black masses constitutes the main determinant in the outcome of the struggle and must eventually provide the solvent to the set-up in our country, it is equally clear that what goes on in the 'whites only' parliamentary arena is of great significance.

This is particularly true because the present manoeuvrings of the white establishment politicians are, in large measure, a response to the growing strength of the National Liberation Movement, and to the politico-economic contradictions which are tearing the apartheid fabric asunder.

The White racists have realised that if they are to retain their 'colony', if the economic growth rate is to be maintained and profits kept at a satisfactory level, a new formula will have to be found and new alliances formed to make this possible. The changes in their political approaches are thus indicative not only of their panic at the advances the Liberation Movement has achieved, but are also embryonic of a new counter-strategy, designed to perpetuate their economic and political over-lordship.

### **VORSTER'S NATIONALISTS**

A close look at the National party and its style of leadership makes this very clear. Under Vorster's leadership the Government is now a far cry from the halcyon days when Verwoerd's firmly dogmatic ideological blueprint virtually hypnotised many into believing that apartheid was a workable formula for maintaining White supremacy. Verwoerd dominated his Cabinet with messianic discipline and brooked no deviation from the party line which he wove in a brain filled with the mad visions of 'idealism'. Many of his most devoted followers in the Cabinet regarded him as a 'benevolent' dictator. Now all that has changed. The realities of South Africa's political economy have cracked apartheid at its foundations. The economy grows more and more dependent on black labour and the quality of that labour is becoming of necessity

more skilled. Verwoerdian 'idealism' is shattered by recognition of harsh reality. The Vorster gang have had to cast about for new formulae to maintain the status quo. There are competing schools of thought within the Government's own ranks to conjure forth the formula which will prove the most effective.

Faced with this situation, the Government's style of leadership has undergone a radical change. Instead of being able to lead his party forcefully along a clearly mapped path, Vorster is frequently forced to play the part of conciliator between proponents of various strategies. He is increasingly forced to placate rather than lead, to hold his party and Cabinet together rather than to carry them forward towards distinct objectives.

The lack of a clear policy direction within the Nationalist camp is well illustrated by the new departures in sports policy. During his regime, Verwoerd reiterated over and over again that strict segregation was to be preserved in sport. In his famous speech at Loskop Dam he set his face against Maori rugby players performing on any South African field. Yet under the new Minister of Sport, Piet Koornhof, the policy is now going through the wildest gyrations in an attempt on the one hand to mollify world condemnation of racism in sport, while on the other trying to satisfy the demands of White racists within the country. Under the justification that this is 'multi-nationalism', not 'multi-racialism', different races have on occasion been allowed to compete against one another, as in the Ashe & Goolagong tennis matches at Ellis Park and the Foster & Fourie world title fight in Johannesburg. At the same time non-racial sport at club level is banned, proving that the race-mixing at the 'multi-national' level is intended primarily for foreign consumption in an effort to break down the world sport boycott.

### **THE NEW 'REFORMERS'**

But it appears that at least some members of the Cabinet have other goals in view as well. Koornhof's whole approach makes it clear that he is hoping to use a pragmatic approach in sport to prepare the voters and the grass-roots membership for further 'multi-national' innovations on the social and economic front. Such a tactic is obviously designed to make it easier for the financial backers of apartheid in Britain, France,

Germany and the United States to continue to pump investment into the country, and to go on using their influence to blunt attacks on apartheid at the international level.

Nationalist pragmatists of Koornhof's stamp are also hoping to stem the rising tide of militancy among the masses at home, by appearing to introduce reforms. These new policy trends are also intended as signals to some of the United Party front-benchers that some closer form of inter-party alliance might be workable. The fact that there has already been a good deal of wheeling and dealing behind the scenes between Government and Opposition is shown by the UP's continued participation in the infamous Schlebusch Commission, which is legitimising the government witch-hunt against the National Union of Students, the Christian Institute and the Institute of Race Relations.

If further evidence were needed of the growing bonds between some on Opposition and Government benches, it was provided by the defection to the Nationalists of Sir De Villiers Graaff's chief lieutenant, S.J. Marais Steyn, MP for Yeoville. Steyn was the UP's most senior representative on the Schlebusch Commission and remained on that body after he had quit the UP. It is worth noting that the mediator between Steyn and Vorster during the period when Steyn was considering his defection was the Afrikaner millionaire, Jaap De Villiers. Once again big money finance is closely linked with the strategems of the White ruling clique.

But this wooing of UP support, these endeavours to liberalise the Government image, have involved Vorster and his 'crown prince', C.P. Mulder in a new set of contradictions. Each concession to his pragmatist wing has to be preceded by a fearful glance over the right shoulder at the arch-facists in the HNP and on his own back benches. Sitting in the wings, for instance, is Andries Treurnicht, reputed chief of the secret Afrikaner Broederbond, whose rightist leanings almost led to his joining forces with his natural political allies among the Hertzogites. Dr. Treurnicht, who has been watching the new innovations with a very critical eye over the past few years, wields much influence in the Nationalist cultural front organisations; he is an extremely ambitious politician who may have an eye on the premiership.

Nervousness about a backlash from the right does much to explain the ambivalence of both Vorster and Mulder. Whenever a seemingly reformist concession is made it must accompany some form of tough

action against liberals, students and the Press. Thus Mulder will be dining with English newspapermen one day and threatening curbs on Press freedom the next. Thus Vorster will be paying lip-service to 'the humanity' of blacks on one day, while sanctioning masses of bannings without trial on the next. Koornhof too, will plead for better race relations, while muttering threats against Natal's non-racial Aurora cricket club. The Government often gives the impression of riding a sort of political see-saw in its efforts to be all things to all men.

### THE LUNATIC RIGHT

The defeat of Albert Hertzog's Herstigte Nasionale Party during the 1970 General Election and in all subsequent by-elections probably made it safe to dismiss the HNP as a political force, at least for the time being. It can not however be dismissed as a potential dangerous influence as far as Vorster and, indeed, the country as a whole are concerned. In spite of every effort to crush it out of existence, including the use of Vorster's security apparatus, this tiny band of neo-Nazis and vigorous anti-semites has proved remarkably tenacious. Its organisation is small but intact, its mouthpiece, 'Die Afrikaner', continues to appear, and it has purged its ranks of all dissident elements. Donations from a few rich farmers and the various trusts controlled by Hertzog and his allies continue to keep the party functioning and have enabled its candidates to contest a surprising number of by-elections since the disaster of 1970, despite the cost in lost deposits. The HNP has created tiny pockets of support for itself in the rural areas of the Northern Transvaal.

Vorster has good reason to fear the HNP. Its deputy leader, Jaap Marais, who effectively controls the party is, for all his fascistic fervour, an extremely astute politician. Since the HNP broke with the Nationalists in 1969, Marais has consistently and accurately pointed to and predicted Vorster's deviations from the Verwoerdian line. What the Nationalists fear is not that the HNP will gain some seats in the House of Assembly, but that they may entice some of the Nationalist Party's own extreme right wing into their camp. This in turn could trigger a landslide of defections. Vorster has already presided over one split in his party and is not anxious to witness another.

Moreover, in spite of its limited influence, the HNP is a limiting

factor on his attempts to move the Nationalist Party to more pragmatic methods of continuing racial domination. It also acts as a constant reminder to Vorster that worsening economic conditions in South Africa could bring more of the White labour aristocracy to the camp of the Herzogite fanatics.

Like the Nationalist Party, the official Opposition has also been trying to formulate a new line. In the United Party's case, however, the dangers of disunity are even more real. Apart from the defection of Marais Steyn, the UP is now divided up into two clearly identifiable camps. Men like its Cape leader, Myburgh Streicher, and its Simons-town MP, John Wiley, are committed to a traditionalist approach; others like the Transvaal leader, Mr. Harry Schwarz, the MP for Bezuidenhout, Japie Basson, and the MPC for Randburg, Horace Van Rensburg, are allied to the so-called 'Young Turk' faction.

The 'Young Turks' are waging their campaign for a new line under the banner of the new UP 'race federation' policy which they initiated. The policy and its origins and implications are worth attention. The party now claims to envisage a federation for South Africa which would recognise any future Bantustans, give increased power to local authorities and institute a multi-racial federal assembly to exercise overall control. However, the powers of the proposed federal assembly would be granted to it by the present White Parliament, which would have the ultimate say, therefore, in how effective the federal assembly could be. Significantly the UP has declined to say whether the 'Whites-only' Parliament would disappear in its scheme of things and talks vaguely about an all-White referendum to decide this issue. The party has also kept a discreet silence on just how it will decide when the time is ripe for the referendum. But what is significant about its new line is the implied willingness to recognise independent Bantustans — a feature of Nationalist policy which it had hitherto eschewed as an unacceptable 'balkanisation' of South Africa.

It is important to understand how the United Party, under the influence of Schwarz, Basson and Co. came to adopt the new policy. Schwarz interestingly enough is a banker; he claims the status of a 'political amateur'. He is surrounded by a host of ambitious young business and professional men like Van Rensburg, Dick Enthoven, David Dalling and James Ramsay, who are irked by the way the UP's political incompetence hampers their careerist aspirations. It was clear

since the moderate UP gains in 1970 that these young bloods were preparing to direct a 'putsch' against the UP establishment.

### EXPEDIENCY – NOT PRINCIPLE

Quite apart from the personality clashes, which in bourgeois parties sometimes play almost as important a role as ideology, it was clear to the 'Young Turks' that the old UP policy of indirect representation of blacks by whites in Parliament was weak in its logic, and exposed them to effective attacks from Nationalist and Progressive Party platforms. The new federal policy was devised by Basson and Schwarz to give the UP a more effective election platform. They could now argue that they no longer stood for indirect and limited Black representation in the White Parliament, and could at the same time promise the White electorate that ultimate power was not to be given to the black majority. If this interpretation seems over-cynical it should be remembered that Schwarz, now the new policy's chief defender, was in the past a heated opponent of non-racialism, even to the extent of accusing the Progressive Party of wanting to institute Black domination! A wealthy businessman with directorships in more than 30 companies, Schwarz is determined to make his name in the political sphere. He is regarded by his own party colleagues as overweeningly ambitious.

Like the Nationalists, the new ordermen in the UP are also anxious to demonstrate that they have the support of as many members of the 'responsible' blacks, the bourgeoisie and the Bantustan leaders, as possible. This is why at the party's Transvaal congress last year, Schwarz like a conjurer produced a few officially recognised black 'leaders' to address the gathering. In these new initiatives the United Party has the advantage over the Government in that it appears to have no real prospect of ever winning a majority in a general election. It is thus able to put new political plans before the White electorate, safe in the knowledge that it will never be faced with the occasion to have to implement them. The UP leadership has no intention of really 'sharing power'; but it is embarked on a course designed to gain support from a section of the White voters and, most of all, from mining-house finance and the opposition Press. It is incidentally noteworthy how much backing the Schwarz faction has received from newspapers like the large-

circulation Sunday Times, whose links with big capital are well known. It is also worth noticing that English newspapers have, in some cases, given support to one or other of the UP factions not only in their editorial comment but also in their news columns . . . .

The Progressive Party too, has been busy with federalist schemes. Federalism has always been part of the party's programme, but recently they have been pushing this aspect of their policy with a vengeance. Their objective in doing so has been partly to counter the UP's federalism propaganda; but it has also been designed to capture support from wavering elements in both the two main parties, as well as to gain allegiance of liberal minded Afrikaner academics and Black leaders. Their objective in short is to reach a concensus with all those outside the party who can be won over to the Progressive idea of 'power-sharing' and 'dialogue'. The party's leader, Colin Eglin, initiated a conference on federalism in East London, which some Bantustan leaders, including Chiefs Gatsha Buthelezi and Kaiser Matanzima, attended. To give the conference a semblance of non-party impartiality, Eglin enlisted the services of the editor of the East London Daily Dispatch, Donald Woods, to convene the conference. The body approved a 'consensus statement' on federalism, along Progressive party lines.

The Progressive version of federalism claims, unlike that of the UP, to be based on a non-racial premise. However, the difference is superficial. The party's proposed franchise qualifications rest on an educational and a property-owning and/or earning capacity; like the UP it has moved ever closer to recognising the Government's Bantustan policy as a reality. Significantly, the party's desperate bid to gain one or two more seats in Parliament has moved its policy several degrees to the right. Progressives are now embarrassed by their earlier promises to lift the ban on the South African Communist Party, the African National Congress and other banned liberatory bodies. There is also a great deal less emphasis on the promises made in the early sixties to scrap the Pass Laws — lynch pin of the system of oppression and exploitation of blacks by whites; The party still stands for a system of residential segregation "where the communities desire it".

The search for new strategies is thus common to all the main white political groupings in South Africa, and is marked by certain common concerns. The first of these is a desire to appease the mass of the people, especially the black working class, by giving the appearance of re-

formism, and at the same time to better apartheid's image in the eyes of the world community, more especially in the capitalist west. The second and most important concern of the white parties appears to be to find some sort of common ground in the face of the mounting threat to the entire system of white supremacy. This is what the talk of 'consensus' really means. But the contradictions of their system make it difficult for them to decide on a basis for consensus on policy and a common set of tactics.

These changing strategies in the enemy's ranks contain dangers as well as the prospect of further advances for the National Liberation Movement. One danger is that the white establishment may succeed in convincing some blacks that reform is a real alternative to struggle — thus blunting the thrust of liberatory advance, and ensnaring a section of the blacks in a new mesh of exploitation. Common to the policies of all the white political groupings is some variant of the tactic divide and rule; the various versions of federalism as propounded by the 'opposition' should be seen in this light.

The Liberation movement however can gain much by exploiting the uncertainty and lack of direction in the enemy ranks. It can do this best by deepening the solidarity of all our country's oppressed people, so that divisions in the oppressor's ranks are met by increasing demonstrations of the Black solidarity he so much fears. The base of our mass support must be strengthened to include all sections of the population, regardless of race, who are prepared to make a principled stand against racism. To achieve all this the Movement will have to deepen its understanding of the scientific theory of mass organisation and spread this understanding everywhere. This is the road to mass strength, increased revolutionary action — and liberation.

# FEATHERING THE NEST...

by J. Villiers

## THE TUC REPORT ON SOUTH AFRICA

The delegation of the British TUC which visited South Africa in October 1973 was a mixed one. Jack Jones, leader of Britain's largest union (T&GWU) has the reputation of being a left-winger. Danny McGarvey of the Boilermakers' Union is a maverick, left in posture, not in practice. His union has long maintained links with its reactionary whites-only counterpart in South Africa. Cyril Plant, a little-known but influential figure in TUC circles, is what the bourgeois press loves to call a moderate, in contrast to the 'irresponsible' militants. Vic Feather, recently rewarded for his services to British capitalism with a peerage, is unmistakably a right-winger. Secretary to the delegation, boss of the TUC's international department, and author of the report of the delegation, was a Cold War warrior, ex-Foreign Office man Hargreaves.

A delegation so composed was bound, if not to split (which it nearly did), at least to produce a report essentially reactionary in its main elements. In South Africa the five men spent most of their time in the company of the three groups which have combined repeatedly (what-

ever their differences on other scores) to obstruct and prevent the growth of free, independent non-racial or black trade unions: government, employers and the white trade unions. They side-stepped the burning issue of African workers' wages (the original pretext of their visit), wined and dined with their TUCSA hosts, praised the mine compound system and other features of African workers' wretched life which British workers would not tolerate for a day, and conspicuously avoided meeting any of the jailed SACTU trade unionists or the still-fighting SACTU trade unions. Instead, with an opportunist eye on the mood of anti-apartheid forces at home in Britain, they paid a quick visit to the young British worker Sean Hosey imprisoned in Pretoria for his connections with the ANC. Worst of all, they went through the motions of reaching an agreement with Vorster about progress towards the organisation of African workers which, in the face of the Nationalist Government's well-known hostility to African trade unions, could only have been a public relations exercise intended to confuse the outside world. Scarcely had the delegation left when Vorster re-iterated the policy which successive South African governments have maintained for half a century or more.

What was it all about, this unnecessary 3-week jaunt by the leaders of Britain's hard-pressed trade union movement? The delegation's proposals, endorsed by the TUC International Committee, hold the key to this question. They are five in number, and worth examining separately:

(1) "Opposition to British investment in SA should be continued unless British firms show in a practical way that they are encouraging and recognising genuinely independent trade unions for black African workers." Previously, the TUC had taken up a position of *unqualified* opposition to British investment in South Africa. In this as in many other respects, there are reflections of the wide gulf between the increasingly strong left-wing forces in the British trade union movement, the right-wing bureaucrats and careerists who have long dominated the TUC and the many other trade unionists who occupy the middle ground. Pressure from the left has previously secured the adoption of progressive policies relating to apartheid; domination of the right has prevented their vigorous implementation.

Now, under guise of still opposing investment, the delegation has stood the previous policy on its head by postulating that those very

foreign firms which had been condemned by the liberation movement for underwriting apartheid could play a progressive role by helping to build African trade unions. This is a dangerous new extension to the labour movement of a trend hitherto most apparent in the churches and other liberal circles by which the role of foreign capital is promoted as an agent of "peaceful change" in South Africa, and thus an alternative to the call for South Africa's isolation and for support of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed to overthrow the apartheid regime. We doubt that British trade unionists are capable of being persuaded — even by the TUC delegation — that those very international monopolies with which they are locked in perpetual struggle, are capable of benign encouragement of trade unions for their very profitable African work force.

(2) This second proposal repeats a call that the TUC has already made before — to oppose the emigration of white workers to South Africa. What the TUC has not yet done is to take meaningful action to give effect to its policy. The policy is a sound one, and more should be done to make it effective.

(3) "The ICFTU and the TUC should seek to establish a national African trade union centre in South Africa to plan on a massive scale the organisation of African workers into trade unions."

With this proposal we come to the heart of the matter. The TUC delegation has arrogantly assumed the right to set up a national African trade union centre in South Africa, on the basis of inadequate investigation on a short visit, which largely left the black workers unconsulted, as some students pointed out at the time, and whose whole purpose was condemned beforehand by SACTU. To seek to impose on the African trade union movement a new centre which it neither needs nor asked for is not solidarity; it is a form of imperialism working with its allies in the South African white labour aristocracy, to do something which has been tried repeatedly in the past and which has always failed: to divert the growth of a revolutionary workers' movement in South Africa. The right-wing of the British labour movement tried precisely the same manoeuvre in an earlier period of upsurge amongst African workers — the ICU in the twenties. At that time they seconded their man William Ballinger to take the organisation of the workers into tow. His "assistance" from 1927 onwards was an experience whose destructive consequences taught the South African workers a lesson they have

not forgotten. More recently, the ICFTU intervened in South Africa in the late fifties and early sixties to split the black trade union movement by promoting the short-lived FOFATUSA as a counter to the non-racial Congress of Trade Unions. Black workers, as the history of persistent trade union organisation in the teeth of white hostility shows, do not allow themselves to be led by the nose by white workers; nor are they simple enough to be "assisted" by the Western world out of their hard-won militant and growing struggle, into respectable passivity and orderliness.

At this point it may be appropriate to pause and ask why Mr Feather and others from the British aristocracy of labour are suddenly concerned about the situation in South Africa. Why have they put themselves out to rescue, as several South African newspapers assessed their purpose, South Africa from its growing isolation? Are they perhaps attempting to soften the tough united anti-apartheid strategy adopted by leaders of all the world's trade unions at the UN-ILO Conference on Apartheid in Geneva last June? Or because anything that threatens apartheid and its cheap labour base threatens the vital interests of the multi-national corporations; and that the TUC right wingers have become so much a part of the British establishment that they cannot distinguish between the interests of these corporations and the class interests of the working people of both Britain and South Africa?

So far we have dealt mainly with the internal, South African aspect of the TUC's proposals. With the fourth and fifth proposals we come to the equally important international dimension of this squalid manoeuvre. The proposal is to set up in London *under the aegis of the ICFTU* a "small, active, international trade union body" to "mobilise maximum international trade union support for African trade union organisation in SA." The fifth proposal (apparently an elaboration of the 4th) says that "the committee should set itself the task of establishing a very substantial fund — say £100,000 — through appeals directed to trade unions throughout the world, to individuals in Britain, America, Canada, Sweden, Germany and other countries . . ."

The reader cannot fail to be struck by the selection of countries listed (all NATO members) and by the failure to mention the Socialist countries. The whole conception is completely at variance with the unity against apartheid, and for the South African workers' cause, which was achieved at the Geneva conference between trade unions

affiliated to the three international centres: the WFTU, the ICFTU, and the WCL, for the first time since the beginnings of the cold war. Indeed the TUC initiative is clearly designed to smash the unity of anti-apartheid forces in the world trade union movement; it was conceived at a time when the groundwork for the united international conference at Geneva was being laid; it has been put forward without even the pretence of consultation with SACTU, or with the WFTU and ICL.

In this aspect the negative role of the American AFL-CIO is made manifest. This bulwark of reaction has for several years tried unsuccessfully to block the growth of unity in action (if not in ideology) which has characterised Europe's labour movement (East and West) in recent years. It has also interfered directly in the trade union movement in Southern Africa through its front organisation, the African-American Labour organisation, based in Botswana.

The TUC-ICFTU initiative now provides the AFL-CIO with a complete strategy and channel of funds as an alternative to those agreed so widely in Geneva last June — that is the formation of national trade union centres in each country to mobilise solidarity with the oppressed workers and people of South Africa. Instead the AFL-CIO, the British TUC and the ICFTU propose to go it alone, by promoting their own outfit, dividing anti-apartheid forces in the labour movement outside South Africa, and causing widespread confusion.

They will find the militant British workers, the international trade union movement and the black workers of South Africa will not let them get away with that very easily!

# People & Wealth in Africa

by R.E. Press

There have been a number of articles and letters in the South African press calling for sterilisation of the infirm, for less blacks and more whites, and all containing a note of hysteria about population numbers. The apologists of imperialism and racialism realise that their type of system is in crisis and one of the reflections of this crisis is that population numbers and capitalist production are out of balance. They cannot see the way out, because they are blinded by their political prejudices, and can thus only thrash about pointing to the problem but offering no solution. They all miss the obvious fact that Africa's greatest asset is her people. But Africa's other resources are by no means negligible.

How do Africa and South Africa compare to the rest of the world, for example with Japan, the USSR, capitalist Europe, Asia (excluding the USSR but including the Middle East), North America (the USA and Canada) and South America? The basic facts are set out in Tables I and II.

The values given in columns 9,10,11,12,13 and 14 are the result of educated guesses backed by experience and historical trends, and are

## RESOURCES PER PERSON

*Table I*

	LAND				LIVESTOCK				WATER RESOURCES		
	Cultivated	Pasture	Forest	Other	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep	Goats	Land Irrigated	Power Produced	Future resources
1. REGION	2	3	4	5	6				7	8	9
South Africa	1.5	12.0	0.2	2.3	0.5	0.06	1.9	0.26	0.06	low	low
Japan	0.27	0.03	0.7	0.2	0.03	0.05	0.001	0.002	0.07	50	50
USSR	2.4	1.4	7.3	13.9	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.03	0.11	125	1800
Africa	1.3	4.5	4.8	19.4	0.25	0.01	0.4	0.3	0.06	15	2300
Europe	0.9	0.1	1.5	0.4	0.25	0.2	0.3	0.03	0.12	270	470
Asia	0.7	0.15	1.0	2.3	0.17	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.1	15	250
N. America	2.3	2.3	7.5	15.9	0.5	0.3	0.13	0.02	0.13	340	1400
S. America	1.0	8.1	18.0	3.9	0.8	0.33	0.5	0.15	0.05	37	2100
UNITS	Acres per person				Animals per person				Acres per person	Watts per person	

sufficiently accurate for comparisons to be made. Columns 2 to 5 show the number of acres per person in each region which is cultivated (2); could be cultivated but is at present left as pasture or left fallow (3); is forest, some of which is natural and wild (mostly in Africa, USSR and South America) and some which is planted and tended (4); and the remaining non-agricultural land, i.e. deserts, mountains, cities etc. (5).

Africa is relatively sparsely populated, the acreage of agricultural land per head of population (columns 2 plus 3) is highest in South Africa, then comes South America, followed by Africa. Africa is also fairly well endowed with forest which if well used is an incalculable resource – only the USSR, North and South America have larger resources per head.

South Africa's stock of animals (column 6) is amongst the highest, especially cattle and sheep. Africa as a whole compares favourably with Europe and far exceeds Asia and Japan. The stock quality may well be poorer, but this is not a question of resources but of development, and

in particular of how imperialism continues to underdevelop Africa. *World Population* states: "The almost 3 million tons of grain protein recently contributed to the poor nations by the rich and well fed have been more than counterbalanced by a flow to the *Western world* of no less than 4 million tons of superior proteins in the form of soybeans, oilseed cakes and fish meal. The West is benefitting from a most deceptive exchange." Africa's proteins are used to feed the cattle of USA and Western Europe, and then skim milk powder in excess of the home demand in the USA and Western Europe is 'donated' to Africa to feed the starving. As Plutarch said, "The person who first begins to give largesse to the people is he that deprives them of their power."

It is often said that water is Africa's problem, and that much of Africa's riches in land area per person is wasted, for example desert or mountains (column 5). But deserts plus water can give agricultural land, and mountains plus rivers can give hydro-electric power. Africa is last, ahead only of South America in the league of irrigation (column 7) This too is not a problem of resources but of development.

The availability of water is illustrated in columns 8 and 9. South Africa and Africa have very little developed hydro-electric power, but *the potential in Africa is the highest in the world*. South Africa itself is not well endowed but is close to possible sources, which explains the Nationalist government's interest in assisting the Portuguese at Cabora Basa, and feasting their greedy eyes on Swaziland and Lesotho. It also explains much of the sudden coup which deposed Nkrumah just as the Volta dam was about to pay dividends, and of the West's attitude to the Aswan dam. In fact vast possibilities exist for irrigation and power from the various rivers of Africa. Schemes, carefully planned and based on mass participation of the population at all levels of decision making, should be continental in scope and create greater unity and prosperity in many parts of Africa.

Africa is apparently not richly endowed with oil and coal resources (Table II columns 10 and 11), but compares favourably with Europe, South America and Japan. South Africa has very large coal resources. The figures are for 'known resources', but the level of knowledge of Africa is poor. For example in Table III the production figures of tin are given for various years from major world resources. An economist in 1867 would have discounted Africa as a source of tin, and regarded the continent as worthless in this respect. By 1940 it had become one of

## RESOURCES PER PERSON

Table II

	Fuel		Minerals				Population			Placings			
	Oil	Coal	Iron	Bauxite	Copper	Industrial Workers	Numbers	Under 15 years of age	Rate of increase	1st place	2nd place	3rd place	Total
1. REGION	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
South Africa	low	3200	290	low	0.05	87	21	white 31 black 40 all 38	white 1.7 black 2.6 all 2.4	3	2	2	70
Japan	3	100	0.8	0.05	low	109	100	25	1.1	0	0	0	30
USSR	360	5000	140	0.42	0.07	107	238	28	1.0	1	5	4	92
Africa	145	210	28	2.8	0.14	16	336	44	2.6	3	2	1	81
Europe	11	1300	57	0.56	0.01	125	358	24	0.8	0	2	1	68
Asia	165	560	15	0.1	0.01	36	1946	40	2.3	0	0	0	51
N. America	630	7000	54	0.3	0.14	95	222	30	1.1	4	5	1	96
S. America	240	71	90	2.4	0.22	37	267	42	2.9	5	3	4	95
UNITS	barrels per person	tons per person	tons per person			per 1000 of population	Total in millions	per cent of total population	per cent per year				

the world's major sources. Until a thorough survey of mineral resources has been undertaken by trustworthy geologists not employed by ITT or the CIA or the United State Bureau of Mines, there is strong possibility that there remains much to be discovered. Perhaps it is a good thing that Africa's resources have not yet been fully revealed, for now that much of Africa is independent and adopting socialist concepts, the discovery of new resources can be to the benefit of the masses and not the imperialists.

### PRODUCTION OF TIN

*Table III*

Year	AREA				
	<i>World</i>	<i>Malaya</i>	<i>Nigeria</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>Congo</i>
1867	24.9	9		8.7	
1870	27.5	9		10.2	
1880	47.7	11.7		8.9	
1890	65.9	27.2		9.6	
1900	85.4	43.1		4.3	
1910	116.4	45.9	0.6	4.8	
1920	122.3	36.9	5.2	3.1	0.4
1930	176.0	64.0	8.6	2.5	0.8
1940	237.8	85.4	10.3	1.8	12.4

In other minerals such as iron ore (12), bauxite (13) – used for aluminium manufacture – and copper (14) Africa is relatively well supplied, even within the present range of surveying and geological knowledge. Of the other fourteen non-renewable resources listed by Meadows and the Club of Rome, Africa is a major supplier of five.

To obtain a rough general view of the comparative resources of the eight regions listed, allocate points on the basis of first, second etc. For each resource score the leader at 8 points, the next at 7 and so on. On this basis the resource placings turn out as in Table II column 19. Well down are Japan and Asia. South Africa and Western Europe are better off. Africa is above average, and the USSR, North America and South America take the lead.

The smaller the area of a country, the more probable that it will not be fully supplied with all the necessary natural resources, even though it

has a small population. Trade is and always will be necessary; but such trade must be equitable and designed to help mankind and not the few. The use of natural resources is another question. With reckless abandon the imperialist powers waste mankind's future in the quest for profit — even Japan which is particularly poor in its own natural resources. An international movement is urgently needed to curb the multi-national corporations and financiers. Without such control the German Federal Republic government seeks to limit food production in the Common Market to keep prices up, while millions starve; the United States of America uses 42% of the world's bauxite production, but only has 3% of its known resources; and Japan, with practically no zinc resources, uses 13% of the world's production. Each United States citizen uses five times more petroleum than the average world citizen, and the Japanese citizen 5 times as much tin. The resources of the sea are even more unevenly used and Africa gets by no means her fair share of the world's fish. The struggle of the third world is in part an attempt to embargo this unfair seizure of their resources, in which they find allies in the socialist world who, having been boycotted in the past, are now being self sufficient in resources.

### RESOURCES AND POPULATIONS

The soothsayers of imperialism continually tell us that there are too many people in Asia, Africa and South America. However on reckoning of resources and consumption, the problem of 'too many people' arises first in the United States of America and Western Europe. Those who are simpleminded and want to play god, see only one world, with too many people. Such views are expressed in South Africa by, for example, Dr. C. Troskie an executive member of the SA Medical and Dental Council who advises Vorster that "Weak genetic elements must be mercilessly eliminated". However M. Jack Van Wyk the general manager of Sanlam has made up his mind that the reduced numbers should apply only to blacks. It "will contribute very substantially to economic advancement". Dr. Connie Mulder; Minister of Information Social Welfare and Immigration, is however more diplomatic; he just advocates fewer people, and presumably being close to the white god relies on *his* good sense to strike the right racial balance. The truth lies deeper, it is

simpler and supplies an answer to the problems of population.

“Every method of production that arises in the course of history” says Marx in *Capital*, “has its own peculiar, historically valid law of population”. Populations increase each time a new mode of production comes in to operation and enlarges the resources available to the people. It would appear that population numbers under subsistence economies, such as the primitive communism of the hunter-food gathering communities, remain steady over long periods of time. The introduction of agriculture, and with it the beginnings of class society (slavery) lead to an increase in population. Similarly the rise of capitalism, increasing the productive capacity of man, gives rise to an increase in population. The rate of increase of the population of England and Wales in the nineteenth century for example was double that of England and Wales in the eighteenth century; that rate fell again in the twentieth century when British imperialism began to stagnate ready for the change to socialism.

This change in the rate of increase of population is reflected in the percentage of the population under fifteen years of age. The greater this percentage, the greater is the rate of population increase. In Table IV some figures illustrating the relationship between age composition, and the mode of production are given.

*Table IV*

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Mode of Production</i>	<i>% under 15 years</i>
UK	1881	early capitalism	40
UK	1970	imperialism	23
Germany	1910	capitalism	32.5
E. Germany	1970	socialism	22
W. Germany	1970	imperialism	23
USSR	1939	socialism	34
USSR	1970	developed socialism	28
India	1970	agricultural	41
Madagascar	1970	agricultural	46

These figures should be compared with those of Table II columns (15), (17) and (18). It is clear that industrialisation and development lead to lower rates of population increase. There is also some indication that socialism brings even lower rates of population increase. In fact

Hungary is particularly worried about its low birth rates and encourages larger families.

The first step to stop what is a population explosion *in certain areas* is to industrialise and abolish underdevelopment. There is certainly a problem of resources especially in danger zones such as India, Japan, and parts of South America, as the socialist countries confirmed at the Stockholm Conference of the United Nations on the human environment. But Africa's problem is not one of population but one of development. It must be socialist development which alone can ensure development without pollution, destruction of natural resources and beauty, and ensure the wellbeing of man.

So what of the future? In the new era of socialism the question of population numbers will still be important. But if the laws which control these numbers are known then mankind can operate these laws so that the greatest benefits can be obtained for the world's people. It is clear that even with increasing technology, socialist planning, closed production techniques, (which prevent waste and pollution) the use of solar and fusion energy resources and increased food supplies, mankind's numbers cannot go on increasing indefinitely. A balance must be established between population numbers and resources.

The only valid way of maintaining a balance between population and resources is by birth control. But this is not like the 'population control' policies of coercion or decree. In a socialist society where there is full participation of the masses in public affairs, where there is full dissemination of knowledge about the problems, limits and expectations of production and resources, the people themselves will be able to control their own numbers. They will be able to banish the blind forces of famine, war, plague, flood, natural and manmade disasters, blind forces which threatened the existence of pre-socialist man whose only method of fighting back was to give birth to more children. Now that the control of these forces is at hand, it is necessary to use our knowledge and power to preserve our natural environment and change from an emphasis on the increase in the numbers of people to the need to improve the quality of life.

This is not a socialist's pipedream. The women of Mali are said to have contraceptive powder made from the roots of a tree which they use in a manner similar to the pill. In polygamous households the women may decide to limit the births of all the wives and having agreed, another

type of powder is put into the common cooking pot which then limits the births of all the spouses, thus cleverly eliminating any who would blackleg on the decision.

There are other straws in the wind such as the dramatic fall in birth rates in countries where free contraceptives and abortion are given on demand (e.g. Japan).

The problem is often lack of confidence in the power, intelligence and ingenuity of the masses, for they are the makers of history.

#### **NOTES ON TABLES I AND II**

The data was obtained from various sources as follows columns (2-5). *Population resources Environment*, Ehrlich and Ehrlich, Freeman and Co. 1972; *South Africa* M. Cole, Methuen; *Japan* G.T. Trewartha, Methuen.

Column (6) UN. FAO report 1965 and *South Africa* and *Japan* above.

Column (7) *Attack on Starvation* Dessosier A.V.I. Inc. (1961); *World Economic Geography* White, Griffin and McKnight Methuen.

Columns (8 and 9) *Environment* Murdoch, Senauer Associates (1971) and *World Economic Geography* above.

Columns (10 and 11) *World Economic Geography, Japan*, above and *Resources and Man* National Research Council USA Freeman (1969). There is some major discrepancy between coal reserves reported for the USSR. The value 5,000 is lower than the USA of 7,000 but other sources give a considerably higher value for the USSR of about 14,000. 'Asia' includes the Middle East oil reserves.

Columns (12-14) *World Economic Geography* above and *World Resources and Industries* Zimmerman, Harper and Row (1950).

Column (15) *The growth of world industry (1938-61)* UN.

Columns (16, 17 and 18) *The World's Population* Stanford. Oxford (1972) and *Statesman's Year Book 72/73* Macmillan.

#### **OTHER REFERENCES**

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*Stockholm Conference* Earth Island.

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*Limits to Growth* H. Meadows etc. Earth Island.

# Hello or Goodbye, Athol Fugard?

by Gala

*“Athol Fugard’s play broke the dead-weight of precedence which decreed that Black men and White could not appear on the same stage, and his two characters in The Blood Knot are the ideal ones to have done so.”* With these words the now-banned magazine *Fighting Talk* introduced Fugard and his unique play to South African audiences back in 1962. *“This thin, bearded man with the intense flashing eyes is modest, self-effacing, direct and unsentimental; talks staccato as he writes and simply doesn’t see colour – in persons.”*

Now twelve years after, Athol Fugard is still considered a phenomenon in South African theatre and has become an established international name. His plays have travelled outside of our country and at the time of writing he is receiving acclaim in London with his newest productions, *The Island; Sizwe Bansi Is Dead; Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act.*

Fugard can be looked at as an example of the contradictions within White South African society. As a force for social change the White community as such must be viewed negatively. The programme of the

South African Communist Party (1962) *The Road to South African Freedom*, stated: "The relatively high standards of life and wages enjoyed by White workers represent, in reality, a share in the super profits made by the capitalists out of the gross exploitation of the non-Whites. Systematically indoctrinated with the creed of White superiority, the White worker imagines himself to be a part of the ruling class and willingly acts as a tool and an accomplice in the maintenance of colonialism and capitalism." Similarly the African National Congress states in its *Strategy, Tactic and Programme*: "The material well-being of the White group and its political, social and economic privileges are, we know, rooted in its racial domination of the indigenous majority. . . . By economic bribes and legal artifices which preserve for him the top layers of the skills and wage incomes, the White worker is successfully mobilised as racialism's most reliable contingent."

In spite of this, White South Africa has not been without its inevitable contradictions and inevitably it has produced from within its ranks numerous opponents. Thus we have seen the emergence of such outstanding revolutionary figures as Bram Fischer, as well as authors and artists of various degrees of philosophical outlook, many wrestling with themselves, but opposed to apartheid and the perpetuation of racism. Among these latter Athol Fugard appeared as a noteworthy figure on the South African stage.

It is not our intention to discuss here the relationship of Fugard's work to the history and development of South African theatre. Likewise in the absence of appropriate studies it is difficult to trace the historical sequence of playwriting in the English language only in South Africa. According to Alan Lennox-Short, (Editor: *English and South Africa*; Nasou, Cape Town, 1973), various productions have appeared since the 1890s; the year 1911 started the 20th century theatre with a production in the Pretoria Opera House, but "the depressed thirties were unpropitious to any form of drama". Those who have tried to follow the growth of English language theatre might recall the post-war works like *Kimberley Train* (Lewis Sowden) and *Try For White* (Basil Warner).

It was *The Blood Knot* (1961, published 1963) which established Athol Fugard's reputation in South Africa, the USA and Britain. Before that he had written and produced *No-good Friday* (1958) and *Nongogo* (1959), both naturalistic tragedies set in Johannesburg black townships

— and staged with African casts. Of these earlier works the writer Lionel Abrahams said, “Fugard already displays distinctive imaginative vigour and a new ease with his dramatic medium that had not been obvious in the efforts of other South African playwrights”.

Athol Fugard was born in Middleburg (Cape Province) on 11 June 1932, his father the son of Scandinavian Manchester immigrants and his mother a descendant of Afrikaner Voortrekkers. Colin Smith in the *Observer* (London 6.1.74) puts it: “The result was a university bantam-weight boxer, merchant seaman, journalist, magistrate’s clerk, actor, director, who at the age of 41 has become South Africa’s most successful dramatist”. He is married and has a 12 year-old daughter.

Fugard the playwright is never divorced from Fugard the actor-producer, the theatrical explorer. He usually participates in the staging of his own plays and his own acting has much to do with their impact. In Port Elizabeth he brought into being an African theatre workshop, The Serpent Players. He worked with Cape Town actors in 1971 to create an almost wordless presentation of *Orestes* which technically emerged largely from the actors’ improvisations. In 1972 he engaged in experimental theatre at ‘The Space’, a new venue in Cape Town; and the first work to be produced there was his own *Statement After An Arrest Under the Immorality Act*.

Fugard’s works are not plays in the accepted sense of the word, but consist in the main of dialogues between two characters. There is an ever-present concentration on experimentation and technical innovations, and the influence of Samuel Beckett is clearly present.

But it is the content of Fugard’s work which must certainly reveal the real man. *The Blood Knot* is a play in seven scenes, with two characters. It is an episode in the life of two lonely brothers, one fairskinned the other dark, who begin a pen-pal friendship with a woman. The pen-pal venture boomerangs when the girl turns out to be White, and what started almost as a lark turns to torment as the two men act out their dilemma — they are brothers but separated by the gulf of colour. The fairskinned brother, Morris, forces Zachariah to probe his blackness, first to cringe from it, debase himself before it, then to glory and triumph in it. In the climax of the play the brothers act out the story across the colour line: subservience, cringing humility, then a creeping apprehension, a growing awareness, fear, terror, the falling darkness while Zachariah — and South Africa — stand in wait.

When the curtain rose on this play in the early sixties it was the time of the Treason Trial, Sharpeville, the State of Emergency, of high ferment on the political scene in South Africa. Among the Whites liberal consciences were being stirred. Perhaps for this reason a group of White authors called themselves 'Die Sestigters' (Men of the Sixties). *The Blood Knot* itself was a sign of the times for White liberal intellectuals in particular, and it was acclaimed with enthusiasm by all who saw it. Fugard is a liberal and at this time displayed all the emotional fervour of the liberal for the freedom of the individual, abhorrence for colour discrimination and the nightmare life of the Blacks under apartheid. He was, like many, captured by the new spirit of rejection of racism.

International reaction against apartheid was mounting as racism became more and more intensified. Overseas playwrights were beginning to follow the call to isolate South Africa on all fronts. Athol Fugard himself felt the restricting confines of laws preventing mixed audiences and actors in halls, and saw justification in the decision of non-South African authors to refuse to allow their works to be performed before segregated audiences, and went on to encourage them in this action. Segregated theatre in South Africa began to enter a critical period.

The South African security police naturally took an interest in this rebellious Afrikaner playwright. Yet he appears to have accommodated them in typically liberal fashion. "They're all great fishermen. I gave them one of my best interviews sitting on a rock with a rod in my hand and the waves washing over our feet." (Observer, London, 6.1.74) He continued to write and produce, but the pressures on him did not fail to leave their influence.

It must be significant that his next play *People Are Living There* his first one about Whites only, had less richness than the previous work, but proved popular nevertheless. *Hello And Goodbye* (1966) followed *The Blood Knot* in confining its cast to two related characters, a white brother and sister, devoured by the memories of their parents. Now the characters were a cripple and a prostitute. The deteriorated symbolism in these two deformed beings cannot go unnoticed. At the end of the play one of them chooses to revert to a lonely continuation while the other takes up a bizarre existence.

Segregated theatre still continued in a state of crisis. There were acts

of copyright piracy by theatre companies desperate for plays, and unconcerned with the anti-apartheid struggle. In 1967 the Government withdrew Athol Fugard's passport. Four years later, a petition with 4000 White South African signatures persuaded them to return it, so that Fugard could direct *Boesman And Lena* in London. The chastened Fugard had by this time abandoned his support for the international cultural boycott. His new work received praise in the press in South Africa. *Boesman And Lena* received an official South African subsidy, and was acclaimed in the Nationalist newspaper 'Die Burger'. The play has been filmed in South Africa, though not yet released.

Lena is a hag, a Coloured hag. A hard-drinking Coloured woman, knocked about by her man, Boesman, treated as rubbish by those in authority. Life's crumbs for Lena are bitter. These characters might still be Fugard's concern for the downtrodden, but Boesman and Lena are the kind of characters the 'White madam' laughs at, tolerates; they are demoralised people who accept their lot, hoping to survive, doing no harm, finding solace in the bottle. So once more Fugard's cripples dominate the scene.

Miss Yvonne Bryceland, the actress who played Lena, has claimed that this play has done "tremendous good" for South Africa overseas. (The Star, Johannesburg, 14.9.71) The Government's decision to grant Athol Fugard a passport had turned out to be "incredibly wise". Now he would have no difficulty in getting the rights to virtually any play for production in South Africa. He would be able to break through the cultural boycott, she said.

Athol Fugard is now the playwright first. It is now enough for him to portray various aspects of life through his skill and dramatic talent. He has suffered the fate of South African liberals with their absence of any scientific or consistent attitude towards the society in which they live and work. The relationship between the artist and what is essential to his social environment has been conveniently bypassed.

It is not enough for South African art merely to idealise the negation of the racist way of life. Art must also be warmed by the fires of the struggle for liberty.

The South African delegation to the Fifth Afro-Asian Writers' Conference in Alma-Ata last year stated in a paper: "*Some writers are still writing as if they were talking to a third party in that party's terms, and not in terms of the masses, for, from and to the masses. Many poems*

*exploit the tragedy of the situation without offering positive inspiration. Much reportage is saying: 'Look how bad it is', and achieves nothing more than a liberal plea for a liberal conscience."*

*Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* shows what it means to be a black man in South Africa. It is a savage and at times hilariously funny account of the workings of apartheid and particularly of the pass laws. *The Island* has like Fugard's other plays been acclaimed by audiences and critics in London. It is centred upon the life of two convicts in a prison cell. Much of the play is very funny too, and the comedy arises out of their struggle to stay alive, to retain their humanity.

Of *The Island* the Observer (London, 6.1.74) reports: "There is some mention of a 'liberation movement', but to go any further into that territory would have meant treading on dangerous ground inhabited by banned political parties. 'The idea is to get plays performed, not banned,' he (Fugard) says."

Or is it to get the author not banned? After all, plays are already banned in South Africa through apartheid and the lack of facilities for Blacks.

Unlike Shakespeare's soldier, Athol Fugard no longer dares "seeking the bubble reputation, even in the cannon's mouth". For Fugard now "the play's the thing" and no doubt his work will continue to receive the admiration of all who abhor apartheid, even in the absence of a more concrete response to the realities of the South African scene. He admits entertaining a doubt about "the revolutionary's crude policy of breaking eggs to make an omelette. . . . 'I would feel more entitled to support that argument if I was an African, but I don't think a white man has the right to say it'."

As we have said while we do not believe that it will be the White people who will bring about the revolution, the revolution nevertheless has no colour-bar, as others have shown. Athol Fugard need not only be an observer of his country's condition, or as he puts it merely "bear witness", and be "a classic example of the guilt-ridden impotent white liberal of South Africa". An admission of guilt is in itself a step towards personal re-evaluation, and a more profound understanding of his function as an artist.

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