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HAMBA KAHLE DULCIE SEPTEMBER

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APARTHEID GONE MAD THIS SYSTEM MUST GO

More than 20 000 mourners paid their last respects to Dulcie September as she was laid to rest in the Pere Lachaise cemetery — the scene of the last armed resistance to repression during the Paris Commune of 1871. The funeral became a huge anti-apartheid demonstration, a manifestation of solidarity with the ANC.

Dulcie was one victim, but there were 11 more victims brutally murdered in Southern Africa. Some of their bodies were mutilated and burnt beyond recognition. At the same time, a 40lb bomb was discovered and defused outside the offices of the ANC Chief Representative in Brussels, Comrade Godfrey Motsepe. In the space of two months, Comrade Godfrey survived two attempts on his life.

All this took place after a British court dropped charges against a gang of mercenaries in the pay of the Botha regime, whose conspiracy to abduct members and leaders of the ANC from British soil was uncovered by the British police.

In December, 1986, a band of armed men entered the territory of Swaziland. At gunpoint, they abducted South African refugee and veteran political activist Ismail Ibrahim, and took him back to South Africa, where he is now on trial.

The ruling circles in Pretoria have long ago transformed the streets of our cities into latter-day killing fields and shooting ranges. Now they want to take the lives of the Sharpeville Six. It is said they have been found guilty under the common purpose rule. When there were thousands of peo-

ple on the scene, how can one know who assisted in the killing? If 'common purpose' law actually means assisting in the commission of a crime, the Sharpeville Six were victims of the non-application of the 'common purpose' law. They must not hang.

It is unbelievable that Western governments continue to hold normal relations with this criminal regime. It is self-evident that the permissive attitude adopted by certain Western governments towards Pretoria terror tactics has encouraged the racists to ever 'bolder' measures, with a callous disregard for either the sovereignty of these very Western states, or the casualties such actions could entail among the citizens of those countries.

It remains to be seen how the governments of Western Europe will respond to this challenge. The events of the recent past, however, make clear who the terrorists are.

The ANC once again appeals to the international community to take measures to demonstrate its abhorrence of the continuing criminal activities of the apartheid regime — in South Africa, in Southern Africa and the world at large. We expect the authorities in France and Belgium to pursue the perpetrators of these crimes with the vigour that the nature of the crimes demands, and to prosecute the culprits to the full extent of the law.

We, on our part, pledge to continue to escalate the struggle inside South Africa until final victory.

PRISONER OF WAR STATUS AND OUR MK FIGHTERS

By Sonia Bunting

At the time this issue of *Sechaba* goes to press, there are at least 42 men and 2 women awaiting execution in South Africa as a result of political actions taken in opposition to the apartheid regime — actions which in some cases resulted in the death of collaborators, informers or vigilantes. There have been 16 executions of political prisoners since 1979 (when Solomon Mahlangu was hanged) six of them during the last year, and evidence was led in court that eight of the 16 were members of Umkhonto We Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress. As trained combatants, the eight were all entitled to prisoner of war status.

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 relate, *inter alia*, to the treatment of prisoners of war. These Conventions have been ratified by more states than any other international treaty — and South Africa is one of the signatories.

In the 1960s, it became necessary to have new rules regulating the status of those fighting for national liberation, either from alien occupation or from racism. To this end, the matter was raised at the United Nations. Resolutions passed by this body culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly in 1973 of a resolution which reaffirmed the right to revolt, and stressed that the policy of apartheid and racial discrimination had been recognised as an international crime. It also stated that the Geneva Conventions of 1949 should apply to persons engaged in armed struggle against racist regimes.

The International Committee of the Red Cross had already convened meetings to consider the elaboration of the 1949 Conventions. Both the ANC and SWAPO participated, having been internationally recognised as national liberation movements.

ANC and SWAPO Included in the Protocols

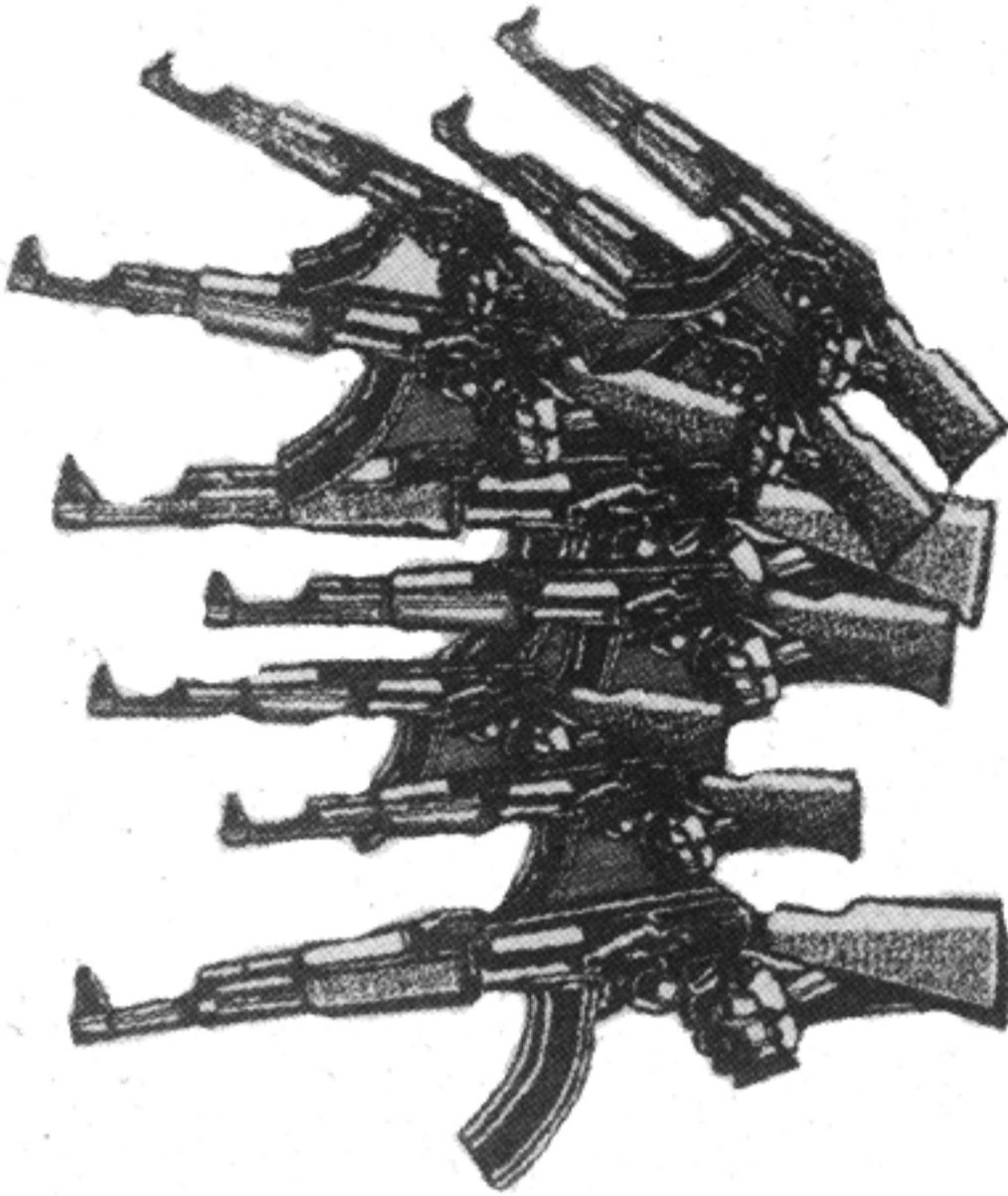
In 1977, after several years of negotiation, Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 were agreed, Protocol 1 applying specifically to:

"... armed conflicts in which people are fighting against ... racist regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination."

The struggles waged by the ANC and SWAPO fall into this extended category of warfare, and therefore their guerrilla fighters are entitled to be granted the status of prisoners of war.

The ANC is a signatory to the Protocols, but the South African regime has refused to ratify them. The 1977 Protocol clearly confers on national liberation movements the right to become a party to the Conventions and to the Protocols. South Africa, having been a party to the original Geneva Conventions, is bound by the development of the rules of international law, which recognises the protected status of the national liberation movements such as the ANC and the combatants under its control.

The significance of prisoner of war status is that it prevents captured freedom fighters from being relegated to the status



of criminals. Any violation of this legal status of combatants struggling to overthrow apartheid and racism is described by the Protocol as a "war crime." Further definitions of prisoners of war make it clear that all members of Umkhonto We Sizwe who are organised for guerrilla activities are combatants by definition, and are eligible for the status of prisoner of war.

Moreover, for the first time it was stated that a mercenary is not entitled to be treated as a combatant or as a prisoner of war.

The United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the international community at large support the liberation struggle in southern Africa, and the crucial need is to protect combatants from judicial execution, from torture, from long sentences or from murder at the time of capture.

Courts of the Regime Reject the Protocols

Defendants Norbert Buthelezi, Wilfred Mapumulo, Robert Dumisa and James Marupeng first claimed their right to

prisoner of war status as members of Umkhonto We Sizwe when they were charged under the Terrorism and Internal Security Acts in 1986. They refused to appoint a lawyer, or even to plead, describing the court as a "loyal and faithful arm" of the regime. The regime refused to abide by the Protocols and recognise the right of these four captives to prisoner of war status, and so the four were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from eight to 12 years.

Edward Petane, sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment under the Terrorism and Internal Security Acts in December last, also claimed prisoner of war status at his trial. Petane refused to be part of the court proceedings and refused to plead, but claimed protection in terms of the Geneva Protocol of 1977, signed by President Tambo. In unashamed contravention of international law, Judge Conradie rejected this claim, asserting that combatants of Umkhonto We Sizwe are not entitled to the protection of the Geneva Conventions.

Cases are being heard now, and more will soon be heard, against activists of Umkhonto We Sizwe who have been captured by the regime. Most of these prisoners have been severely tortured in order to extract confessions from them. If the courts follow the precedent set by Judge Conradie, and refuse to recognise international law in the cases of these soldiers, their sentences are likely to be heavy, some even involving the death penalty.

To try MK combatants as common criminals, and to punish them, is to commit one of the most serious crimes in international law, a crime that was committed by the nazis, and later described as a war crime at the Nuremburg Trial of nazi war criminals.

It is the duty of all those who support democracy, those who respect international law, the duty of the international community and governments everywhere, to ensure that the South African regime should carry out the terms of the Geneva Conventions. It is the duty of all of us to exert pressure on this regime to ensure that it treats captured combatants of MK as prisoners of war.

THE CHARACTER OF OUR STRUGGLE

By Ben Magubane

Lenin paid special attention to the crisis of a social formation that leads to the development of a revolutionary situation. He emphasised that such situations are characterised by sharp breaks in the routine of daily life and flow of events. Because of the structural crisis there is a contraction of the social order's ability to absorb shocks. On the side of the oppressed, it suddenly dawns that their condition is not ordained by an act of nature. Thus, of all the theoretical challenges posed to the national liberation movement, none are more pressing than the need to understand the current conjunction in South Africa. After all, the success of the liberation movement depends on this grasp.

National or Class Struggle

The scale of the present struggle and the possibility of the end of White minority rule poses very sharply the question of what type of society will replace apartheid. What class, or combination of classes, will inherit the future? What is the future of capitalism? What is the possibility of establishing socialism? These questions, given the vested interests of international imperialism, assume special significance.

Much of the debate today about whether the struggle against White minority rule is a national or class struggle begins with the landmark resolutions adopted in 1928 and 1930 by the Communist International on the Black National Question in the US and South Africa. The theses had profound historical influence that is still felt today.

Recently, several criticisms have been levelled against the ANC and its allies, involving the nature of the ANC and the implications of its alliance with the South

African Communist Party (SACP). Among those who have raised the criticism most persistently and sharply, are Tabata (1985) and the various documents of the Unity Movement; Archie Mafeje (1986, 1987); John Saul, (1986); *Inqaba Magazine* (which describes itself as representing the Marxist tendency in the ANC), A Kallinikos (1985) among others.

Those who are sceptical of the ANC and criticise its alliance with the SACP share a certain ideological orientation. First, the criticisms are made from a Trotskyite perspective. Second, these writers are virulently anti-Soviet Union; third, they have the habit of selecting and misquoting statements and documents of the ANC and the SACP in the hope of discrediting and creating doubts about the one movement that has the potential to wrest power from the White minority regime.¹ Most of these writers are opposed to the armed struggle, dismissing it as hopelessly misconceived given the strength of the White minority state and the efficiency of the military. For instance, Tabata (1986:80) writes:

"Our methods of achieving our aims cannot be based on militarism ... We cannot possibly match our military power with that of the South African state ..."

More specifically, the criticism can be summed up as follows:

- The ANC is a petty-bourgeois organisation whose main goal is to abolish apartheid, and it will betray the working class.
- The SACP is a bureaucratic-Stalinist organisation. Its policies follow slavishly the twists and turns of Moscow policies, and, instead of advancing the interests of the working class, it tails the ANC.
- What is needed in South Africa is an independent Marxist party, expressing the

interests of the working class, that will fight for socialism, unencumbered by national concerns.

■ The Freedom Charter is not a socialist document; besides its demands are too vague to be trusted.

In *Inqaba* (1986:10) we read:

"If the SACP were a genuine Marxist Party, it would be organising the militant youth and workers without delay to build a mass ANC on a socialist programme. It would, as we do, explain and develop the transitional and socialist content of the Freedom Charter, emphasising its promise to nationalise the monopolies ..."

The SACP would be able, very rapidly, to organise tens of thousands of revolutionary cadres for this purpose — and we would support them in every genuine step.

For Kallinikos (1986:11), the theory of internal colonialism, which he says was adopted by the ANC in its document, *Strategy and Tactics*, is nothing but a "piece of bizarre phantasy." For him: *"South Africa is the most highly industrialised country in Africa ... The SACP invites us to view this capitalist social formation as in fact two societies ... Not only is the suggestion intrinsically preposterous: it flies in the face of the past fifteen years' research by South African Marxists ..."* (Ibid)

Mafeje, like Kallinikos, is also impressed by the integration of Blacks into the urban-industrial order of South Africa:

"... the position of the CP on the question of 'nationalities,' though inspired by a liberatory ideology, coincides with that of the government on Bantustans ..."

"From its inception the Communist Party has been guided by Stalin's thesis on the right of nations to self-determination and the recommendations of the Third International/Comintern to fraternal organisations ... The slogan recommended for South Africa in the 1920s was a "Native Republic," which was to fight for the overthrow of British and Afrikaner imperialism and for the restoration of lost territory to the natives. (Cf Botha's "constellation of independent nations in South Africa.) Mafeje, 1986:100-101)

Attempts to Win Whites to the Struggle

In these statements, the programmes of the Congress Alliance are parodied and caricatured to the point of absurdity. There seems to be a deliberate disregard for the painstaking work that the SACP and the ANC have put into thinking out the implications of the nature of the White minority state. Kallinikos's position is reminiscent of the arguments advanced by the 'left opposition' current in the Comintern. Then and now the aim of the 'left opposition' was to liquidate the national liberation struggles with 'left' arguments. For instance, in Kallinikos and in *Inqaba*, one often reads theoretical arguments against the right of self-determination for Africans, arguments advising against dividing the proletariat with too much emphasis on national aspirations of Black workers. That is, the struggle must be confined to the 'limits' acceptable to White workers, who will one day learn that their 'true' class interests do not lie with the White bourgeoisie, but with the Black working class. *Inqaba* (1986:37) that:

"The inability of fascism in South Africa to gain or sustain a momentum towards power will bring the class contradiction within it to the surface ... This could well provide crucial opportunities, if we are alert to it, for the Black workers' movement to win over working-class and lower middle-class Whites from fascism directly to the proletarian revolution."

Inside South Africa itself two tendencies have emerged to contest the loyalty of the Black workers — the so-called 'workerist' and 'charterist' tendencies. The former emphasises the independent role of trade unions and is suspicious of all struggles that do not involve 'pure' working ones. We find in *Isizwe* (1987:51)

"... workerism tends to have a very narrow idea of working class concerns ... to be highly suspicious of any kind of popular alliance ..."

The designation 'Charterist' describes those organisations like the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress

of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Student Organisation (SASO) which argue that unions, like other mass community organisations, should not divorce themselves from the broad alliances that fight the general oppression and exploitation of the Black people as members of the oppressed nationalities. Underlying this debate has been the question of whether socialism is on the agenda in South Africa or whether the struggle is simply to achieve first, democracy, and later socialism.²

Marxism and the National Question

To understand the national question in South Africa, it is necessary to review the development of Marxist theory on the national and colonial question. The founders of Marxism, Marx and Engels, understood that the proletarian struggle for social emancipation never takes place in a vacuum. Many other social issues have influence and an impact on it. But they always proceeded from the interests of the working class. In doing so, they analysed national oppression to see its impact on the class struggle. By taking factors like colonial conquest, racism and the women's question, Marxism was able to create and develop a comprehensive materialist theory of national liberation. Basing himself on the works of Marx and Engels, Lenin elaborated on the Marxist theory of national liberation.

Marx and Engels, in a true spirit of internationalism, devoted considerable time to analysing the development of bourgeois national movements in Western Europe, where such movements were then focused. They supported these movements in so far as they represented struggles against feudal absolutism and were against reactionary classes holding back the development of capitalism, which at that time was historically progressive.

Marx and Engels first put forth their ideas on the national question in 1848 in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. They demonstrated that the concepts, 'nation' and 'national' are products of the era of the

rise of capitalism and are closely connected with the division of society into two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The class struggle is a consequence of this division. This is not to suggest that there was no class struggle before that. The abolition of national oppression depends on the outcome of this struggle, inasmuch as national oppression is a manifestation of the class domination of the bourgeoisie. National oppression disappears as these relations are abolished. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie paves the way for a drawing together of nations.

"In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end." (1969:125)

After reviewing the growth of the European national liberation movement and the deepening of class contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the working class in the middle of the 19th century, Marx developed the ideas set forth in the *Manifesto*.

International Class Struggle

Studying the problem of the national liberation movement in Ireland in the light of the struggle of the British working class against their own bourgeoisie, Marx concluded that the international alliance of the working class, and consequently its social emancipation, was impossible without first demolishing the wall of enmity and isolation between nations, which had been continuously created by the bourgeoisie. "Any nation that oppresses another forges its own chains," Marx wrote on March 28th, 1870 (Ibid:176).

In a letter to S Meyer and A Vogt of April 9th, 1870 he noted that the working class of Britain was "divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians." (1956:286) and underlined that it was particularly important "to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the national emancipation of

Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment but the *first condition of their own social emancipation*". (Ibid:287) In other words, it was a question of the right of nations to self-determination.

In contrast to the bourgeois formulation of the question, Marx regarded national self-determination first as a slogan of the working class and, second, as one of the most important conditions ensuring the international class alliance of the workers essential for the victory over their class enemy — the bourgeoisie.

This Marxist premise enabled Engels in a letter to K Kautsky written 12 years later on September 12th 1882, to say that:

"The victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing." (Ibid:423)

Marx and Engels offered only general theoretical principles in formulating the problems posed by national oppression. It remained for Lenin, living in the era of imperialism, to draw up a scientific theory for solving the national-colonial question. He demonstrated that as capitalism moves into the imperial phase, the national question is exacerbated and develops into a most acute international socio-political issue.

Colonialism and Historical Materialism

Therefore, the task for national liberation, if it was to achieve genuine independence, would involve the application of the historical materialist method within a colonial context, rather than simply arguing mechanically the 'economic case' for socialism. This entailed adapting Marxist science to the national conditions created by the colonial situation. In a colonial situation, the cause of freedom for subject peoples could not be genuine unless the interests of the most subject classes were taken into consideration. For Marxists in the colonial countries the cause of freedom for their people was coeval with that of labour.

Lenin wrote:

"We must link the revolutionary struggle

for socialism with a revolutionary programme on the national question ... combine the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary programme and tactics on all democratic demands." (Collected Works, Vol. 21, p. 408).

Today history is full of examples in which Marxist theory as a revolutionary tool was adapted and used as an anti-imperialist weapon. The proletarian nature of the anti-colonial struggles has been recognised successively by such Marxists as James Connolly in Ireland, Mao in China, Fidel Castro in Cuba, Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam, and Amilcar Cabral in Guinea-Bissau.³

Connolly, in what today looks like an over-sanguine assumption, argued that Irish Catholics had learned over the centuries that:

"Just as the socialist knows that the working class, being the lowest in the social system, cannot emancipate itself without as a result emancipating all other classes, so the Irish Catholic has realised that he, being the most oppressed and disfranchised could not win any modicum of political freedom or social recognition for himself without winning it for all others in Ireland ... He has learned that his struggle is, and has been, the struggle of all the lowly and dispossessed, and he has grown broad-minded with the broadmindedness of the slave in revolt against slavery." (Quoted Ramson, 1980:24).

Bernard Ramson (1980:6-7) in his book, *Connolly's Marxism*, writes that:

"As it emerged as the faith of the organised working class in the late nineteenth century industrial Europe and North America, Marxism centred itself on the problem of replacing the established bourgeois political economy with its socialist antithesis. In the dependent territories of the capitalist empires, then, as in the twentieth century, Marxist strategy could not be resolved into such matters of empirical judgment and calculation. The burden of history is a prime legacy of long-standing imperial relationships, both in terms of the self-definition of the ruled and the perceptions of the rulers. Marxists like Connolly,

from dependent nations, were primarily obliged to articulate their doctrine as a standpoint within the history of the national struggle."

In examining the strategic questions faced by the working class in the countries dominated by imperialism it must be remembered that the class alignments that fight for national liberation and social emancipation are not the same as those spawned by the logic of capitalism. This makes it very difficult — even in our day — for a national liberation revolution to begin as a socialist revolution.

Origin of the Alliance

The relationship between the ANC and the SACP goes back to the late 1920s, and covers a long and variegated path. This means that the study of the binding alliance must be approached concretely and historically. The tasks the ANC and SACP set themselves when they were formed in 1912 and 1921 respectively must be considered from the standpoint of the historical condition, place and time in which these organisations were formed. It is especially important to take into consideration the overall historical situation created by imperialism, the level of self-awareness and organisation of the ANC at the time it was formed and the involvement of Black workers in the political economy of the White settler state. Such an approach makes it possible to comprehend more deeply the purpose and the goals of the two organisations and to arrive at a fuller interpretation of the ideas that informed these organisations.

In 1912 the ANC represented the interests and aspirations of a people who had been recently conquered, whom the Constitution of the Union of South Africa excluded from the political process. As Oliver Tambo, the President of the ANC put it:

"The South African constitution excludes the Blacks. They are outside the constitution. There is nothing they can do about the decisions, the policies of the South African regime. They don't belong. They are fighting from outside this White state. This is not a civil rights struggle at all. If we

were part of the constitution, if we were citizens like any other, then of course there would be rights to fight for, as there are rights to fight for in the US. But in South Africa the position is different. Our struggle is basically, essentially, fundamentally, a national liberation struggle."

(Quoted by Nyawuza, 1984:26)

Those who are critical of the national orientation of the ANC completely ignore this fact. The character of White minority rule is apprehended in a one-sided manner and is oversimplified. Until the historical injustice of conquest and dispossession that Africans experienced with the advent of White minority rule is abolished the task of national emancipation will not lose its democratic content and its bearers will always act as objective allies of the working class.

Because of the nature of White minority rule and capitalist exploitation in South Africa, Black people continue to be degraded and victimised across class lines. The subjugation of whole nations and peoples is a basic essence of the imperialist system. Black people's labour has played a crucial role at each stage of the development and expansion of capitalism in South Africa. As Alex Hepple (1966:177) puts it:

"The early history of labour in South Africa is a record of slavery, bondage, child-stealing and kidnapping. In later years these compulsions to work were replaced by refinements of legal devices to direct the non-Whites into the service of the Whites."

Given the centrality of Black labour in settler colonisation policies, the various struggles Black people waged became closely interwoven. Political struggle also contained economic demands, workers' strikes served as an instrument to advance political demands. The history of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) demonstrates this interaction.

The SACP was founded in 1921. A Lerumo in the foreword to his book on the history of the SACP points out that:

"... some of the assumptions made by the pioneer Communists of South Africa were incorrect and led them to indefensible

positions, particularly when as leaders of the White labour movement they felt themselves obliged to defend on 'Marxist' grounds the maintenance of the colour bar in industry." (1971)

Using the high vantage-point of retrospect, Trotskyites and 'nationalists' who are hostile to the ANC-SACP alliance never tire of reminding us of the SACP support for the 1922 reactionary strike of White miners and for the pact that united the National Party and Labour Parties on an explicitly racist programme. If these criticisms were offered in a fraternal spirit one would not quarrel with them. But they are used maliciously. The unhistorical approach is not only unjust to men who fulfilled a notable task; it also fails to see that those men and women, like their Christian and liberal counterparts, were bound by the inevitable limitations of their time, their background and the pressures that moulded them.

"It fails to educate because it does not explain in an historical context what those pressures and limitations were and how, with deeper experience and knowledge, the movement those pioneer Communists founded developed to transcend, correct and overcome them". (Ibid)

A general feature of the period under review was that the working class level of development, its degree of organisation and the scale of struggle by the various factions, were uneven. The development of class consciousness of Black and White workers was inseparably associated with the whole historical development of their respective communities. The interaction of national and social experiences played an important part. Because of the interweaving of these factors the moulding of the proletarian class consciousness was an uneven process, especially because it occurred in uneven material and political conditions.

Why an ANC-CPSA Alliance?

The nature and character of Black oppression and exploitation in South Africa has been a controversial and hotly debated issue. It is not an exaggeration today to say

that the conflicting answers to, and strategies for the solution of, the question of Black oppression and exploitation are at the core of the various disputes that have plagued the liberation movement. Does the situation of Blacks in South Africa boil down to national oppression or is it an issue of class exploitation only? Or is the issue really one of both national oppression and class exploitation?

The manner in which the problem is posed implies *ipso facto* different tactics and strategies. If for instance, the problem of Blacks in South Africa is posed as one of national oppression only, as the Pan African Congress (PAC) has conceptualized it, then the issues of class exploitation are considered secondary or irrelevant. On the other hand, if the problem is posed only as one of class exploitation, as by the Trotskyites, then the questions of national liberation and self-determination are clearly rendered irrelevant in South Africa.⁴

If national oppression and class exploitation are considered as dialectically related, then national emancipation and social liberation are not mutually exclusive.

After the SACP lost faith in the White workers' revolutionary potential, it began to formulate a new approach to the national question in South Africa. It worked out anew its attitude to the ANC, and came to the conclusion that given the nature of the ANC, and its historic role, it was possible to work with, and take advantage of, 'bourgeois' nationalism, which expresses itself concretely through the democratic aspiration of all the classes in the ANC.

During the presidency of J T Gumede, the relationship between the SACP and the ANC improved greatly, even though, ten years earlier, Gumede had been a strong opponent of 'Bolshevism'. He represented the ANC at an International Congress of the League Against Imperialism in Brussels. Other delegates from South Africa were James La Guma, representing the SACP, and Daniel Colraine of the South African Trade Union Congress. President Gumede visited Moscow in 1927 to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution.

From 1927 onwards the programme and strategy of the SACP has been fundamen-

tally determined by its theoretical conception of the nature of the White minority state, especially its relationship to the African majority. The component parts of the SACP analysis of the national question in South Africa are derived from the thesis adopted by the 1928 Congress of the Comintern which summed up the situation in the Union of South Africa. Document 41 states:

"In the Union of South Africa, the negro masses, which constitute the majority of the population, are being expropriated from the land by the White colonists and by the State, are deprived of political rights and of the right of freedom of movement, are subjected to the most brutal forms of racial and class oppression, and suffer simultaneously from pre-capitalist and capitalist methods of exploitation and oppression." (South African Communists Speak, 1915-1980:90)

On the role of British imperialism, Document 42 states:

"South Africa is a British Dominion of the colonial type. The development of relations of capitalist production has led to British imperialism's carrying out the economic exploitation of the country with the participation of the White bourgeoisie of South Africa (British and Boer). Of course, this does not alter the general colonial character of the economy of South Africa, since British capital continues to occupy the principal economic positions in the country (banks, mining and industry), and since the South African bourgeoisie is equally interested in the merciless exploitation of the negro population.

"In the recent period in South Africa we have witnessed the growth of the manufacturing iron and steel industries, the development of commercial crops (cotton, sugar cane), and the growth of capitalist relations in agriculture, chiefly in cattle-raising. On the basis of this growth of capitalism there is a growing tendency to expropriate the land from the negroes and from a certain section of the White farming population. The South African bourgeoisie is endeavouring also by legislative means to create a cheap market of labour power and a reserve army."

These excerpts from the Comintern resolution draw attention to the fact that White minority rule has its origin in a particular form of settler colonialism and derives its logic from a capitalist mode of production thoroughly influenced by imperialism.

That is, political oppression, cultural repression, and economic exploitation of the African people benefited the bourgeoisie of a few Western imperialist countries who invested their capital in the diamond and gold mines of South Africa in the last quarter of the 19th and early part of the 20th century. From then on South Africa was organically integrated into the capitalist world system. And the economic and social structure of the country was governed by the laws of this system and controlled by the classes that dominated the world market, as the post World War 1 recession demonstrated so well.

Marxist theory on the national liberation question and the White settler state in South Africa are not formulated as an academic aid to the study and writing of history as practised in the universities. It had, and still has, a definitely operational character as a guide to strategic and tactical questions. Examined from the vantage point of today, the two formulations are a remarkable appraisal of the fundamental structure and character of South Africa, whose aptness and relevance have been vindicated rather than made obsolete, by the passage of time.

"The theory's emphasis on the 'colonial type of the country,' on the 'united White front for the exploitation of the native population', between British imperialism and the White South African bourgeoisie, foreshadowed the Programme adopted by the SACP in 1967 with the benefit of 34 years' experience and study". (Lerumo, 1971, revised edition, 1980:58-59)

Shallow Misrepresentations

Contrary to the shallow misrepresentation and disingenuous attempts by Kallinikos and Mafeje to discredit the theory of colonialism of a special type, at the time it was formulated the SACP and the ANC had no coherent theory on the character of Black

oppression, and no comprehensive strategy for intervention and leadership in the struggle for national and social emancipation. The great contribution of the Comintern Thesis on the national question, in 1928 and 1930, was that for the first time Communists and later nationalists confronted the specific nature of the South African state and broke with the liquidationist approach that had denied the fact that the African people in South Africa were subject to a form of oppression distinct from that of White working class exploitation and oppression. The thesis recognised that Black exploitation was a particular form of oppression and exploitation which required a comprehensive theoretical and historical analysis in its own right, and a special political strategy and programme to overthrow it. The thesis highlighted the fact that the struggle against White minority rule was also a struggle against imperialism and a key to the struggle for social emancipation in South Africa. Finally, the Black nation thesis grasped the centrality of Black labour in the evolution of South African capitalism as it moved from mining and farming to the development of secondary industry.

The conquest and disfranchisement of Africans in 1910 was essentially the political and legal reflection of the settler imperative and its insatiable demand for Black labour which it exploits using extraordinary economic methods. The links between the national (race) and the class question affect all Blacks in South Africa and objectively determine the inevitable logic and direction of that struggle. Contrary to the conclusions of Kallinikos and Mafeje, the collective historical experience of Africans is not an illusion but central to the economic development and socio-political formation of South Africa. As *Simons and Simons (1969:387)* put it, the thesis:

"... was a bolder and more imaginative programme than any projected for the overthrow of White supremacy.

"Achieved by centuries of colonial war, slavery and forced labour; by brute force and the concentration of power in the oligarchy; by education, propaganda, Christianity and the entire range of approved institutions — White power seem-

ed so formidable and inevitable that the most radical leaders of the liberation movement hesitated to present any direct challenge to it. They fought a defensive battle to preserve old rights or resist new assaults; they pleaded for acceptance as equals within the existing order, and never envisaged its destruction. The ANC's constitution, based on a draft prepared in 1919 by a committee under R.W. Msimang, stipulated no higher aim than to strive by just means for the removal of the 'colour bar' in the political, educational and industrial fields and for equitable representation of Natives in Parliament. It needed courage to demand "equal rights for all civilised men," as the Congress stipulated in 1923. Not then, however, nor for many years to come, did it claim universal suffrage and majority rule."

Has the integration of the Black working class into the industrial economy and their urbanisation made the theory of colonialism of a special type a bizarre phantasy as Kallinikos claims? Clearly no!

"Historical, political, economic, social and cultural evidence clearly points to the fact that the term "RSA" does not encompass the total population of South Africa, but only the settler community and their descendents and can only denote the state of the White settler nation. As regards the subjugated Black nation, RSA is, therefore, the colonial power ... the colonial power and the colonial people both occupy the same territory, ... The claim that the term "RSA" applies equally to both nations is refuted daily by reality. This claim is reminiscent of the ludicrous post-war French and Portuguese claims that "their" African colonies were "overseas provinces," an independent part of metropolitan territory. If accepted, this claim would also lead to the absurdity that, had the Union been successful in annexing Namibia in 1919 as its "fifth province," Namibia would have been independent long ago! (Theodoropoulos, 1982:62)

Two Principles of Colonial Rule

Sam Nolutshungu's argument in *Changing*

South Africa (1983), that the South African state is incapable of incorporating Africans, is informed by the idea that Blacks in South Africa are governed by institutions that are colonial in character. He mentions the racial franchise and the institutions of labour control — influx control, pass laws, labour bureaux and the bantustans. All these he says represent a colonial form of rule. The place of Africans in the polity is controlled by two principles of colonial rule: racial exclusion from the state plus policing and control for purposes of exploitation. Given these structural realities, the reformist overtures of the Botha regime are nothing but ideological deception by a regime in crisis.

Nolutshungu argues that unless the distinctive effects of domination and submission are taken into account neither the resistance to change on the part of the ruling Whites, nor political alignments and behaviour favouring radical change among Blacks can be appreciated:

"Just as there is a resistance among Whites to any real loss of power and privilege, there is, among Blacks, an equally strong ideological and political resistance to any reform that might perpetuate White domination and Black subordination ... among Whites, the opposition to fundamental political change is not ... located only in one class (or coalition of class elements), but consists of a broad coincidence of interests of Whites of all classes, so, also, among Blacks, the rejection of White dominance is not restricted to one class. There is no class that can be said to be decisively in support of continued White domination, even if it were somewhat reformed. The basic reason is that both the alignments for conservation and those that demand change are defined, in the first place, in terms of political rather than economic relations. Positions occupied by the various 'races' in the order of domination itself modify the general social effects of the positions they occupy in the relations of production ... In South Africa the circumstances and the effects of this 'modification' are very particular and important".

To sum up, the social oppression of Africans, as a people qualitatively deter-

mined their class and political position. The key question in South Africa is: given the nature of Black oppression and the fact that the overwhelming majority of Africans are workers what role should a Marxist Party play? What those who criticise the ANC-SACP alliance fail to grasp are the conditions which allow a Marxist Party to play a vanguard role in the national liberation struggle, and which gives a materialist underpinning to the ideological struggles and organisational norms which compose the united front of class and national forces. That element is an historically specific class analysis, political line and strategy that can accommodate the forces of national liberation and social emancipation. A working class party does not lead because of the 'purity' of its programme, or because it is most eloquent in criticising other parties' opportunism — though all these things may be true at one time or another.

"At bottom, a Leninist Party leads, to the extent that it most accurately assesses the political potential of each class and class stratum in society, best illuminates the tasks at each stage of the working class movement's development, and displays the most skill at grouping together all political forces who can make a positive contribution. A Leninist Party plays a vanguard role when the party has a vision of how each stage is linked to the protracted process of accumulating enough revolutionary force to eventually capture political power." (Elbaum, 1987:2)⁵

In other words, in historical development, the working class is never reproduced as a 'naked' proletariat, that is, pure bearers of the capital relation. Labour is always reproduced with historically specific habits and 'needs' and within a social and cultural world whose character is never exhausted by the functional requirements of capital. (Cf. Johnson, 1979: quoted by Bondemann and others. 1986:10)

E P Thompson stresses that although class experiences are largely determined by capitalist relations of production, class consciousness itself as a way of articulating these experiences is mediated by traditions, value systems, ideas and ideologies like racism etc. Therefore a concrete, historically given society cannot, accor-

ding to Dos Santos (1970:177), correspond directly to abstract categories. He further states that "Marxism does not use abstraction formally. After it has elaborated a concept abstractly, it later denies it, showing the limitations of this level of the concept. Hence, the need for passing to more concrete levels of abstraction". That is:

"In a concrete society, the development of the means of production and its contradictions gives rise to historically specific social situations (for example at the end of the nineteenth century the capitalist mode of production takes on an imperialist form and today this form assumes a character integrated on a world-wide scale". (Ibid)

The integration of the Black workers into the South African political economy and the trade unions they have formed have put on the agenda the question of the democratic rights of the entire Black population. The demand to organise trade unions and for their recognition are not merely economic demands; in South Africa these are political acts which defy the White minority regimes that have tried to reduce Black labour to mere units of labour power. Conceding the right to Black workers to organise themselves indirectly acknowledges their status as 'political animals' equal to other 'political animals.' The organisation of Black trade unions focuses attention on the core of the contradiction — that Black labour cannot be divorced from the African as a political and social outcast. It is true that the dialectic of national and class oppression and exploitation became more complex as secondary industry developed, but the continued underpinning of the system of national exclusion and racism only served to increase the alienation, the bitterness and political explosiveness of Blacks in South African society.

Footnotes:

1. For a criticism of the "left/workist" critique of the ANC/SACP strategy, see Harold Wolpe, *National and Class Struggle in South Africa, Africa's Crisis*, 1987, Institute for African Alternatives, London, pp. 59-68.

2. For an example of this debate see Isizwe, *Errors of Workerism*, a debate between two trade unionists in *The South*

African Labour Bulletin, Vol.12, No. 3, March/April 1987, pp. 51-76.

3. On this point, the Programmatic Platform of the Communist Party of Cuba says: "There is no unsurmountable barrier between the democratic-popular and anti-imperialist stage and the socialist stage. In the era of imperialism, both are part of a single process, in which national-liberation and democratic measures — which at times have already a socialist tinge — pave the way for genuinely socialist ones. The decisive and defining element of this process is who leads it, which class wields political power."

4. For an excellent discussion of this issue see Christos Theodoropoulos, *Colonialism of a Special Type and its Implications in The African Communist*, No. 91, Fourth Quarter, 1982, pp. 53-65.

5. When some anarchists in Russia accused the Bolshevik party of putting off the socialist revolution by advocating this first democratic stage, Lenin replied: "we are not putting it off but are taking the first step towards it in the only possible way, along the only correct path namely the path of a democratic republic. Whoever wants to reach socialism by any other path than that of a political democracy will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the economic and political sense". (*The Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Collected Works Vol. 9 p.29).

ANC INTERNATIONAL



Our Banners Dipped: Funeral of Sean McBride

As a young man, Sean McBride, an Irishman, spent time in prison for his part in the struggle for independence of his own people. From 1973 to 1976, as United Nations Commissioner, he distinguished himself in his work for the independence of Namibia. President Sam Nujoma of SWAPO and President Tambo of the ANC were among those who paid tribute at his funeral in **Dublin** in January.

President Nujoma said Dr McBride's death had left a void in the ranks of the world-wide, common struggle aimed at human liberty, universal justice, world peace and productive international co-operation.

President Tambo said in his message:

"The ANC ... salutes with pride the contribution of Sean McBride to the cause of freedom and human emancipation throughout the world. He was a great beacon, guiding and assisting oppressed people to the path of national liberation and self-determination.

"We in the ANC have rich memories of a great Irishman, a revolutionary and freedom fighter, who recognised that freedom, like peace, was indivisible. He fought for peace against the twin evils that face humanity — the scourge of racism and the imminent threat of destruction through nuclear weapons.

"Sean McBride will also be remembered for the concrete leadership he provided to the liberation movements and peoples of Namibia and South Africa, driven by his own personal and political insight, arising out of the cause of national freedom in Ireland. We recall our debt to him in the brilliant way in which he focused the attention of the world on the grim process of colonialism and exploitation in Africa in par-

ticular. Our debt to him can never be repaid.

"In extending the sympathies of the ANC to his son and daughter, friends and compatriots, we dip our revolutionary banner to this visionary fighter who did so much to espouse the hopes and needs and demands of ordinary people, not only in his own country, but throughout the world.

"Hamba kahle. Go well, Sean McBride."

Irish Republic: Call for Sanctions

Farid Esack of the United Democratic Front and Comrade Mzwai Piliso of the National Executive Committee of the ANC visited Ireland in March as part of the campaign for sanctions organised by the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement. They held a press conference in the morning of Friday March 19th, and in the afternoon met with a senior representative of the Department of Foreign Affairs, to urge the government of Ireland to apply sanctions against the apartheid regime.

Farid Esack and Comrade Piliso also made stirring speeches at a rally on Saturday, March 19th, when between 4 000 and 5 000 people from all over Ireland — from Belfast in the north to Cork in the south — marched in **Dublin** to call for sanctions against South Africa. Specifically, Comrade Piliso urged Ireland to stop exporting to South Africa technology that could be used for military purposes. After the rally, a letter was handed in at the office of the Foreign Minister.

The rally was held outside the historic General Post Office, scene of a major battle in 1916, during the Easter Rising against British rule in Ireland. The leaders of the Easter Rising were captured and later shot; John McBride, father of Sean McBride, was

one of them.

On the following Monday, 75 members of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement picketed the offices of a newspaper that had printed a propaganda advertisement placed by the Pretoria regime. At first, the newspaper management refused to take the letter, but was finally persuaded by the police to send a representative to meet the picketers.

French Solidarity Action

On January 9th, a street in **St Breve** on the Cote d'Amour was named after Nelson Mandela.

To commemorate International Women's Day, a traffic circle in **St Martin D'Herbes**, near Grenoble, was also named after Nelson Mandela. On the centre of the circle is a huge sculpture, depicting Space and Liberty.

The sculpture was executed by a woman named Evelyn Iehle. She says, "It is difficult to be a woman. You always have to prove what you are doing."

Netherlands

The Afrikaners of South Africa pay homage to Jan van Riebeeck as the pioneering father of their colony at the Cape. At the same time, the birthplace of Jan van Riebeeck, the Dutch town of **Culemborg**, regards him as the founder of apartheid South Africa, and has officially and publicly dissociated itself from him.

Culemborg held a week of anti-apartheid activities in January, during which the mayor and the townspeople publicly rejected racism, exploitation, and all that apartheid stands for. The mayor made a strong statement in which he said that the people of the town felt no pride in their association with Jan van Riebeeck.

Previously, the South African Embassy had made representations to Culemborg to drop its plans for this week of action, but the town went ahead nevertheless.

A number of statues of van Riebeeck have been taken down.

This small town also raised 30 000

guilders to help fund *Voice of Women*, the journal of the ANC Women's Section. The symbolic cheque was received by Comrade Godfrey Motsepe, ANC representative in the Benelux countries.

US Citizens Protest: Call for Sanctions

In **San Francisco**, the week of March 6th was declared South Africa Solidarity Week, and the announcement was made at a press conference called by the San Francisco Anti-Apartheid Committee.

Participants at the press conference included trade unionists and religious leaders. They condemned the banning of organisations in South Africa and Reagan's support for the Pretoria regime. They called for the end of the state of emergency, freedom for Nelson Mandela, and for sanctions. The mayor of the city sent a statement to the press conference, calling for "full sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa."

In **Washington DC**, over 1 500 people took part in a protest outside the South African Embassy (at least 62 of the demonstrators were arrested). A speaker from the AFL/CIO, and other trade union leaders, spoke in support of COSATU. Just before the banning of COSATU, US auto and steel trade unionists had begun a campaign for the release of South African trade unionist, Moses Mayekiso.

Speakers called for sanctions. A Bill before Congress at present — introduced by Representative Ronald Dellums — calls for a complete ban on all trade with South Africa; other measures introduced would ban US corporate investment in the South African oil industry and the import of South African diamonds.

Another **Washington** demonstration was organised in front of the campaign office of Senator Robert Dole, who was running for presidential nomination in the Republican Party. Dole is strongly opposed to sanctions against the South African regime, though it seems he is not opposed to sanctions in principle, for in 1987 he introduced a Bill in Congress calling for sanctions against Angola.

END APARTHEID EXECUTIONS!

Demonstrators in Britain protest against hangings in South Africa



END APARTHEID EXECUTIONS!

Demonstrators in Britain protest against hangings in South Africa



THE CRISIS IN OUR COUNTRY A REALISTIC POLITICAL SOLUTION

By Brenda Stalker

This is a further contribution to the debate that has been taking place in Sechaba, on the nature of our revolution, and the seizure of state power.



I would like to have the opportunity of taking up the challenge of Thando Zuma, who responded, in *Sechaba* of February 1988, to my contribution in the issue of November 1987. In particular the following contribution will serve perhaps to clarify, but more importantly to expand, some of the ideas which, in my earlier contribution, I had put in a sort of shorthand. I welcome his contribution, because it is only by exchange of opinion that we can clarify questions of strategy and tactics.

My main point about the changed objective basis of the liberation movement's strategy and tactics since 1984-5 referred to the emergence in South Africa at this time of a *political crisis with a nation-wide thrust*. A most important symptom of this crisis is the 'talks' process which started in 1985 with the visit of the businessmen to Lusaka to have discussions with the leadership of the ANC. Though we use the term, 'talks', to refer to qualitatively different types of dialogue between the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC, and various political and social forces, the existence of this fundamental political crisis undoubtedly lies at the base of all of them. Nonetheless, it is necessary to distinguish between the different types, for they have, clearly, a varied socio-political content and, the involvement of the national liberation movement in such talks does not have, from case to case, exactly the same strategic and tactical aims.

Categories of Discussion

One category of discussion is that between the liberation movement and the people's movement. The two main organisations of the people's movement, which emerged in the first half of the 1980s, are the United Democratic Front (UDF), many of whose constituent organisations are in themselves of decisive importance, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). COSATU is not simply a trade union movement, but an integral part of the people's movement, and this has significant implications for the tactics of the organisation.

The people's movement, which is not identical with the national liberation move-

ment, has its own peculiarly democratic tasks. It is, at the same time, an integral part of the revolutionary forces; indeed, its emergence is the most characteristic symptom of the evolution of a deep political crisis in our country.

While the people's movement is an expression, a symptom, of the crisis, it constitutes a subjective factor which makes history, thus itself contributing to the deepening of the crisis, as well as representing a key factor for a possible solution. The people's movement has become a key motive force of social and political progress under present conditions.

Clarify Strategy and Tactics

In its discussions with the various constituent parts of the people's movement, the aim of the liberation movement is to clarify questions of strategy and tactics, both its own and those of the people's movement, to deepen understanding of the different roles of the national liberation and the people's movement (including the constituent parts of the latter) and to step up co-ordination of action on various fronts. The most important aim of the national liberation movement at this stage is to strengthen and defend the people's movement.

The second category of talks is those between the national liberation movement and a range of forces holding more or less reformist bourgeois-democratic positions. They come from both the White and Black sectors of the population. Here, the aim of the liberation movement is, above all, to broaden the spectrum of political forces participating actively in the struggle for a democratic South Africa.

A third category consists of dialogue with representatives of political and social forces from among the White population; forces which, to one degree or another, constitute the political and social base of the apartheid regime. Of course, the line of demarcation between this category and the second one is not always clear. The overlapping of the two categories has, among other things, to do with the colonialist-racist nature of the apartheid

system, which gives all Whites a position of privilege and also a part of the super-profits extracted from the brutal exploitation of the Black people.

Differentiation Among Whites

However, to classify all the Whites together would certainly be an over-simplification of a narrow nationalist type. It would not only run counter to the facts in South Africa, which point to a growing differentiation and re-grouping process among the Whites; it would also involve a failure to understand the complex nature of South African society and the onset of political and socio-economic crisis.

There is also a tendency to overlap in the other categories I am formulating. In general, the attempt to classify phenomena, in particular socio-historical processes, always suffers from a certain (necessary) schematism. Though the method is useful, the formulation of categories and concepts, used in scientific work, only reflects in very general and essentially static terms the dialectical movement of historical processes.

To return to the third category — it involves forces from the colonialist-racist camp. The chief aim of the liberation movement in conducting talks with such representatives is, in my opinion, to isolate the most extreme elements in the White population and to look for a basis for acceptable compromise, a compromise with an important element of 'national consensus.'

The boundaries between the different elements from the social and political base of the regime are not always clearly definable — this emerged, in my opinion, at least on the margins of the 'Dakar talks' — and such talks could represent a step towards eventual negotiation with the government or a sector of it.

Utilise Contradictions

In regard to the possibility of eventual negotiations with the Pretoria government, it is important to note that there are signifi-

cant, objectively based contradictions in its social and political base. It consists, on the one hand, of petty-bourgeois and petty-bourgeois-orientated nationalist forces, including White working class forces, and, on the other, big Afrikaner business. It seems to me extremely important for the liberation movement to utilise such contradictions to the utmost, for they may prove finally to be of a strategic nature as far as the possibility of finding a political solution to the crisis is concerned.

A fourth category involves talks which aim at the isolation of collaborationist elements among the Black people. Recent events, especially developments in the bantustans, suggest that this category will grow in importance.

Last but not least is that of talks with the ruling class, the core of which is, of course, the monopolies. (Closely related to these talks are the contacts between ANC leaders and imperialist governments.) The way this sector moves in the forthcoming period will be crucial to finding a relatively peaceful solution to the present crisis in our country. Undoubtedly, in setting up the initial talks in 1985, big business (I have particularly in mind such leading concerns as the Anglo-American Corporation) was influenced by the desire to erode the principled political positions of the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC, and to divide the movement if possible.

This should not prevent us from putting this first step of big business into proper historical perspective, for — perhaps we can see this better in retrospect — it was quite clearly linked with the opening of deep political crisis in the second half of 1984. Thus the timing of what Thando Zuma has referred to as a "pilgrimage" to Lusaka, to have discussions with ANC leaders, was no historical accident.

Elements in the Ruling Class

First of all, we should get a picture of the main elements in the South African ruling class. These are big Afrikaner business, which has, of course, many roots in the conservative countryside, and are also closely tied in to the framework of state or semi-

state capital. Since this section is a fraction of the social forces closely connected with the apartheid regime, it might be argued that it would fit better into what I have designated the third category, encompassing the social and political base of the regime. However, as the ruling class in South Africa, it must clearly be handled as a specific social category with a definite historical significance, in spite of its various fractions with diverging interests.

The other main section of the South African ruling class is Anglo-South African mining finance capital, which is, in general, even more powerful than Afrikaner finance capital, and is closely tied in with international finance capital, which historically it stems from. Undoubtedly, the leading element here is the Anglo-American Corporation, which is especially closely linked to international finance capital.

An essentially secondary part of the ruling class is that sector involved mainly or solely in manufacturing (Anglo-American is, of course, also involved in manufacturing in a wide range of products).

The big foreign concerns involved in such fields as the motor industry have been selling out to South African concerns, though maintaining their influence through such more modern forms of imperialist influence as technology transfer, management expertise and marketing.

Growth of Smaller Business

There are often the medium and smaller concerns, however, which are not altogether independent of the big monopoly firms, and have, till now, had very little political or economic weight. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the national liberation movement should ignore them. Medium and small concerns, not only the White-owned but also the Black-owned, are likely to grow in importance, partly because of the strategy of the apartheid regime and the monopolies, of expanding their social and political base, stepping up neo-colonialist-type relations in our country and stabilising apartheid colonialism.

It should not be forgotten that such forces are interested in seeing a further widening of the South African domestic market; and

so to strengthen the bourgeois-democratic thrust of such forces should be seen as an important task of the liberation and people's movement. One such tactic in this context is, of course, the consumer boycott.

A certain growth in the independent political potential of the manufacturing sector is also to be expected in the context of the socio-economic crisis, a crisis closely linked to the deformations of the 'national industrialising' process in the country. In this respect, the interests of manufacturing offer a certain basis for a realistic compromise solution.

Though the ruling class is certainly to be classified as part of the colonialist-racist camp — this appears when, for instance, we consider the role of the gold-mining industry in our country, dominated by Anglo-American — at the same time, it is not identical with the regime. This should have been made clear in what I have said concerning the two main social props of the apartheid regime. To see the apartheid regime and the ruling class as having precisely the same parameters would be falling into a crucial error which would tend to lead the liberation movement into errors of an ultra-left type. This is especially relevant in the new objective conditions of socio-economic and political crisis.

In connection with the problem of the relationship of the ruling class to the regime, I think it would be useful to make the point that, though important elements and structures of South African state monopoly capitalism exist, and though it reached a qualitatively new stage of development in the 60s, it has not matured. The colonialist system of apartheid itself places fundamental barriers in the path of the maturing of South African state monopoly capitalism.

Unequal Role of the South African Economy

The other side of the coin is the subordinate role of the South African economy in the international capitalist division of labour, which, on its part, acts as a brake on the maturing of South African state monopoly capitalism. South Africa's unequal role was

retained, despite the qualitative changes in the role of the South African economy in the world capitalist economic framework that took place in the 60s when a relatively broad-based manufacturing sector grew in our country.

Indeed, we should not ignore the interlocking and mutually reinforcing nature of the apartheid system, on the one hand, and the unequal role of the South African economy in the world capitalist system, on the other. A key to understanding this organic relationship undoubtedly lies in recognising the importance, in the South African socio-economic system, of the mining industry, dominated by international imperialist finance capital, and worked, in the main, on the basis of cheap, colonialist, exploited African labour.

Finally, as far as the conclusion is concerned that South African monopoly capitalism has not matured, it should be clear that this has important implications for the question of the type of revolution which is on the agenda in our country and for the strategy and tactics of the progressive forces.

Nature of the Crisis

We return now to the nature of the deep political crisis. It is based on a socio-economic crisis, and this became clear in the first half of 1974. It is the socio-economic crisis that determines the nation-wide thrust of the political crisis. Among other things, it is the existence of a socio-economic crisis which plays a fundamental role in putting objective pressure on the ruling class to find a way out of the crisis.

However, though there exist certain crisis symptoms in the South African economy, the leading monopolies continue to make huge profits. That the mining concerns in particular are not feeling the economic pinch in any direct economic sense is, of course, very much related to the specific role of primary industries, and, above all, to the role of producers of such a commodity as gold, as exporters to the world market. So the factors putting the South African ruling class under pressure to look for a way out are not directly or

purely on the economic level.

It is necessary to bear in mind that economic crisis and socio-economic crisis are not identical categories, a fact that British Prime Minister Thatcher does not appear to have grasped. The apartheid system is serving to endanger the process of capitalist expanded production in South Africa, to the extent that it is acting as a brake on the productive forces — and here the objective need to begin the task of intensifying production is a decisive factor.

Apartheid Threatens Capitalist Production

Under our country's peculiar conditions, this threat to the process of expanded production endangers political stability to a degree unknown in the 'normal run' of countries of the national-democratic revolution, which do not have a consolidated national capitalist state on domestic soil.

So it is that, under South African conditions, the contradictions existing in the *national framework* overlap and reinforce contradictions which are more of the type of international relations of production, turning, as they do, in the first place, on the role of the relevant country in the framework of the world capitalist economic system. It is this specific type of 'structural crisis' in South African conditions which has led to the emergence of what I have referred to as a political crisis "with a nation-wide thrust."

The two main features in this respect are the people's movement which, as we have noted, finds its highest expression in the setting up of organs of people's embryonic state power and the beginning of a search by the ruling class, as well as by other sectors of the colonialist-racist camp, for a way out of the crisis. When we look at the situation in South Africa this way, we must immediately be reminded of Lenin's definition of the revolutionary situation:

"... for a revolution to take place it is not enough for the exploited and oppressed masses to realise the impossibility of living in the old way, and demand changes; for a revolution to take place,

it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way ... This truth can be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). (Collected Works, Moscow 1966, pp 84-5)

Of course we have to bear in mind that there exists in fact, in the real world, a dialectical, complex and complicated relationship between the two sides of the equation. In particular, the people's movement itself plays a crucial role at the subjective political level, and is itself an active maker of history in a situation where an historical or dialectical leap has begun to come on to the historical agenda.

The people's movement is thus the main motive force of the political crisis, at least in the longer-term sense. It is especially important to bear this in mind in the South African situation, since, as I have said, there is no full-blown economic crisis in our country which would serve to exert at least very intense pressure on the ruling class to find a way out. In fact, the peculiar dynamic of the political crisis in our country, when compared to the classical revolutionary situation outlined by Lenin, points to the specific character of the "nation-wide" crisis. This specific character arises out of the specific nature of the socio-economic crisis in South Africa.

Not a Revolutionary Situation

I have not used the term 'revolutionary situation' in connection with the political crisis in our country; nor, in an unqualified sense, should one speak of a 'nation-wide crisis.' It is for this reason that I have spoken earlier in this article of the crisis in our country having only a "nation-wide thrust." In fact, the political crisis in South Africa does not constitute a fully-blown revolutionary situation in the classical Leninist sense. Indeed, that is one of the important reasons why it is wrong to identify the struggle in South Africa too closely either with the Russian revolution of 1905-1907 or with the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, both of which were marked by the un-

folding of a classical-type revolutionary situation. The revolutionary situation, at least in the case of Russia's first revolution, stemmed from the fact that, at the most basic level of the society, the qualitative leap which stood on the historical agenda had to do with a full-scale contradiction at the level of the productive forces, the relations of production and the political superstructure.

Thus, there existed a fundamental contradiction, a contradiction which had become over-ripe, between the existence of a feudal, autocratic regime (in the form of the Tsarist regime) as well as considerable remnants of feudal relations at the level of the relations of production, in particular those on the land and the needs of capitalist development. This was, then, a revolution of the classical bourgeois-democratic type, the key element of which was a peasant insurrection which centred on the confiscation of the land from the feudal or semi-feudal landowners. The October revolution was, of course, a socialist revolution.

With reference to the question of whether or not the anti-feudal revolution is relevant to the South African situation, it is important to note that, despite the view of a sector of the Trotskyite movement in South Africa (the Unity Movement), such a revolution is not on the agenda in our country.

Decade of Qualitative Change

Because of the thoroughly imperialist character of South Africa's historical development, the revolutionary process never had what we can really call an anti-feudal thrust, not even in the second half of the 1950s or even in the 1920s. Apart from this, what remained of pre-capitalist socio-economic sectors and elements in the so-called 'White farming areas' and in the bantustans entered the final stages of their erosion in the course of the important economic developments in South Africa in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Indeed, in my opinion, we cannot properly understand the new conditions fac-

ing the liberation movement today — even as compared to the days of the Freedom Charter — if we do not grasp fully the import for our revolutionary theory, for our strategy and tactics, of what were, to an important extent, qualitative changes, at the socio-economic level, which took place in the decade of the 60s. In this regard, we must remember that Marxist-Leninist theory and method is precisely that scientific theory and method which gears us to noting, not only quantitative, but also qualitative, changes in the conditions of struggle.

At the same time, though the revolution in South Africa is not of an anti-feudal type, we must not then fall into the trap of believing that it is a socialist revolution. This seems to be the belief of yet another sector in South Africa, with Trotskyite tendencies, calling itself the "Marxist tendency within the ANC," though, of course, despite their chosen designation, they are not to be found within the ranks of the ANC.

Indeed, the position of the South African liberation movement — that the revolution in South Africa is of a national-democratic type — should guard us against such a danger. This conclusion, reached by the ANC Morogoro Conference, constitutes one of the most important achievements of that conference. In other words, it stressed that the revolution in South Africa is of a national liberatory type, and its core the national liberation of the African people.

On this question, Thando Zuma and I seem to be in total agreement. But if the revolution in South Africa is of the national-democratic type, we must draw the correct conclusions from it. And let us spell it out quite clearly, to eliminate any possibility for confusion: *A national-democratic revolution is not a socialist revolution, not even in its people's democratic form.*

Pre-Capitalist Sectors Eroded

I have referred to the final erosion of the pre-capitalist sectors, which took place in South Africa in the 1960s and the first years of the 1970s. Despite this, the national-democratic, and not the socialist, revolution remains on the agenda.

This has to do with socio-economic and political realities. I have already pointed to some of the most important of them — namely the retention of the colonialist exploitation relations (necessarily also reflected at the political level) in respect of the Black majority, as well as the retention of the unequal role of the South African economy in the international capitalist division of labour (the two are, as I have indicated, essentially sides of the same coin).

This situation has meant essentially that, despite the emergence of the capitalist mode of production as a more or less unitary mode of production in South Africa, the country's socio-economic relations still remain stamped by the international imperialist relations of colonialism and neo-colonialism. A revolutionary process directed against such relations, and in particular neo-colonialist relations, is, indeed, the very core of the objective tasks of the national-democratic revolution as a revolution type of our epoch.

In the sphere of political relations, the fact that the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism remains the chief objective task of the present revolutionary process in South Africa is connected, too, with the essentially colonialist 'metropole' character of the position of the whole White population.

On the other hand, the position of, at least, the non-monopoly sectors of the White population are also subject in a general sense to the imperialist relations of colonialism and neo-colonialism and, in particular, also affected by world imperialism's plunder of the human and natural resources of our country. They, likewise, suffer to one degree or another, from the deformations of the socio-economic relations in South Africa, connected with the retention of the colonialist relations whose main burden falls on the Black people, in the first place the African people.

The Whites also suffer from the effects of the political crisis, even if only in the main from a deep sense of insecurity, caused by the political upsurge among the Black people. Moreover, if one sector of the population of a country — and particularly if that affects the majority — is unfree, then this

must limit the freedom of the privileged minority too, with all the implications, not only at the political, but also at the cultural levels.

Contradictions Among Whites

In my opinion, when we look at the position of the non-monopoly sectors of the White population, we can grasp in an especially concrete way the contradictory nature of the revolutionary situation in South Africa from the point of view of the classical revolutionary situation. On the one hand, they have been 'corrupted' with a share of the super-profits, extracted from the super-exploitation of the Black people, while on the other hand they also suffer from the general imperialist plunder of their country's resources.

It is clearly in the interests of the liberation and people's movement to use this contradictory situation in its interests, specifically the certain progressive potential that exists in the White population. At the same time, from the point of view of the possibility of "general insurrection," (see Thando Zuma's contribution) or the conquering of full state power by the people — in this respect it cannot be forgotten that the South African army is White-dominated, and the Whites are, in general, not going to be a support for such an uprising. Moreover, the extreme rightist elements among them would undoubtedly be dedicated fighters in such an eventuality.

The existence of this 'metropole' on South African soil should warn us against a too close identification of our struggle with, say, the struggle in Vietnam, quite apart from the fact that the Vietnamese revolution had a most important anti-feudal content, which laid the objective basis for a crucial element of genuine peasant insurrection. While considering the question of Vietnam, we should also not bypass the general scientific and practical problem of the possibility of the transition from a national-democratic to a peoples-democratic revolution, which did, indeed, occur in Vietnam.

Among other things, this points to the possibility of countries in which there does

not yet exist a high level of socialisation of production making the transition to socialism, in particular in the face of imperialist intransigence. In fact, even the October Revolution in Russia had already offered objective evidence for such a possibility, and the inauguration of the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism which occurred with the October revolution has, in general terms, increased the potential for such a development.

However, the transition to the socialist revolution took place in Vietnam (and Cuba too) in connection with the breaking out of these countries from the framework of the international capitalist economic system. It should be clear that, apart from the enormous obstacles in such a path even in the national framework of South Africa, world imperialism is not likely to watch passively such a development in South Africa, especially as South Africa plays a most important role in the context of the economic, political and strategic interests of the leading imperialist countries, and of world imperialism as a whole.

Peace Endangered

Such a path of the revolution in South Africa is fraught with the most serious dangers, not simply for regional, but also for international, peace. It is the people's democratic revolution which is, of course, more closely connected with the classical concept of the conquering of full state power than is the national-democratic revolution. And, since in conditions of colonialist exploitation and oppression the build-up to general insurrection can only take place along the path of people's war, it should be obvious that the adoption of such a strategy in our conditions would have extremely dangerous implications for regional and international peace.

In this respect, we cannot forget that, particularly in our nuclear age, no genuine revolutionary movement can afford to formulate its strategy and tactics without taking into consideration their implications for the maintenance of world peace. It should also be clear that the strengthening of peaceful coexistence on a global scale —

and here the de-escalation of regional conflicts will play a growing role — creates favourable general conditions for political and social progress, among other things, through the containment of imperialist aggressiveness.

I believe that, in the new stage of world development which is just opening, this will become increasingly clear. Even at a national or local level, a conscious policy of choosing the most peaceful path, as long, of course, as it is not connected with lack of principle, offers the revolutionary and democratic forces the most favourable basis for further progress.

It is for such reasons that the liberation movement should pay increased attention to the fact that the emergence of a political crisis with a nation-wide thrust in our country lays the objective basis for a compromise solution. The ruling class must eventually make important adaptations in its own interests, for, as I have noted, the political crisis has deep socio-economic roots which, in the end result, fundamentally threaten political stability in South Africa, including the stability of the state itself.

Moreover, from the point of view of the liberation movement, the beginning of the emergence of embryonic organs of people's power (in areas of Black settlement) ensures a process of continuing revolutionary development in the deepest democratic sense.

A Part of State Power

In addition, a genuine compromise will serve directly to strengthen the national liberation movement itself, since such a compromise must necessarily mean a qualitative widening of democratic rights. Then, too, such a compromise is likely to mean that the liberation and democratic movement will gain a part of state power, even at the centre of the state apparatus, and this, likewise, will be a decisive element for further progress.

We must force the ruling class to throw its weight behind such a peaceful perspective, which is in all our interests — the interests of the ruling class, of the national

liberation movement, of the people of South Africa, of the Southern African region as a whole, and of world peace. We must mobilise, at a qualitatively new level, all the people in our country and in the international arena for such a solution of the present crisis in our country. It cannot be denied that such an outcome can only be brought about by a further stepping up of our struggle — this is sufficiently proved by the extreme aggressiveness of the apartheid regime and the continuing support for the regime of the main imperialist powers.

Moreover, a further stepping up of our struggle on the domestic front — this will mean in particular a strengthening of the people's movement and its necessary defence (including armed defence) will be needed in order to lay the basis for a realistic solution.

It cannot, of course, be ignored that the apartheid regime, together with the monopoly and imperialist forces, are attempting to ensure the basis of a neo-colonialist 'solution' to the country's crisis by attempting to strengthen the neo-colonialist collaborationist structures which, indeed, are an integral part of the apartheid system itself. Such a 'solution' will represent, not a dismantling of apartheid, but a further strengthening of its neo-colonialist thrust.

Such manoeuvres will not, cannot, satisfy the mass of our people, and, as we already see from what is going on at present in our country, can only lead to a further escalation of conflict in the direction of civil war. A realistic solution will mean that the imperialists disentangle themselves finally from the policies of the apartheid regime, take up an independent political position, and force the regime, if necessary by comprehensive sanctions, to orientate itself by achieving a genuine compromise.

Such a political solution of the present crisis could create the conditions for a peaceful, stage-by-stage realisation of the objective tasks of the national-democratic revolution. Improving relations between the world's two 'super-powers' as well as in general between the developed capitalist countries and the 'Third World' could create a favourable background for such a longer-term development.



THE KHOI PEOPLE AND THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY

By Archibald Crail

Early one morning in March of 1647, Chief Autshumayo of the Goringhaicona (at various times he was known to Europeans as Hadah, Adda, Hadat, but the name that stuck to this day was 'Harry the Strandloper') went for a walk with a few of his elders. Reports had reached him that a ship named "De Haerlem" had been stranded on the north-west shore of Table Bay. To Chief Autshumayo there was nothing strange or threatening in this event. He had known White men, the Hongkoiqua (smooth-haired men), for as long as he could remember.

During his younger days, in 1632, the English had taken him to the Indonesian port of Bantam for a course in English, from which he graduated with high marks. This trip of the Chief was nothing new in itself. Many others of his tribe had sailed to Europe and Asia to acquire new skills in languages, and thus had a worldly view of their own existence as well as of the importance that the Cape had for international shipping as a stopover point between Europe and the Far East.

Chief Autshumayo's skills in languages

and negotiations were almost legendary in his own time. Besides his own language, he was also fluent in English, French, Portuguese and Dutch. This achievement was not unique at all. His own cousin, Krotoa, also known as Eva, who later married a marine doctor, mastered the Dutch language fluently after only a year's stay in the Van Riebeeck household. Dutch, of course, was her fourth language after Khoikhoi, French and Portuguese.

As for his diplomatic skills, these had been evident in 1632, when a French whaling fleet landed in Table Bay, intent on converting whale blubber into train oil. Through a combination of threats and cajoling, Autshumayo convinced the captains of the three ships that it would be best to take their operations elsewhere, where the strong smell of rotting carcasses would not offend him and his people. In addition, he had convinced the English (for whom he had served as some sort of vassal) that he would have a far better vantage point from Robben Island, where he would be able to detect all ships passing, and convey to them all important messages. Subsequent-

ly, the Chief and his entire retinue of family, hangers-on, cattle and sheep, were conveyed to the Island.

This temporary move to Robben Island was significant, as it proves that the Chief's power within his clan was so strong that he could leave them on the mainland without worrying that his position might be usurped in his absence.

Autshumayo had known for a long time about the stranding of the Haerlem. However, as a ruler of his people, he had expected that the captain of the ship would approach him instead of vice versa. There had been reports that some of the sailors had molested the women, while others had tried to rob the Goringhaicona of foodstuffs. In both instances, the evildoers had been put to death summarily. Although some of the elders had suggested that the entire party be killed, Chief Autshumayo persuaded them against this. For one thing, such a step would adversely affect their position as key middle persons in the bartering system, and no other European ship would ever stop over at the Cape again. In his concluding argument he convinced the council that they were not the only breeders of cattle and sheep. There were numerous other tribes, both on the east and west coasts of Africa, who could easily replace the Goringhaicona in a trading arrangement.

Negotiation and Diplomacy

Another report that had been discussed was the question of a shack which the men from the Haerlem had built. As everybody knew, this was nothing new. Numerous ships had docked in the Bay, sometimes for months, and the crew had made themselves comfortable with their own material. What was wrong in the eyes of the Chief, at this crucial point of South African history, was that his honour had been offended, simply by the Hongkoiquas' refusal to come and meet him. Being the diplomat that he was, he placated his own people by approaching the White men himself.

As was the custom of the time, he took a few sheep with him as a form of respect. For this occasion he took five worn-out old

ewes to show that he still observed protocol, but also that the leader of the White men was in his eyes no better than these aged animals. His mandate from the council was that the Hongkoiqua explain their presence to their Chief and keep his sailors in line.

The captain of the Haerlem emerged from the windowless shack, upon being informed about his visitors. He was very apologetic about the behaviour of his men, and said that, even in his own society in Holland, such crimes as had been committed would have been similarly punished.

This, of course, was not enough for Chief Autshumayo. As far as he was concerned, this was merely a side issue, while the main question remained — had the White men got permission to set up a house there? He expressed himself first in High Dutch, to show the White man that he was no stranger to his language.

Noticing the surprise on Leendert Janssen's face, he switched to Portuguese, then to English and back to Dutch again. Autshumayo was not sure whether this sea-dog had understood everything he said, but he was comfortable in having re-established his reputation as a worldly man.

Janssens was dumbfounded. He had heard much about 'Harry,' who was called a worker for the English. Among his own sailors, any one of them could probably express himself in four or five European languages. However, he had not expected this from an aboriginal Khoikhoi draped in the skins of animals.

Janssens went on to explain that they were not planning to stay in the Bay for ever. With the arrival of the next Dutch merchant vessel, they were planning to be on their way. They did not plan to stay very long, but in the meantime, if the Chief should allow them, they would like to trade the goods that were salvaged from the Haerlem, for food.

The Strangers Accommodated

There was nothing about Leendert Janssens that impressed Chief Autshumayo. He felt only compassion for him, as a shipwrecked individual. He knew that

under normal circumstances the arrival of these foreigners would bring great wealth to him and his clan. There was nothing to fear about them in the way of permanent settlement, because they always left. No matter how long they stayed, ultimately they always returned home. So he accommodated them, as another group of sojourners, on the periphery of his own ethnic structure.

Janssens did not find the 'natives' completely threatening. As people, they were no different from his own — only that they wore sheepskins instead of spinning the wool of a live animal, spoke a different, and to him unintelligible, language, and in the main had customs of their own. However, as a friendly trading partner and resident community, they had a sense of business, understood reason, and seemed comfortable with the White man's presence.

In his diary (Hague Codex 1067 bis COD164811), he wrote that his stay among the Khoikhoi (People of People) had shown some possibilities for the Dutch East India Company. Why not establish a refreshment station here with some semi-permanent officials and workers? It surely would aid the Dutch cause, and, as a refreshment station, could grow vegetables and fruit, while trading in livestock could continue as before. Although his recommendations might not easily be accepted by the Lords Seventeen, he felt that such a solution might solve the problem of scurvy, and generally improve the health of seamen.

To Chief Autshumayo, he said nothing about these ideas. He did not even share them with his own men. He felt that if credit for the idea should come, it should be directly attributed to him. If the Company wanted to negotiate with Autshumayo at a later date, then the Lords Seventeen could do its own negotiations.

The Khoi People: A Commodity

Whether Leendert Janssens did in fact covet the proposed position of first commander at the Cape, we do not know. What we do know is that another freebooter, Jan van Riebeeck, was given a chance at the Cape to make amends for earlier fraud

committed at another Company outpost. Janssens became the co-author of the *Remonstrance* of July 26th 1649, which formally urged the Lords Seventeen to establish a permanent Dutch presence at the Cape of Good Hope. Neither Chief Autshumayo nor any of his subjects contributed to this document. It was a feasibility study, that regarded the Khoi people merely as a commodity to fuel European mercantile capitalism.

In the history books of racist apartheid, all our early leaders are portrayed as either bloodthirsty and evil or weak-kneed and compromising. The latter attributes did not necessarily mean that they were portrayed as ripe for conquest and Christianity. More often than not, the intervention of White *kragdadigheid* is shown as the salvation for those unfortunate souls.

Somewhere between glorifying our ancestors and ignoring their existence, there is an area where we can take stock of their personal attributes as people who dwelt among people. We can only surmise what would have happened if Leendert Janssens had shared his dream with Chief Autshumayo. Would Autshumayo have become angry and outraged, killing off all the Dutchmen for their preposterous assumptions, and reverting to dealings with English mariners exclusively? What would South African history have been like if my people had been agriculturalists instead of purely pastoralists? Would they have defended the land with greater vigour, like their Nguni neighbours did in the Eastern Cape, instead of just moving away to another area where pasture could also be found, away from the threat of the White man?

For far too long South African history has served the interests of the ruling class. However painful the process, the time has come now for Black South Africans to take stock of themselves and their history.

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DULCIE SEPTEMBER

BORN 1935: MURDERED 1988

"If ever there was a soft target, Dulcie September was one."

— Alfred Nzo, March 30th 1988

Dulcie Evonne September was treacherously murdered on March 29th 1988, by a hired killer in the pay of the apartheid colonial regime.

Those who knew Dulcie will remember her as an always smiling, friendly, committed, almost impatient ANC activist — a comrade who loved to see things done. This gentle, unassuming Dulcie, who never handled anything more deadly than a pen or a typewriter, was to be a victim of an unknown assassin who shot her five times with a .22 calibre rifle as she was opening the ANC office in Paris after collecting the mail from the post office. For her, that fatal morning was just another working day. In a manner typical of the cowardly paid murderer, she was shot from behind with a silenced weapon.

Dulcie was descended from the Coloured community in the Western Cape. She grew up in Gleemoor, a section of Athlone, one of the suburbs of the city of Cape Town. It was there, in the region of our country that lies in the shadow of Table

Mountain, rich in traditions of struggle that extend back as far as the 17th century, that she evolved her keen social conscience and political commitment to the struggle for national liberation, democracy and social justice.

In 1935, the year when Comrade Dulcie was born, serious developments were taking place internationally. The little place called Gleemoor must have seemed very far away from the sites of these momentous events. Yet it was never so far that it remained unaffected. It was the struggles waged during the 1930s, the 1940s and the 1950s that shaped and moulded the mind and character of the woman whose memory we honour today.

Many of the fathers, uncles and elder brothers of the community she came from went off to bear arms against Hitlerite fascism during the Second World War.

Dulcie was among the first group of pupils to attend the newly-established Athlone High School. From Athlone, she moved to the Battswood Teacher Training

College, where she qualified as a teacher in the mid-50s. It was the profession that she had chosen that first launched her into the thick of the struggle for liberation.

During the 1950s, education had become one of the principal terrains of struggle. In 1954, Verwoerd had presided over the imposition of Bantu Education, and stood poised to debase higher education and the professions by submitting them to the ideology of apartheid. It was in the context of the struggles around education that Comrade Dulcie received her baptism in politics. She joined the Cape Peninsula Students' Union, an affiliate of the Unity Movement of South Africa, in 1957. The political culture of Cape Town during those years was slanted towards the Unity Movement.

It was not long before Dulcie's vision caused her to part company with her erstwhile political mentors in the Unity Movement. She broke with the leadership of the Unity Movement. The Sharpeville massacre, and the consequent political crisis that gripped the country, proved the catalyst. This was time for action, not endless debates and discussions about national and international politics, she thought.

She aligned herself with some young militants around Dr Neville Alexander. They called themselves the National Liberation Front, or the Yu Chui Chan Club.

It was while engaged in the activities of this group that she was arrested and detained without trial in October 1963. Early in 1964, together with nine others, she was charged with conspiring to commit acts of sabotage, and incite acts of politically motivated violence. In April 1964, Dulcie was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

When she was released from prison in 1969, the Pretoria regime proscribed her activities in terms of a five-year banning order, which not only prohibited her from political activity, but also from practising her profession. She left South Africa in 1974, to pursue her studies in Britain.

She joined the ANC. It was in the ANC that Comrade Dulcie found a movement that did not merely propound theories but also had a comprehensive strategy for the total destruction of the system of racist

domination. It was a movement that could effectively harness her profound political commitment and energies, in a programme of political action based on a sober appreciation of regional and national realities. She threw herself body and soul into the work of the movement, and quickly won recognition for her contribution. In 1984 she was appointed Chief Representative in France, Switzerland and Luxembourg. Before the ANC sent her to Paris, she had worked for some time at the ANC headquarters in Lusaka, and before that for the Anti-Apartheid Movement in London.

In the course of her work in Paris, she suffered physical assaults, manhandling by fascist thugs and a mugging. None of these daunted her or turned her away from the path she had chosen to follow. Courageously, she soldiered on in the full knowledge that the cause she upheld was just, and, come what may, must in the end be victorious.

The bitter irony about her murder is that, though Dulcie had received death threats over the past eight months, and had reported this fact to the French authorities, she had been given no protection and, as a result, there are no clues to the identity of the killer, no traces of the assassin. All we are told is that this was a "professional job."

This cold-blooded murder, though it might be embarrassing to some Western governments, is a result of their lukewarm reactions to Pretoria's terror tactics. The Pretoria regime is not only encouraged to embark on state terrorism in South Africa; it is now undermining the sovereignty of those very Western states which veto any tough measures against apartheid.

Comrade Dulcie died at her post as honourably and with as great a dignity as any fighter who falls on the battlefield. That is the memory of her that we must always cherish. Long after the misanthropic scum who plotted her murder are forgotten, her name will live on as an inspiration to men and women the world over.

The only real monument we shall erect to Comrade Dulcie and all other martyrs who have fallen is the future we will create in South Africa. Let us all bend our efforts to make it worthy of their sacrifice.



Mongane Wally Serote, *A Tough Tale*, Kriptown Books, International Defence and Aid Fund, London, 1987, £3.00.

As a young man in the early 70s, Mongane Wally Serote emerged as one of the finest of a new generation of South African poets, and perhaps the most powerful of them all. His work was direct, full of energy, full of pain and anger; his irony (when he used it) bitter and abrasive. He cried out aloud against the outrage perpetrated against his people, lamented their suffering, wrote of the strength they could draw from their traditions.

He wrote of water and desert dryness, light and darkness, life and death. Light represented life; darkness, in the imagery of his poetry then, hid both grief and danger; it was where:

"... death lurks ... like a blade in the flesh,"

and where:

"... alexandra's night shadow is soaked and drips with my tears."

In an often-quoted poem, he wrote of struggle and the determination to be free:

*"I come like a storm over the veld
And oh! there are stone walls before me!
... But Brother
I know I'm coming."*

Serote did more for the liberation struggle than write about it. He took part in it, sat out time in gaol, went into exile. Now in London, working for the ANC Department of Culture, he is in the struggle still, and still writing about it. This long poem, *A Tough Tale*, is his mature work.

When he writes of the chaos and horror in our country, his rhythms are broken and jagged. But for the most part, he tells of the road to freedom, which is no easy walk, but long and hard, and here the rhythms he uses are slow-paced and solemn. He tells of stubbornness and patience, he tells of exile, he mourns the many who have given their lives along the way, and who:

*"chose through their brave acts graves
anywhere on the road
in cells or dying stared at by trees and
cruel eyes
and got time to hail, 'Amandla!'"*

He writes of those children, caught up early in a struggle children should not have to take part in:

*"and so the little girls and boys
they emerge from out of an unripe youth
to mount the restless hour
they are freedom children."*

And, while:

*"even as we watch from a trench
terror howling like a cat gone mad,"*

the past is still with us; behind the motherless and restless children are past generations, grown old in the struggle for survival and the struggle for freedom. Understanding the continuity of the past and the present are essential to our understanding of the future:

*"Why does one want to tell such a gory
tale?
so that, my friends, the past is not
erased."*

In Serote's imagery, light still represents life and freedom. The flames of Sasol are a precursor of liberation. The light of hope, he is telling us, is there:

*"... patience is like the twinkle of a star
in the dark night."*

When the day of freedom comes:

*"we shall stand face to face with the sun
we shall hang on a sunrise."*

In the short space of this review, I cannot begin to do justice to the spiral movement of the poem — Serote returns again and again to certain ideas, and each time develops them further. I can give no real picture of the levels and complexities of *A Tough Tale*. The poem must be read, and read again and again.

JM

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