

JUNE 1985



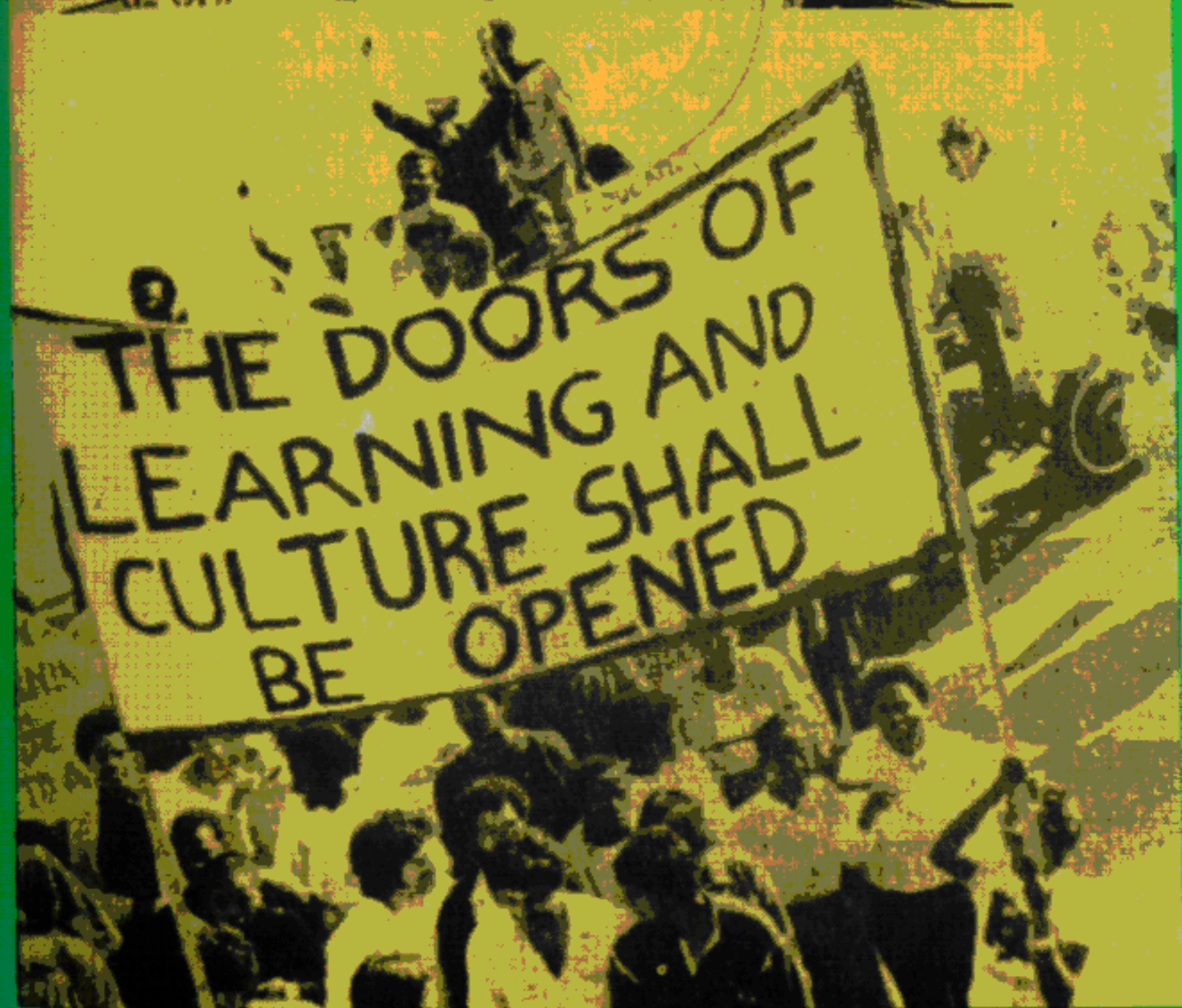
SECHABA

official organ of the african national congress south africa

DOWN WITH THE GOVT'S PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL
LONG LIVE THE PEOPLE'S FREEDOM CHARTER



THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN
 ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS
 THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH
 THE LAND SHALL BE SHARED AMONG THOSE WHO WORK IT
 ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW
 ALL SHALL ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
 THERE SHALL BE A JUST AND HUMANITARIAN COURSE
 THE DOORS OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED
 THERE SHALL BE SECURITY AND COMFORT
 THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP



THE FREEDOM CHARTER 1955 - 1985

SECHABA

JUNE 1985

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EDITORIAL

Fiddling While Rome Burns

A lot has been written about the incidents in the Eastern Cape. More can still be written. But today we want to say a few things which characterise the mood of our people who are filled not only with grief and sadness but also with anger and rage.

An estimated crowd of between 120 000 and 150 000 mourners gathered at KwaNobuhle Stadium outside Uitenhage on April 13 to bury the 31 victims of the massacre. This was the biggest funeral in South Africa's history. The people sang freedom songs and shouted slogans: **Viva Mandela, Viva Sisulu, Viva Oliver Tambo** with clenched fists raised in the air. The political identification here was more than clear. Speaker after speaker called for the release of political prisoners and an end to oppression. The people, members of the Black civic, political and labour organisations rallied under the banner of the UDF, the main organiser of the mass burial.

The procession led by Dr Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, entered the stadium with most of the coffins draped in **black, green and gold — the colours of the ANC**. While the Blacks in KwaNobuhle were rededicating themselves, the white areas of Uitenhage were packed with army and police personnel while a military helicopter hovered around the stadium during the service.

The people went further to show that their anger is combined with militancy. A poster carried by the youths in the townships said it all: **No to SADF, Yes to MK, Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people's army**. Surely this is more than just a new development. It is a call to the people, a call which we hope those war resisters and even soldiers in the SADF will follow.

These demonstrations were accompanied by strike action by the workers. These actions spread throughout the country covering areas such as KwaMashu, Lamontville, Soweto, Dundee, Alexandra, Bronkhorstspuit, Tembisa and other areas. More than 4 000 people attended a mass meeting at the University of Natal Howard College in Durban on April 2, in spite of the ban on

meetings. The meeting was to honour those who died in Uitenhage on March 21 and in solidarity with the people of Uitenhage. Hundreds of residents from the townships of KwaMashu and Lamontville moved into the hall just before the meeting, singing freedom songs. **Nelson Mandela's photograph was carried by the man who was leading the procession.**

In the last week of March alone 46 Black town 'councillors' resigned because they no longer wanted to collaborate with the people's enemy. The legitimacy of authority is not just under attack, it has been largely destroyed. The people, by their actions, are teaching Black police and soldiers that there is no place in our communities for those who wear the uniforms of apartheid and who carry out orders to kill, maim and torture their brothers and sisters.

A protest against foreign business support for apartheid on April 3 brought the Johannesburg offices of Citibank to a standstill for about an hour. About 40 supporters of the UDF and its affiliates marched into the offices of Citibank on the 22nd floor of the Anglo American Life Building in Commissioner Street. When Anglo American sacked 15 000 miners, Umkhonto we Sizwe destroyed its offices causing extensive damage.

At the same time the UDF held its first annual national conference at the Azaadville Civic Centre near Krugersdorp. The theme of the conference was: **From Protest to Challenge — From Mobilisation to Organisation**. The conference stated:

"The precondition for peace in this country is the removal of the evil apartheid system. That is why we say the struggle for liberation in South Africa is a struggle for peace".

While all this is happening PW Botha decided to 'respond' by relaxing the sex laws. He seems to be unaware of the fact that real love across the colour line can only take place when South Africa is completely free. He is fiddling while 'Rome' burns!

CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE REMEMBERED 26th JUNE 1955



Thirty years ago this month, in June 1955, the great Congress of the People took place at Klip-town in the Transvaal, and the Freedom Charter was adopted. The Congress of the People was the culmination of months of organising: volunteers undertook to canvass house by house; at mass meetings, the demands of the people were noted and delegates elected. When the great meeting at Kliptown took place, all regions, all sections of the South African people were represented there, and the wishes of the people were embodied in the Charter.

The emblem of the campaign, the four-spoked wheel, symbolised the four main organisations of the Congress Alliance: the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured People's Organisation (later to be called the Coloured Peoples' Congress) and the Congress of Democrats. Also in the alliance was the South African Congress of Trade Unions. This alliance was to endure until 1960, when the ANC was banned and forced to go underground.

There are many comrades still active in our struggle who remember those days of 1955. We print here the memories of a few of them.

Western Cape

Zola Zembe who was at that time active in both SACTU and the ANC in the Western Cape writes:

"The directive to have a Congress of all the people of our country did not just happen by accident. The directive came from decisions

taken in the ANC, and this directive was promoted throughout the country.

"The Regional Executive of the Western Cape met; on this Regional Executive were delegates from all bodies and areas in the region ... The Regional Executive had to find ways of reaching the people in the area to get their demands, so these could be put to the Congress of the People.

"We approached the political organisations in the region; trade unions, churches, women's groups and organisations, community organisations and those organisations responsible for migrant workers' social needs in the townships. We would go to the factories and stand outside during lunch and after work, and speak with the workers.

"On Sundays we would arrange with the ministers of the churches to give us time to address the congregations about the Congress of the People.

"Letters had to be written to all organisations explaining what was being planned and what was needed from the people.

"Consultations took place with the Coloured People's Congress, (CPC) the Indian Congress and the Congress of Democrats (COD). They in turn were mandated from these meetings to go back to their constituencies and discuss with them. It was a gigantic job.

"For the people, the Congress of the People meant two things: they could put their demands before the country, and they had the chance to say what they wanted the country to look like and how it should be governed.

Staggered Transport

"After discussions about the conference, the member organisations of the Congress Alliance called the formation of a committee to organise funds to engage full-time people to travel around the Western Cape collecting the demands of the people. Transport to Klip-town had to be organised, and money for leaflets.

"When it was nearing the time for the Congress of the People, elections were held to nominate the delegates from the Western Cape. The delegation needed to be financed, and it was decided they should finance the delegations from money collected amongst the people in the Western Cape.

"The transport of the delegates had to be staggered to avoid detection by the security police. Buses, cars and the train were used to transport people. The police set up many road blocks, stretching throughout the province. They stopped many of the delegates who travelled by road, demanding names and wanting to know where they were going. Many of the delegates got through the road blocks. Those who did not, held their own Congresses where they were stopped. For instance, many delegates from the Western Cape were stopped at Beaufort West. They then proceeded to hold a Congress of the People in Beaufort West, and sent on their demands after this to the Kliptown meeting."

Indian Youth

Paul Joseph describes the preparations made by the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress:

"We met in a house in Vrededorp, one of Johannesburg's 'black spots,' with a kind of border dividing the population — Africans, Coloureds and Indians were on one side and Whites on the other.

"Several of the persons present were banned people. The discussion was introduced by Comrade 'Kathy' Kathrada, and was led by Comrade Moses Kotane. Comrade Moses, who had a flair for drawing people in to make contributions, also had the capacity of making seemingly complex political questions simple, racy, stimulating and enjoyable to follow.

"For all the years, he explained, the Congress movement had been engaged in separate struggles until the Defiance Campaign, but as a whole the movement did not have a programme for all the oppressed peoples of South Africa. At most, the ANC had, in the mid-forties, the 'Africa claims,' a list of demands, or rather aspirations, modelled on the Atlantic Charter. What was needed was a programme to come out of the people and to be used as a basis for united struggles. It should be the people's vision of a new South Africa.

"The youth joined in the discussions and asked a multitude of questions. They came out of that house inspired with a new perspective ready for the new tasks ahead."



The Gathering in of the Demands

"The immediate task was to go out to the people in a campaign known as "the gathering in of the demands." We set to work. Each evening after work and school and at week-ends, bands of us, armed with *New Age*, *Fighting Talk*, leaflets and sandwich boards, would go from street to street and suburb to suburb in and around Johannesburg. We asked people to write down in their own words their demands, and these they wrote on scraps of paper or cardboard, and, where people could not write, we took down what they said verbatim. In one instance, a young activist was put into prison, and when he came out of the Fort he had with him a set of demands by prisoners written on toilet paper.

"On another occasion we encountered a group of young people who asked for arms. They did not think non-violence would bring freedom. We knew they were right, but the times required us to argue, rather ashamedly, that the pen is mightier than the sword. We convinced them and they set out their demands.

"What sort of demands were these? People were asking for jobs, decent wages, food, homes, schools, the right to move around freely. Many were simple and straight to the point — "We want freedom," or "We want to sit in parliament."

"Going through the areas brought us in contact with people who had been involved in political movements in earlier days. We came across people who had been in the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU), the ANC, the Communist Party, the African People's Organisation (APO). One, for instance, was one of the two Chinese leaders who had joined Gandhi in the first passive resistance campaign in 1906; another had been imprisoned in the passive resistance campaign of 1946.

"Other aspects of the campaign were beginning to take form. Slogans and the symbols of the COP were appearing on walls and bridges. Area meetings became a regular feature."

ANC Natal

MB Yengwa from Natal writes:

"I was banned from 1954-56 and therefore could not attend the Congress of the People.

This does not mean that I was not involved in the preparations for this occasion.

"At this time I was the Natal provincial secretary of the ANC, liaising with the Central Office of the Secretary-General's office. Walter Sisulu was Secretary-General. Meetings were held all over Natal, in Durban and in the rural areas like Mapumulo, Stanger (my own home districts), Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, Dannhauser and Newcastle. People were demanding freedom from apartheid, passes; they were demanding more land, higher wages. A burning issue was endorsement out of towns. These demands were jotted down. I can say without any fear of contradiction that practically all Congress branches in Natal were involved in the preparations for the Freedom Charter.

"The huge mass meetings which were held were later followed by the election of delegates to the Congress of the People. These delegates collected the demands which were later reflected in the Freedom Charter. By the way, all these demands had already been submitted to the Secretary-General's office."

The Lioness of the Eastern Cape

Steve Tobias from Port Elizabeth writes:

"We, as the South African Coloured People's Organisation had meetings with two distinguished members of the ANC, namely J B Marks and Lilian Ngoyi, who stressed the importance of sending representatives to Kliptown.

"We had meetings to discuss the matter, and at one meeting the late Florence Maroyi Matomela (often called the Lioness of the Eastern Cape) said that we, as Coloured people should be represented at this Congress. We decided to organise a delegation to the COP. The late Maroyi was a great inspiration to us, and at most of our meetings we invited her as a guest speaker.

"As we didn't have the funds to send delegates we had three volunteers, who offered to pay their own fares to Johannesburg. When these delegates returned and reported back, SACPO grew stronger."

Kliptown, June 26th

Paul Joseph describes why the meeting was held in Kliptown:

"When the organisers chose Kliptown they had in mind two main reasons. It was 12-15 miles from Johannesburg. They could evade a ban on gatherings because magisterial powers were limited to cities and towns. The meeting ground was private property; it belonged to a lifelong and staunch Congress supporter, Ismail Jada, and no amount of intimidation was going to frighten him."

There were a number of activists who had taken part in preparations for the Congress of the People but could not attend it because they were under banning orders. One comrade could not resist going to watch from a distance:

"For some of us it was too painful to be deprived of seeing just a wee bit of the 'People's Parliament.' So, on the day, comrades JB Marks, Dan Tloome and I got into a car and drove slowly around the perimeter of the meeting grounds.

"We were excited and happy at what we saw. The delegates were pouring in from all over the country. We saw them, some sitting on planks placed across stacks of bricks, some sitting on stones, boxes, benches, and many on the ground. The majority were standing.

"We could see the platform decked with the ANC colours."

One comrade describes the obstacles which were placed in the way of delegates:

"Many of our leaders were there and addressed the Congress of the People, though there were also many of our leaders missing, those who were banned and those in detention. Some delegates on their way to the Congress were detained deliberately for the period covering the Congress and then released afterwards so they could not attend. Some of the leaders were served with banning orders to prevent them reporting back to their constituencies."

All the same, he adds:

"The meetings' biggest impression was its size and the amount of organisational work and preparation that had gone into it."

A Memorable Day

After 30 years, Sonia Bunting of the Congress of Democrats, who attended the Congress of the People, is still able to recapture the excitement and enthusiasm of that day in her description of it, and the sense of dedication among those at the gathering:

"The week-end of June 25th and 26th, 1955, will live on for ever in the hearts and minds of all members and supporters of the Congress movement at that time. These were the two days of the Congress of the People held at Kliptown, Johannesburg — days for which all of us had worked and planned for so many, many months.

"The excitement of the first bright, sunny winter day mounted as we approached Kliptown and passed delegation after delegation, waving their banners and singing freedom songs. Comrades, some old friends, some seen for the first time, had come together from east, west, north, south, from town and country, city and village, factory and street — never before had there been such a representative gathering of elected delegates, representing people from every walk of life and from every national group.

"Everything at the site was in readiness — the great open area had been fenced in, there was seating for the 3 000 expected delegates, the facilities for cooking and toilets, the platform and vast public address system for the speakers. All was dominated by the banner of the big green four-spoked Freedom Wheel, symbol of the Congress of the People campaign.

"One of the most moving moments was the spontaneous reaction of the crowd on the second day of the gathering, when the police finally moved in. The detectives were escorted to the platform by police armed with sten guns, while mounted police and police armed with rifles threw a double cordon round the conference enclosure. They seized all documents and started taking down names and addresses. Everyone stood up to sing Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika, and then settled down again to continue with the proceedings.

"When the Freedom Charter was finally adopted, all present pledged to strive, sparing neither strength nor courage, to win the democratic changes set out in the Freedom Charter for all South Africans.

"And all of us in the liberation movement 30 years later stand by that pledge still. Freedom will be won!"

True Aspirations

"What is reflected in the Charter," writes Comrade M B Yengwa, "are the true aspirations of the people of South Africa; the people's demand that South Africa should be truly democratic, non-racial and progressive; a demand which reflects a need for a proper

share in the wealth of the country.

"These demands were not met — they received only a harsh and repressive response; all the leaders of the Congress movement were sent to prison and charged with treason; a trial which lasted for about five years.

"After 30 years I sincerely believe that the Freedom Charter is still as relevant to the situation in South Africa as it was before. It is a true guideline for the movement; it is a blueprint for a future South Africa. Before 1955 the social philosophy and ideology of the ANC was eclectic, and the Freedom Charter is therefore a landmark in the development of our thinking."



OUR FREEDOM CHARTER

By Jack Simons

Equality is the Charter's keynote. It is sounded in the Preamble's call for the building of a democratic state "without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief". An identical note is struck in the clauses on government proclaiming equality of rights for all persons "regardless of race, colour or sex." The principle is extended to national groups.

In the liberated South Africa:

■ All people shall have equal rights to use their own language and to develop their own folk culture;

■ All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed; while

■ The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime.

In its affirmation of equality the Charter is consistent with the mainstream of world opinion reflected in the Charter of Human Rights, the conventions and resolutions of the United Nations that reject discrimination, the principles of the Organisation of African Unity and policy statements by the Front Line States condemning apartheid. In global perspective the ideology and practice of racism — white supremacy and black oppression — are no less repugnant than slavery.

World opinion has taken a great leap forward since the end of World War Two towards an accepted doctrine of equality of rights and freedoms. Contributory factors include the defeat of the Nazi-Fascist Axis, decolonisation, the strengthening of the socialist sector and the emergence of newly-independent African and Asian states, former victims of colonial rule. There has been a shift in the balance of power, one that favours the struggle against social evils of which racist South Africa is the supreme embodiment.

It is correct for the liberation movement to single out racism, colonialism and apartheid as the main enemy, since they are the main source of oppression. There is more to the

struggle than a bare rejection, however; its complement is a positive determination to unite South Africans of all national groups in a common cause for a single culture. This was the vision of the ANC's founders and it has gained rather than lost credibility in the years that followed. We can now speak with realism of moving towards one South Africa, one people and one nation.

The Roots of Inequality

The closer South Africa advances towards a unified society the greater will be the resistance from divisive forces represented by 'tribalism' and 'racism'. Both have historical roots which can be taken for granted in this essay. Of more significance for the present discussion is the contradiction between the forces making for unity and the obstacles they encounter. Both result from South Africa's special brand of capitalism. Like capitalism everywhere, it breaks down national barriers in the search for a common market, but recreates them in a new form within the national economy by means of race discrimination and tribal segregation.

Racism and tribalism occur in a class society in which differences of language and culture become an adjunct to the primary cleavage between the owners of property and the propertyless workers. The exploiting class, trading in South Africa as a national or racial category, perpetuate their supremacy by dividing the dispossessed into competing groups, fighting one another for land, jobs and power instead of combining their forces for untied action against the oppressor.

The Freedom Charter recognises the linkage between capital and discriminatory inequality, at least to the extent of calling for the return of the country's national wealth to the people, the nationalisation of the "mineral wealth beneath the soil", and public ownership of the banks and monopoly industry. These objectives are compatible also with state monopoly

capitalism, however, and can hardly be considered a socialist programme based on public ownership, a planned economy, workers' management and the payment of wages according to the value of the workers' contribution to the total product.

The founders were radical liberals rather than socialist egalitarians. In spite of the transition to revolutionary armed struggle, Congress has adhered to the original programme of uniting:

"all tribes and clans of various tribes or races and by means of combined effort and united political organisation to defend their freedom, rights and privileges."

Added to a desire for continuity and respect for tradition, there is a Congress realisation that most peasant-workers, who form the bulk of the working class under apartheid, are not yet class conscious enough or ready for the adoption of a socialist solution.

Whatever the reason, Congress is not a workers' party with a socialist programme. The liberation struggle is directed against white domination and national oppression; its objective, in the words of President Oliver Tambo, is "a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa." The equality it seeks is *formal*, guaranteed by law, and providing equal rights to all people. A formal, legal equality of rights is an essential element of a democracy.

Two Revolutions

Another kind of equality is *factual*. It guarantees actual equality of power and opportunity by transferring the means of production to public ownership and distributing rewards under the rule: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. This is socialist equality which the Freedom Charter does not contemplate. At the present stage of the revolution, the liberation movement aims to uproot national oppression and release the economy from control by transnational monopolies. It is not directed against the owners of domestic capital.

The distinction is not acceptable to all groups opposed to the apartheid regime. Some, like the exponents of 'workerist tendencies' and

self-styled 'Marxists', reject all forms of capital, emphasise the class struggle and set their targets at the achievement of socialism.

The ANC's position is that just as there are two kinds of equality, so there are two kinds of revolution, separate yet intertwined. One is the national democratic revolution for equal rights; the other is the socialist revolution for public ownership, workers' control and a classless society. The national revolution for equal rights is the special province of the oppressed nationalities; the socialist revolution takes the form of a class struggle led by the working class of all national groups. The two revolutions co-exist, operating side by side. They interact, blending at many points and fructifying each other.

This is not the place to debate the separation of function or the nature of the alliance. It is sufficient for present purposes to note that the partnership is an established reality, born out of struggle against the common enemy, nurtured by sacrifices on the battlefield and watered by the blood of martyrs. They are as closely knit as Siamese twins. To separate them would need a surgical operation which might kill or cripple both.

Open Membership

Another departure from the ANC's declared position is represented by the Black Consciousness Movement and an assortment of 'Africanists' who recommend the exclusion of the non-Africans, notably whites, from the ranks and/or leadership of the liberation movement. A related issue is the alleged existence of 'tribalism' in Congress, giving rise to preferential treatment of members belonging to one or other language or regional group. Complaints of tribalism are, however, marginal, serving perhaps to strengthen the hand of persons making a bid for top positions in the leadership, and can therefore be safely ignored in the present discussion.

A convenient starting point is the constitution. The first published in 1919, provided for three kinds of individual members, all required to belong to the "aboriginal races of Africa." This proviso was interpreted to include Coloured on the assumption that the ancestors of

at least one parent were aborigines. Ordinary membership was open to men over the age of 18 years; honorary membership could be conferred on persons who had rendered outstanding service to the people; while auxiliary membership, without voting rights, existed for members of the Bantu Women's National League, who provided shelter and food for the delegates.

A new constitution adopted in 1943 removed the restrictions on women and non-Africans. Clause 3 stipulated that:

"Any person over 17 years of age who is willing to subscribe to the aims of Congress and to abide by its Constitution and Rules may become an individual member upon application to the nearest branch."

The 1958 Constitution retained the open membership clause. Section 3(a) declares that:

"Membership of Congress shall be open to any person above the age of 18 who accepts its principles, policy and programme and is prepared to abide by its Constitution and Rules."

Under the heading "Rights and Duties" the Constitution acknowledges the right of members to take part in elections and to be elected to any committee, commission or delegation of Congress (Clause 6(a)(iii)).

Constitutions are an important but incomplete guide to policy. Practice is another valuable indicator. The available evidence suggests that Congress made no considered attempt during the period of legality to integrate non-Africans. In contrast, Congress in exile includes in its ranks a substantial number of Indians, Coloureds and whites. Their position in the organisation has been informally debated from time to time and is now receiving more attention because of the ongoing preparations for the pending consultative conference. A leading Congressman has circulated a memorandum on tribalism in the ANC and the question of open membership. As regards the latter, he calls on the movement to:

"mobilise all patriots of different races to actively and physically participate in the support of MK."

But there is "at this stage of our revolution, no need for open membership." His argument in brief includes the following assertions:

- Our struggle is first and foremost against White Domination;

- Africans can and should liberate themselves under their own leadership;

- People who want to include non-Africans in the National Executive Committee of Congress may give an impression that Africans are incapable of doing the job on their own.

Sentimentality apart, there is an obvious contradiction between the approved policy of enlisting militants from all national groups and the proposed exclusion of non-Africans from the leadership. An even more serious contradiction exists between this Africanist approach and the claims of Congress to represent all national groups in the struggle for a single South African nation.

A survey of opinion held by ANC members in exile revealed the existence of two minority views, one amounting to an outright rejection of non-African integration at any level of the ANC organisation, the other approving of integration subject to the proviso that the three top positions in Congress be reserved for Africans. Both minorities considered that the rural population in Bantustans was not yet politically mature enough to accept non-Africans in the leadership.

The majority supported the participation of all South Africans in the work of Congress at all levels. Members should be appointed to office strictly on merit. The narrow nationalism of the PAC and BCM remained invalid while the ANC was committed to building an inclusive South African democracy without racial barriers.

One Nation

Tribalism and racialism are much the same. Dominant classes manipulate the differences to suit their interests in ways well known to us. Our history is saturated with the 'divide and rule' strategy used by colonists, settlers and governments to conquer and subdue. Bantustans, the tri-racial parliament, an emerging black bourgeoisie are products of this divisive strategy.

The liberation movement has responded with calls for a united front of South Africans committed to the vision of a liberated society of equals. President Tambo repeated the call in an address delivered on the occasion of January 8, 1985:

"Our cadres are men and women, young and old, black and white, who are involved in daily struggles, making sacrifices in pursuit of the people's cause",

he said. In his message delivered in Luanda, People's Republic of Angola, on January 8 1979, he expressed the

"conviction and hope that 1982 will find the ANC with a membership representative of a cross section of our entire population, a membership which will include a substantial percentage of those South Africans now living under the doubtful privilege of being 'white'."

Nelson Mandela also called for an 'open door' in his interview with the Conservative Party's (UK) Lord Bethal. He was reported as saying:

"Personally, I am a socialist and I believe in a classless society. But I see no reason to belong to any political party at the moment. Businessmen and farmers, white or black, can join our movement to fight against racial discrimination. It would be a blunder to narrow it."

(Sunday Mail London January 27, 1985)

Any discussion of the ANC's composition must of necessity involve an attempt to portray the nature of the liberated South Africa. The debate will continue until Congress makes up its mind on both issues. The Freedom Charter projects the ideal of an integrated society of equals. That vision remains no less valid than when it emerged at Kliptown in June 1955.

SEFAKO MAPOGO MAKGATHO

By Africanus

"We ask for no special favours from the Government. This is the land of our fathers."

S M Makgatho,

ANC Presidential Address, 6th May 1919

The purpose of this article is to give a brief outline of the manner in which S M Makgatho carried out this mission under the changed conditions of his times.

Some Highlights of the Makgatho Era

S M Makgatho was born in 1861 at Gampahlele, Pietersburg district, Northern Transvaal, and died in Pretoria full of years



Sefako Mapogo Makgatho

and experience and wisdom in 1951, aged 90 years old. A cursory glance at the years 1861-1951 shows that Makgatho was born the year King Sekwati died and Sekhukhune succeeded to the Marota throne in 1861; that in 1882, when Sekhukhune died, Makgatho was 21 years old and at school in Ealing, Middlesex, England, reading Education and Theology. As a keen student of South African affairs he followed Sekhukhune's odyssey closely, especially since they were blood relations and since these events were reported adequately in the British press at the time. He also witnessed at close range the politics surrounding the signing by Britain, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, the United States of America, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Norway and Turkey of the General Act of the Conference of Berlin respecting the freedom of trade in the Basin of the Congo, navigation of the Congo, navigation of the Niger and rules for future occupation of the coast of the African continent, 26th February 1885.

From the very beginning Makgatho opposed this rape of Africa. He understood the immediate threat that it constituted not only to the vast natural resources of Africa but also to the freedom, independence and self-determination of her peoples. And so it was that in after years when he and his compatriots founded the African National Congress (1912) they adopted a political slogan that was applicable not only to South Africa but also to the whole continent of Africa — "Mayibuye i Afrika" (Come back, Africa) they cried. They also adopted a national anthem that expressed the political hopes not only of the people of South Africa but also those of the people of Africa as a whole — "Morena boloka sechaba sa hesu; Nkosi Sikalel' i Afrika" (God save my nation; God bless Africa). The same Africa-wide spirit informed their choice of colours of the flag of the African National Congress — black, gold, green. It took decades of struggle and sacrifices by liberation movements across the continent to free Africa from the chains of political bondage forged for her at the Berlin Conference, 1884-1885. Makgatho played his part in that supreme effort.

Again, as a student in England, Makgatho was inspired by Keir Hardie of the Miners' Union and others who were to establish the British Labour Party in 1906. Indeed, in 1906, back home in South Africa, he and a group of young African teachers joined hands to form the Transvaal African Teachers' Association (TATA) as a trades union for African teachers and an instrument for the transformation of 'Native education' into a non-racial system of universal education for all of South Africa's children.

Creation of the Racist State

In 1909 Makgatho witnessed the Imperial (British) Parliament enact the South Africa Act, which brought the Union of South Africa into being. He was revolted by Clause 35⁽¹⁾ of the Act, which provided that henceforth no Black man could become a member of Parliament, no Black man could vote for others to represent him in the all-White South African Parliament, and that the handful of Black voters who had acquired franchise rights in the 19th century in the Cape Province and Natal Province would remain on the common voters' roll until disfranchised by a two-thirds majority obtained at a joint session of the two houses of Parliament sitting together. That result was achieved by General Hertzog, leader of the first Afrikaner Nationalist government in South Africa, in 1936.

He also lived to see the 1936 legislation repealed in 1951 and replaced by the Bantu Authorities Act, 1951, which laid the legislative foundations for today's Bantustans. Needless to say, he opposed these developments with might and main.

But of course the South Africa Act did more than that: the inclusion of Clause 35 in the Act, by a Liberal Government headed by Liberal Prime Minister Asquith, created the first explicitly race state of our times. After that no serious-minded Black man could be a Liberal. For Blacks, Liberalism was dead as a dodo. Henceforth Black men looked elsewhere for salvation. This was so especially because after 1910 successive South African governments put one race law after another on the statute

book. A few examples to illustrate this contention must suffice:

■ The Mines and Wages Act, 1911, created a mining and wages regime based on race and skin colour, on the shape of a man's nose, the look of his hair, the thickness of his lips and colour of his eyes.

■ So did the Defence Act, 1911, which, despite many amendments made to it over the years, remains essentially racist in conception, enactment, administration, enforcement.

■ The Land Act, 1913, as amended by Hertzog in 1936, divided our country into two parts according to race — at present 9.9% of the land is possessed and occupied (not owned) under effete land tenure systems by nearly 23 million Africans; whilst 90.1% of the best agricultural and mining land is owned, possessed, controlled, administered, used, enjoyed, by four million White people drawn from the four corners of the earth.

■ In 1920 the race principles of the South Africa Act were applied further in the Native Affairs Commission Act, which created periodic "Native Conferences" where Blacks could let off steam instead of taking their rightful places in parliament. This process was carried a step forward in 1936, when the few remnants of Cape and Natal African voters were stripped of their franchise rights and offered instead three token White members of Parliament and a toy consultative body styled the "Natives' Representative Council" (NRC). The Government took no notice of recommendations made by this body against race laws. The NRC was finally abolished by the Bantu Authorities Act, 1951, which, as stated earlier, laid the legislative basis for Bantustans. The establishment in 1984 of the tricameral parliament marks the culmination point in this process of the emasculation of Africans of all political rights by an all-White parliament.

■ The Industrial Conciliation Act, 1942, defined 'worker' to exclude Black workers; consequently Black workers were denied traditional trade union rights and privileges that their White counterparts enjoyed.

■ In 1930 White women were enfranchised on an equal basis with White men, thanks to

a political process that had started in England under the inspiration of Mrs Pankhurst and other suffragettes. Even such a positive measure had the effect of excluding Black women, half the Black population of South Africa, from the franchise.

■ In 1935 a high-powered Inter-Departmental Committee on African Education shamelessly defined the aims and objectives of European education as being to prepare a White child for a place of superiority and baasskap in the State and those of African education as being to prepare a Black child for a place of inferiority in society, doomed to be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water for 'Whiteman boss' — shades of Bantu Education of the fifties and beyond.

Time and space do not permit us to go into details of other race laws, covering all aspects of South African life, enacted by successive South African governments from 1910, when the South Africa Act was enacted, to 1951, when S M Makgatho died. Suffice it to say that all these laws, so-called, lacking the consent of the vast majority of the population, the African majority, and therefore illegitimate, derived their cue from the Act of Union of 1909 itself. Africans had no choice but to fight back. For Makgatho only one instrument was ready to hand — the African National Congress.

The ANC Aimed to Unite Africans

The African National Congress had been established, with Makgatho's active participation, on the 8th January 1912, in response to the race clauses of the South Africa Act, 1909, and race laws enacted under that Act. The ANC aimed to unite Africans not just in South Africa but also in Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland in particular; to fight the forces of imperialism generated by the General Act of Berlin, 26th February 1885; to spearhead their common struggle for freedom and self-determination; to destroy racism and to create on its ruins a non-racial South Africa where traditional democratic rights would be available to all, irrespective of race, colour, religion, sex, possessions, formal education and so on.

As stated earlier, S M Makgatho had helped establish the Transvaal African Teachers' Association in 1906 and its journal, the *Good Shepherd*, in 1923, to fight for equal education opportunities for Africans in South Africa. From 1906 to 1908 he served as President of the African Political Union. He was President of the Transvaal Native Organisation from 1908-1912. Both organisations merged with the ANC in January 1912. From 1887-1930 he was an influential Methodist lay preacher. He participated in delegations and petitions to London (after World War I, 1914-1918) on behalf of our people. When the ANC was established in 1912 he was elected President of its Transvaal section, the Transvaal Native Congress, from 1912-1930. He was President-General of the ANC itself from 1917-1924. From 1930-1933 he was a Senior National Treasurer of the ANC.

It may be said, in a nutshell, that during these momentous years Makgatho led our people as an educationist, theologian, editor of the *Good Shepherd*, and, with Advocate Alfred Mangena, of the *Native Advocate*. He led anti-pass campaigns, calling the pass "infernal" and "a badge of slavery." He vigorously opposed the extension of the 'dompas' to African women. He successfully took the government to court over the Transvaal Poll Tax of £2 (a lot of money in those days). He led Africans in Pretoria in a successful campaign for the right, then denied them, to walk on street pavements in the city instead of competing with vehicles and horses for space in the middle of the road. Under his leadership Africans won the right to use first class and second class facilities on South African trains instead of being confined to goods trains.

Lessons from Makgatho's Experiences

One could go on to write about Makgatho and the wars in Sekhukhuneland and Zululand in 1879; about him and the Bambata Rebellion of 1906; about his attitude to the Boer War, 1882-1884, the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902, and the two world wars, 1914-18 and 1939-45; about his attitude to the League of Nations and the United Nations; his reaction to the two socialist revolutions of our times, the October

Revolution that erupted in Russia in 1917 and the Chinese revolution of 1949; his anger at Fascist Italy's rape of Abyssinia in 1935; his reaction to the electoral victory of apartheid's Afrikaners in May 1948; his relations with Liberals, Socialists, trade unions, and with chiefs and villagers and so on. But space and time forbid. We cannot, therefore, elaborate on his leadership on all these issues. Suffice it to say that there are lessons to be learned from his experiences in all these fields of political thought and action. None of these achievements came anywhere near winning political, financial, economic, military, social, cultural power for the dispossessed and exploited African majority. None of this amounted to a root-and-branch transformation of South African society. But to apply such tests to Makgatho and his generation is to benefit from hindsight - and that is poor historiography. Let the last word be Makgatho's. It is taken from his Presidential Address to the Eighth Annual Conference of the ANC held on the 6th May 1919. He said this, *inter alia*:

"Chiefs, ladies and gentlemen, many changes have taken place since we last met at Bethlehem. The Native Lands Act still operates as mercilessly in different parts of the Union, and as a result many Native families are still working for White farmers only for their food. It will be remembered, after the representations of this Congress and the pleadings of our missionary and other friends, the government has consented to postpone for a year enacting the Native Affairs Administration Bill, which was nothing but the confirmation and perpetuation of the harsh provisions of the Native Lands Act and all its sorrows. Another Bill has likewise been postponed: that is, the Native Urban Areas Bill ... It says: no White man, under pain of £100 fine or six months' imprisonment, shall rent or sell a house to a Native in any town or village in the Union, unless that Native be a registered voter. This means that only a few Natives will retain the right to acquire town property in the Cape Province; and none at all in the other three provinces. How such a provision can be accep-

table to us, only the government knows. It adds that men and women should not get work unless they carry passes, and pay a shilling a month for them.

Passes Can Never Be Acceptable

"And it is a proposition our people can NEVER accept. When the Bill came out, I was assured in the Transvaal that our people there would forestall it by organising a movement against the present male pass laws before their extension to our women. The passive resistance against male passes is now history in the Transvaal. There have been serious strikes and labour troubles among Europeans in South Africa. In every instance, where well-paid White men, getting as much as £1 a day or more, struck for higher pay, they got it; but our first strike for sixpence a day over two shillings and two-and-sixpence was met on the part of the government by violence, arrests, heavy fines and imprisonment. The White man, on the other hand, can strike at any time because he has no pass, but a Native worker going on strike commits a breach of contract — his service pass.

"Thereupon, at Bloemfontein, last July, the Johannesburg branch of the Transvaal Native Congress brought to the Executive Committee a resolution demanding the abolition of the pass law, so that Natives must work unshackled by contract passes. The resolution was duly sent to the government and the matter was discussed at various interviews between the Transvaal Congress leaders and the government officers, and also with the Prime Minister and other ministers at different times; the reply in each instance being that the matter will be attended to. Eventually, in March of this year, the Johannesburg Branch, followed by the Benoni and other Witwatersrand branches, decided to throw away their passes and secure the government's attention to our grievances by courting arrest. Thousands of men and women have been arrested and sentenced to fines and various terms of imprisonment with hard labour, and, refusing to pay fines, they nearly all elected to go to gaol. They were driven like cattle, trampled by mounted policemen under their horses' hoofs, shot at

by White volunteers, and some men and women are in their graves as a result of their refusal to buy any more passes.

Compulsory Protection

"The principle involved has wide ramifications from both points of view. The authorities insist that they cannot abolish the passes, which are a 'great help to the Natives' ...

"What is so difficult for us Natives to understand is that a form of help should be forced upon us against our wish, that we should be fined, imprisoned and ridden to death by mounted policemen, with our women also under the horses' hoofs, and shot at, simply because we say we are not in need of the help that is offered. What kind of protection is so compulsory? While our people were shot at and clubbed by civilian Whites, and our womenfolk ridden down by the mounted police of Johannesburg, there was, at the same time, a strike of well-paid White men in the same city, agitating for more pay and less work.

"Not content with doing that, they forcibly seized the local government property, and practically ejected the constituted authority. Nobody shot at them. Their wives were not ridden down or beaten with sticks. The real reason for this insistent enforcement of the pass law is kept in the background. No mention is made of the amount of revenue raised from our people by means of this badge of slavery. The government retains a share of the spoils. The Transvaal Provincial Council alone gets £340 000 annually, from the scant earnings of our poorly-paid people, to build and maintain schools for White children, while our educational needs remain unattended. Thousands of Natives are suffering imprisonment at the present time, and, in spite of the law, many thousands since last month are courting arrest by working without any passes. And it is for you to call on the government to abolish the Transvaal and Free State passes ...

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am told that there is a difference of opinion as to the wisdom of sending a deputation to England. I cannot understand how anyone could call it a crime to send a delegation to the headquarters of the Empire. What sort of a king have we that we

should never go to see him? Have we got the Republic already that we should not go to the seat of the Empire? At the December Special Congress he (that is, Sol Plaatje, Vice-President) was elected with myself and seven others to carry our grievances to the British public. Two of the delegates have already left, and as funds are forthcoming others will follow shortly ...

"Today we are informed that we are represented at the Peace Conference by Generals Smuts and Botha. Did any of the two generals ever inform any Native that they were going to represent him? I read that General Botha, on leaving Cape Town in a Japanese ship, told some Europeans that he was going to represent the two great races. So, where do we come in? And what do our two generals know about the abomination of the pass laws or the atrocities or the Native Lands Act, enacted by them? What do they know about our starving widows and dependants whose breadwinners fell during the Great War in German West and East Africa, on the ocean, in France and other battlefronts?

"Chiefs, ladies and gentlemen, if we send no representatives to the seat of the Empire now, our families will only have ourselves to thank; so let us do our best at this moment, so that when the hard time comes and the threatened class laws are enacted, posterity may not charge us with inattention.

"Our people in the Free State have also had their chapter of misfortunes. Like us in the Transvaal, their troubles are twofold — the need for a living wage and the infernal 'pass.' All this on top of the mischief of the Natives Land Act, which, in the Free State, allows the buying of land from Natives by Europeans, while it strictly prohibits any purchase or lease of land by a Native. Even sales between Native and Native are strictly forbidden.

Shooting Outrages

"Chiefs, ladies and gentlemen, when we met at Bethlehem last year the Free State Natives were very restless because of the easy manner in which Natives were shot by farmers, without any protection from the courts, as the juries

could always be relied upon to discharge every White man who shot one Native or a Native couple.

"When the Bethlehem Congress rose, four fresh shooting outrages were again reported in rapid succession. At a time like this, when we are face to face with some of the worst upheavals that ever overtook our people, it is imperative that we should stand together. We ask for no special favours from the government. This is the land of our fathers, and, in it, we wish to be treated at least as well as foreigners and with the same consideration extended to foreigners, including foreigners of enemy origin.

"It is my pleasant duty to express the thanks of our people to the small band of Englishmen in and out of parliament, together with our friends and sympathisers of the Missionary Associations, who have stood by us throughout the dark days under the pitiless yoke of the Native Land Act, and also during the present 'no-pass' agitation. It is for us to see that their confidence in us is not misplaced."⁽²⁾

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These are not the words of a dead man addressing dead issues. They are words addressing live issues concerning the day-to-day life of the Black man in South Africa today. And so we pay homage to Sefako Mapogo Makgatho (1861 till 1951), national figure from 1906 till 1951, founder member of the ANC, and its national President from 1917 till 1924 and President of the Transvaal ANC from 1912 till 1930, Senior National Treasurer from 1930 till 1933.

We pledge ourselves to continue his lifelong struggle for a South Africa that is legitimate, non-racial, non-exploitative, free, independent, democratic, and playing its proper role amongst the nations of the world.

References

(1) This Clause was based on Article 9 of the *Grondwet van die Suid Afrikaanse Republiek*, 1858, which denied equality between Black and White people. It in turn was followed by the Draft Constitution issued by the fascist Broederbond in 1942 and by the Republican Constitutions of 1961 and 1983.

(2) Karis and Carter, *From Protest to Challenge, 1882-1964*, Vol. I, pp. 107-110 (Hoover, 1972).

STATE VIOLENCE



*(Above right) A grieving Enid Raditsela with baby Nathabiseng.
Inset: Trade unionist Adries Raditsela murdered by police, 6 May 1985.*



Nobantu Qulu and her 4-Year-old son Thulasizwe, who was shot by police 2 years ago in Lamontville. She was awarded R750 as compensation by the police. Thulasizwe still has 6 pellets in his body.



*The funeral of those killed at Uitenhage
Inset: the tombstone of one of the victims*

THE FIGHT FOR MGWALI

By Pandula



Resettlement camps like this are a familiar sight in the bantustans.

While the South African Ambassador Dennis Worrall is telling everybody in England that South Africa is changing its apartheid policies, the people of Mgwali are fighting bravely against removal from their fertile village, which has an illustrious history, to a life-destroying, drought-ridden ghost town called Frankfort.

A common feature of all these settlements to which people are discarded as part of South Africa's slow genocide against Blacks is poor soil, lack of rivers, jobs and many features which are a normal part of South African village life. The usual catalogue of deprivation is repeated with such regularity that what can be said of one of these camps is tragically true of all of them. Destitution is heaped upon destitution; wizened-looking children, kwashiorkor, broken families, high death

rates, especially among young children, people begging for chaff because they cannot afford mealies. As Dr H H Conradie, Medical Superintendent at Nompumelelo Hospital near Peddie, says: "For every child with a clinical picture of kwashiorkor there are probably nine others with malnutrition, but not as serious as to show up clinically". (Sowetan 27.8.81).

Frankfort, the ghost town to which the people of Mgwali are being removed, gives every impression of being no exception to the rule. The soil is hard and dry, and the land is not enough to accommodate the 5 000 people of Mgwali. Water is scarce; several boreholes were dug. The only amenities are zinc-enclosed pit latrines, gravel roads and communal water taps at 150 metre intervals. The previous inhabitants of Frankfort were the German settlers who came to South Africa

towards the end of the 19th century, and even they in spite of generous government subsidies could not transform Frankfort into a life-supporting community. The people of Mgwali, with even fewer material resources, are being made to endure the ordeal of living there.

By contrast Mgwali is a vibrant community with a proud history, and whose people have never known destitution. Mgwali was declared, many years ago, to be a 'black spot' (meaning only for whites) because it is 'badly situated'. The people of Mgwali, however, have for over a hundred years seen it as most fortunately situated. Its three rivers have always flowed, and the residents have practiced contour farming for over one hundred years, as a result of which their land has never known soil erosion.

One of the ways in Xhosa of asking a stranger where they come from is the phrase 'Mlambo mni?' (literally, from which river). This question sums up in one phrase a wide range of important facts about the traditional life of the African, for the river is not only a source of water for which a substitute could be the tap. The part which the river plays in the cultural, religious and moral life of the people is something which could justify a book on its own. One small example of this role of the river is when men, after initiation into manhood, have to wash in the river. The communal tap is quite unsuitable as a substitute! The people of Mgwali, also the name of one of the rivers at Mgwali, must always answer with a pride approaching a swagger when ask-

ed 'Mlambo mni?' because their history includes the now decaying Mgwali Institution, which was the first boarding school for Black girls; it was at Mgwali that Tiyo Soga wrote many hymns, articles and books including the first Xhosa translation of the Bible; it is here that Suthu, mother of Chief Sandile, lies buried. Mgwali is, therefore, a special place in our history, and it will always have a special place in the affections of those who know it.

Well-intentioned missionaries in the 19th century tried to get us to discard our customs in order to 'civilise' us. They failed, because these customs play an important role in our culture. The South African government is making us discard these customs using the simple method of killing the people and taking them away from their communities. It is no mistake that they are choosing this kind of community to destroy, because the particular kind of genocide which is the removals policy, is aimed at removing the cohesive element in the society, and the people of Mgwali are among the communities which show this cohesion at its strongest. It is they, therefore, who are the main targets of this policy.

'President' Sebe set up the Mgwali Planning Committee to implement this removal and all of its members are employees of the Ciskei government. The people of Mgwali formed the Mgwali Residents Association, which has the support of 4 000 of the 5 000 residents. The 4 000 are those who were brave enough to put their signatures to a list. Considering the sanctions which the South African government ap-



Mgwali residents, Mr Dyani and Mr Giza (96-years-old) on their release from detention in the Ciskei.

plies in such situations, this is amazing.

The role of the Ciskei government in all this is very strange, for certain aspects of the administration of Mgwali are carried out by the Ciskei in spite of the fact that Mgwali is in the Republic of South Africa. For example, Mgwali schools are administered by the Ciskei, which has used its powers to punish 'cheeky' teachers.'

On 16th February, 1984 a detachment of Ciskei police in 18 vehicles and in plain clothes came to Mgwali where they beat up and arrested nine members of the Mgwali Residents Association, including 96-year-old Herman Gija and his grandson, Mike Gija, whose pregnant wife had a miscarriage two days afterwards as a result. At first the South African government tried to find excuses for the raid, and even condemned the Progressive Reform Party for coming to the aid of the Mgwali people. After some concerted protest, however, the South African government made some

ineffectual verbal protest to the Ciskei government. Sebe has occasionally tried to confuse the situation, as in September 1984, when he told a PFP delegation:

"We refused point blank that the Mgwali community which has a rich history, a rich Christian base, and which is a reservoir of our culture, should be removed".

This, however, must be taken with more than a pinch of salt, as the people of Mgwali have, after three hard years, had to take the matter to court. For this rural community the legal costs must be something phenomenal, but the pincer movement of the South African and Ciskei governments has pushed them into a desperate situation, for they are fighting the combined power of Sebe, the South African government and at Frankfort they would face the combined ravages of Sebe and dreadful Frankfort. As one resident said: "If we stay we are dead, if we move we are dead".



Nothing Constructive in 'Constructive Engagement'

By Tilly Isaacson

Since the decolonisation of the Portuguese colonies in Africa and the collapse of white minority rule in Zimbabwe, the US and her western allies have been involved in a number of strategies designed to protect western political and economic interests in the region.

The United States is the most active imperialist power in Southern Africa — a region very rich in mineral resources and regarded as part of US 'sphere of influence.'

Of all hitherto US policies on Southern Africa, the most diabolical and notorious is Reagan's present policy of 'constructive engagement.' It is this policy that has subjected Washington to a barrage of criticism from a broad strata of its own citizens and the internal community. The most outspoken are the leaders and activists of the Free South Africa Movement (FSAM) and some people like Rev Jesse Jackson, Congressman Walter Fauntroy, Randal Robinson, Gus Hall and Edward Kennedy to name but a few.

Within the UN circle, the Special Committee against Apartheid is leading the campaign exposing the ominous nature and bankruptcy of this policy. In South Africa many leading anti-apartheid activists including the Nobel Peace Prize winner for 1984, Bishop Desmond Tutu, have all sharply criticised Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement.' Bishop Tutu said it is 'evil, immoral and unchristian.'

The African National Congress as the leading force in the struggle against racism, apartheid and against imperialism in South Africa has urged the world public to strongly denounce Reagan's policy in our region because of its overt support to the butchers of the oppressed people — the Botha-Malan regime.

Constructive Engagement

The US former under secretary of state for political affairs, Lawrence S Eagleburger, in his address before the national conference of editorial writers in San Francisco, California June 23, 1983, said:

"Our national interest and the interests of the west demand an engagement — constructive and peaceful — in the affairs of Southern Africa."

Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement' represents the most desperate imperialist attempt to reverse the gains of African revolution in the African continent and to salvage the bastion of white minority rule from collapse and its replacement with societies based on justice, freedom and non-racial democracies. It is a policy that has adversely hampered Africa's progress to total decolonisation, genuine freedom and fundamental socio-economic transformation.

US Southern Africa policy of 'constructive engagement' should not be seen in isolation from US overall or global strategy for world domination. Its failures in Southern Africa reflect its overall failures in other regions of the world such as in the Middle East and Central America.

The apartheid regime like Israel in the Middle East, is seen in the west by successive US administrations including the Reagan administration as a regional power and bulwark of anti-communism, a 'link' in the chain of relations between the west and third world countries. It is viewed as a western outpost, not an international outcast, and is further seen as a strategic country that could play an active role in the overall military buildup of Nato and

the US in the Indian Ocean.

It is no wonder why South Africa features so prominently in US and Nato global strategy for world domination. In fact US economic stakes in South Africa can make us understand why it behaves as it does today as the following facts indicate:

- South Africa is the leading partner of the United States in imports and exports in Southern Africa.
- Some 400 US companies have subsidiaries in South Africa and a further 6 000 do business through agency networks.
- US total involvement in the South African economy, according to the President of the Federated Chamber of Industries, amounted to \$26.5 billion and not the 'popular' and inaccurate \$3 billion. This includes \$4 billion of US bank loans to South Africa and \$7.6 billion of US-owned shares listed on the Johannesburg stock exchange, which is about 60 per cent of all foreign-owned holdings on the exchange.

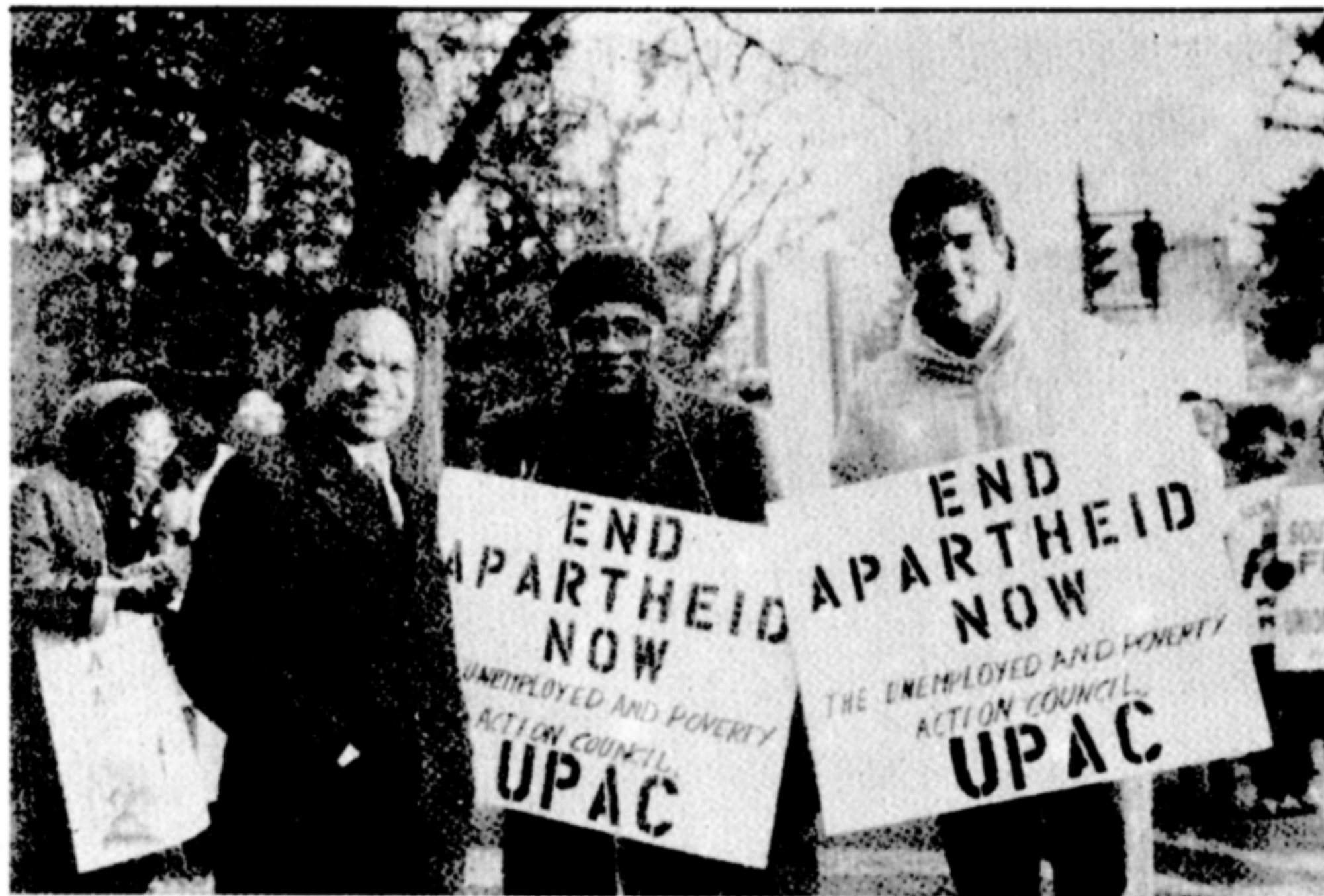
- Americans owned close to 30 per cent of all South African gold shares in 1979.

That is why the struggle to end white minority rule in Southern Africa is destined to a life-and-death struggle against imperialism and particularly US imperialism which seeks to protect the apartheid regime in Pretoria from collapse. To this end the Reagan administration conceives of change in Southern Africa that is only acceptable to the 'national interest of the US and its western allies' not the black majority people of South Africa and Namibia.

Anti-Communism

The Reagan administration like its predecessor, the Carter administration, asserted that only an orderly non-violent transfer of political power to majority rule government favoured the west, whereas an escalating armed struggle waged by the national liberation movements, the ANC and SWAPO, favoured the Soviets.

Paradoxically, armed struggle waged by the



Members of The Unemployed and Poverty Action Council in the US demonstrate with Congressman Walter Fontroy (left) outside the South African Embassy in Washington.

ANC and SWAPO is seen by the US as a Soviet attempt to penetrate the region but not as a struggle aimed to eradicate the inhuman system of apartheid and race domination in our region. The assertion here is that the main problem in Southern Africa is not the apartheid system and its programme of repression and aggression against the oppressed people and neighbouring states but rather the Soviet and Cuban presence in the region and their selfless support and assistance to the ANC, SWAPO and the Frontline States.

Needless to say that our struggle enjoys all round support from all progressive forces of the world including the citizens of the United States itself. This support to the anti-apartheid forces inside the country cannot constitute the main problem as the Reagan administration wants us to believe.

It is therefore not amazing that under the Reagan administration the liberation forces in both South Africa and Namibia are experiencing the most difficult period of struggle against the apartheid rulers thanks to the support it receives from the Reagan administration. The apartheid regime has in fact emerged brutal against its opponents and aggressive against the Frontline States forcing others to sign so-called non-aggression pacts aimed at undermining the struggle to end white minority rule in our region.

Reagan's accession to power as representative of the most brazenly bellicose and reactionary section of US monopoly capital, was like a signal to the apartheid rulers in Pretoria to proceed with their programme of genocide against our people and those of Namibia and aggression against the Frontline States, which support our struggle.

Terror and Reactionary Violence

Every peaceful demonstration by black school children, every strike by workers, every student class boycott or community bus boycott, every protest against mass removals, pass laws, influx control measures, every opposition against the inhuman system of apartheid and demands for a free, non-racial, democratic society is being met with terror and reactionary

violence. This means mass killing and maiming of our people. It means mass arrests and detentions without trial.

There are more treason trials in South Africa today than ever recorded in South African history. There was only one treason trial which lasted from 1956 to 1961 and in which leaders of our movement were accused of treason. In 1984 there were five treason trials and in 1985 there are currently 30 people facing charges of treason. According to a Detainees' Parents Support Committee (DPSC) spokesman, in the first two months of 1985, there were already more than three times more people facing treason charges than there were in the whole of 1984 (*Rand Daily Mail* 4.3.1985). Most of these treason trials include leaders and activists of the UDF, trade unions, student organisations, women and other mass organisations.

It should be noted that most of these people belong to organisations committed to peaceful and non-violent forms of struggle against the apartheid regime. We can therefore conclude that under the heretical system of apartheid backed by the Reagan administration, all peaceful and non-violent forms of struggle are not given any chance. Dr Allan Boesak, a leading anti-apartheid campaigner, addressing a press conference in Geneva, said: "Whether we will be able to continue along this road, I do not know." He warned the apartheid rulers that "the UDF represents the last chance" that our people have in non-violent change.

We Have No Choice

The African National Congress was itself committed for more than four decades to peaceful and non-violent forms of struggle to bring about change in South Africa but apartheid atrocities against our unarmed, disarmed and defenceless people seriously hampered and undermined this form of struggle. We had no other choice but to meet reactionary violence with revolutionary violence. US imperialism has declared its total opposition to our armed struggle as a means to bring about change in South Africa.

The Reagan administration itself recognises the limits of the current so-called changes in South Africa. Lawrence S Eagleburger admit-

ted this when he said "we agree with those South Africans who recognise that change is imperative" but do not agree with those who call for revolutionary changes like the ANC. Bishop Desmond Tutu at a press conference in Johannesburg said: "Can whites tell us what methods are left to blacks to change the system? ... What alternative would be left except violence?" (*The Star* 3.1.1985) He went on to ask: what would they have done in our place by a minority they outnumber 5:1 for three centuries.

Those who challenge the ANC for taking up arms are in fact calling on our people to surrender their birthright for a mess of pottage. What would they have done in our place by a minority that has transformed our country into an abattoir and hell for our people? Should we fold our hands and tighten our seat belts until all of us are massacred by racist troops and police? We have chosen to fight back by all means in our power including armed struggle.

To achieve our victory, all revolutionary forces inside the country must work tirelessly day and night to further expand and intensify the revolutionary impact of our struggle. Greater involvement of our people is a guarantee that we shall overcome all difficulties and it is an absolute necessary condition for the development and growth of our revolutionary army, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), and of victory of our struggle. Our people, while confronting the enemy on basic issues like mass removals, rent increases, influx control, pass laws, education, etc, must be made not to lose sight of the final goal — the liberation of South Africa's black majority from white minority rule.

The white minority regime relies for its survival on western aid and particularly on America. In Southern Africa, the US has not used its might to influence Pretoria to dismantle apartheid, on the contrary it is using its might to strengthen the Pretoria racist regime and to isolate the National Liberation Movement from the masses and to crush our struggle.

The US government is pouring countless dollars into the country to support trade

unionists, students, entrepreneurs, bantustan stooges, cultural, political and religious organisations, civic associations and racist government leaders — all of whom are said to be committed to peaceful and non-violent changes and not armed struggle. The Reagan administration with the support of congress has designed a number of programmes aimed at supporting "those committed to peaceful change in South Africa."

Nothing Constructive

Lawrence S Eagleburger emphasised that "such groups and individuals must prosper if there is to be multiracial bargaining leading to a government based on the consent of the governed." But how can these 'groups and individuals' prosper under the tyranny of fascist terror of the apartheid regime? And when they are not participating in the making of laws that govern them? Are these US programmes supposed to be fully justifying the term 'constructive?' If yes, how do you explain US behaviour at the UN, where out of eight resolutions adopted in September and December 1984 on apartheid, seven of these were opposed by the United States and Great Britain? It is worthwhile to list these resolutions because of their historic importance:

1. A resolution condemning South Africa's continued massacre of the oppressed people as well as the arbitrary arrest and detentions of leaders and activists of mass organisations and demanding their immediate and unconditional release;
2. Calling for comprehensive sanctions against the apartheid regime and support for the liberation struggle in South Africa;
3. A programme of work of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid to promote the international campaign against apartheid;
4. A resolution condemning the continuing and increasing collaboration of Zionist Israel with the racist regime of South Africa, especially in the military and nuclear fields;
5. Calling for concerted international actions for the elimination of apartheid;
6. An appeal made to all governments and information media, non-governmental organisations and individuals to lend their co-operation

to the UN in disseminating information against the apartheid regime;

7. An international convention against apartheid in sports.

It stands to reason that this US obstreperous behaviour cannot be termed 'constructive.' We are far from being convinced that this open diplomatic support to the racist regime in Pretoria can really contribute to what the Reagan administration calls a peaceful change away from apartheid.

There is yet another striking element concerning the political side of Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement,' this is Washington's insistence that apartheid is not a threat to international peace and security. That is why the Reagan administration could not condemn South Africa's invasion of parts of Angolan territory and illegal occupation of Namibia.

The Namibian Question

It is with this background in mind that we should understand why Resolution 435 on the decolonisation of Namibia has not been implemented. The Namibian issue was tabled in the now defunct all white parliament by P W Botha in 1982 as "South Africa's greatest problem" (*The Citizen, Pretoria News* 3.2.1982). But what appears to be the 'greatest problem' for the Boers is to find the alternative to SWAPO, which is recognised as the sole authentic representative of the people of Namibia. Pretoria tried to use certain elements of Resolution 435 as an excuse for stalling progress on the Namibian issue but failed because the UN General Secretary Mr Perrez de Quellar was himself in the region to clarify any misunderstanding between Pretoria and SWAPO.

What could have been then the obstacle when Lawrence S Eagleburger himself acknowledged that "we have virtually all elements in place for the implementation of 435?" SWAPO has repeatedly stated its willingness and readiness to co-operate with the UN and to sign a ceasefire with South Africa. In fact Reagan's concept of 'linkage' constitutes the main obstacle to a full-fledged decolonisation process leading to Namibia's

independence.

It is absurd and utter nonsense to place Namibia's independence conditional to Cuban withdrawal from Angola. Lawrence S Eagleburger argued that the US has "inherited a stalemated negotiating process." But what has the Reagan administration done to end this 'stalemated negotiating process?' The Reagan regime has done nothing except to further complicate the Namibian issue to the interest of the US and the Pretoria racist rulers. Washington has instead given Pretoria time to find a neo-colonialist solution only acceptable to the Trans-National Corporations and their apartheid cohorts.

The Reagan administration has been totally opposed to calls for sanctions and disinvestments against the apartheid regime as punitive measures for refusing to end apartheid and its illegal occupation of Namibia. A survey commissioned by the US State Department and conducted secretly inside South Africa by a team headed by Professor Lawrence Schlemmer argues that any sanctions and disinvestments against the apartheid regime will harm blacks ultimately. Such arguments entertained by political buffoons like Gatsha Buthelezi and Lucy Mvubelo seek to camouflage the real economic and class motives of Reagan's support and collaboration with the apartheid regime. The ANC does not see sanctions and disinvestments as measures to harm our people but means or another important front to strengthen the struggle to end apartheid and the illegal occupation of Namibia and to ultimately restore people's democracies in South Africa and Namibia. Since when have the Reagan administration and the apartheid spokesmen been worried about the plight of the blacks?

The failures and bankruptcy of Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement' in Southern Africa and its open support to the butchers of the people of Southern Africa — the apartheid regime in South Africa — has led to the emergence of the present protest movement in the United States which is led and organised by the Free South Africa Movement.

The Free South Africa Movement

This movement reflects the impatience of American people with Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement.' The FSAM comprises clergymen, members of Congress, judges, mayors, students, youths, communists, civil rights activists and trade unionists. Afro-Americans who were solidly against the re-election of President Ronald Reagan are blazing the trail in this movement. Some of their demands include:

- Freedom for the jailed ANC leader Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela;
- Release of all imprisoned trade union activists in South Africa;
- Rejection of Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement;'
- End to brutal repression in South Africa;
- Implementation of UN Resolution 435 as the basis for the decolonisation of Namibia;
- Disinvestment of all US companies from South Africa;
- Sanctions against the brutal apartheid regime.

The political significance of the protest movement in the citadel of imperialism is precisely that:

1. It vividly shows that 'constructive engagement' is a sham and insult to the American people who cherish justice, freedom and democracy.
2. It demonstrates that the Reagan policy of 'constructive engagement' is unpopular, evil, immoral and repugnant.
3. It further shows that this movement represents the true voice of America that demands meaningful changes in Southern Africa.

Needless to say that these demonstrations represent a new unique form of genuine constructive engagement with the oppressed people in South Africa and Namibia. Any engagement with the apartheid regime cannot be termed constructive because it serves the interest of big capital and not the people in the region. We demand total disengagement with the apartheid regime. There is nothing constructive about Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement.'



Leaders of Children Against South African Apartheid singing outside IBM offices in the US.

SOLIDARITY STRENGTHENS US ALL



Interview with Achim Reichardt, the Secretary General of the GDR Solidarity Committee, by Inacio Torres, Sechaba correspondent in the German Democratic Republic.

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Sechaba: 1985 is the year of the 40th anniversary of the victory over fascism and it is also the 25th anniversary of the GDR Solidarity Committee. Comrade Secretary General, in which way are these two events of importance for the anti-imperialist and progressive forces of the world?

Comrade Reichardt: The victory over Hitler fascism 40 years ago, to which the Soviet Union made the decisive contribution, opened the way into a new and better future for the German people. The historical chance was taken advantage of on the soil of today's GDR. The Soviet liberators' unselfish solidarity was the force behind the cradle of the socialist workers' and peasants' state and influenced its successful political, economic and social development. The increasing results of social progress in the GDR, under the leadership of the working class and its party, the SED, promoted and enhanced the possibilities to show solidarity itself — as a now liberated people and independent state — to those countries which still suffer from colonial and imperialist suppression or defend their young, hard fought independence and freedom and the chosen road to social progress, against imperialist in-

terference and aggression, against counter-revolutionary terror.

The reminiscences of the first piece of bread made from flour delivered by the USSR in 1945 and of the relief consignment of 1 000 tractors are now similar to the GDR's own solidarity consignments of children's food, lorries and agricultural machinery to Socialist Ethiopia. The workers who rebuilt the first workshops from the ruins, with the help of the Soviet Union, are probably those who train young cadres, including those from the ANC, in modern training workshops and production centres.

We do not forget that the liberation from the yoke of fascism opened the hearts and brain where previously heaps of racist ideology despising mankind had been germinated. The first textbooks, works by Marx and Engels, were printed for us in the Soviet Union — today, among other things *Sechaba* can be produced in the GDR. This is an expression of solidarity. Thus we are able to make a contribution to the mobilisation of international public opinion in today's struggle against racism.

The Soviet Union's act of liberation 40 years ago and its effects resulted in the German Democratic Republic becoming a state respected by all peace-loving and progressive peoples, as a friend and ally, as a comrade-in-arms in the worldwide struggle for peace, national independence, human rights, human dignity and social progress.

The coincidence of the two anniversaries, the 40th anniversary of liberation and the 25th anniversary of the founding of the GDR Solidarity Committee, also has a deep inner connection.

What do you regard as the main achievement of the GDR Solidarity Committee in its anti-imperialist struggle since its founding 25 years ago?

The growing of an anti-imperialist solidarity movement among the people of the GDR, which comprises all classes and strata, is one of the great achievements of the development of our country. After its founding in 1960 the Solidarity Committee became the state's coordinator and advocate; and the movement in its present volume, range and strength, fills us with great joy and pride. Due to this movement, the Solidarity Committee was put in the position of increasingly aiding those peoples and states of Africa, Asia and Latin America that needed help most urgently.

"The GDR is giving active solidarity particularly to those peoples and states which are increasingly exposed to the USA policy of interference and threats. Examples of this are found in Nicaragua, in Southern Africa, in the Near and Middle East, in South East and South West Asia,"

as Erich Honecker, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the SED and Chairman of the State Council of the GDR, stated recently.

The results of 25 years of work of the GDR Solidarity Committee include, above all, a higher quality of its solidarity services, especially the high proportion which organised training and further education of younger cadres of the mentioned regions has and for which nearly half of the Committee's entire fund is utilised today.

We would also like to point out the treatment and care of wounded patriots and freedom fighters in GDR medical institutions, initiated through the Solidarity Committee. When we reflect in 1985 on the 25 years since the founding of the Solidarity Committee, we were always accompanied by happy eyes of Palestinian children in holiday camps in our coun-

try, by words of gratitude from Ethiopian farmers, by the handshakes of trained South African and Namibian friends and the hugs in Nicaragua for curing close relatives.

We are very happy about this and it fills us with satisfaction. But we shall never forget that such 'achievements' are successes which include the motivation not to become apathetic in our solidarity work.

In the GDR there is a powerful and broad solidarity movement which supports the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples in the world, in particular in South Africa and Namibia. What type of movement is this and what is its scope?

The GDR solidarity movement is a genuine movement of the people. Besides covering the whole country it also comprises all classes and strata of the population and all age groups — from kindergartens to old-age pensioners. The solidarity movement is the commitment of millions of citizens of our country to the worldwide anti-imperialist liberation struggle.

Our active solidarity which we demonstrate in many ways within the framework of our possibilities, is directed especially to those countries which are increasingly subjected to the USA policy of interference and threats, eg in Southern Africa, in Nicaragua and in other parts of the world.

Of course this type of commitment differs a lot. The heart of this complex movement is the solidarity shown within the numerous mass organisations in the GDR, of which I would like to mention only the trade union federation, the FDGB, the Free German Youth Organisation, the Democratic Union of Women of Germany and the Pioneer Organisation 'Ernst Thälman.' Thus the majority of these mass organisations follows the tradition of the Union by their members, like the trade unionists, donating a voluntary monthly contribution, in addition to their membership fee, for the solidarity fund. On the occasion of solidarity weeks with the struggling peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which take place every year, or on other occasions, the mass organisations organise meetings and solidarity bazaars. In this way, the international tradi-

tions of the German working class are kept alive in the socialist German state, and the humanist character of our social order is given its concrete expression. And it is in this sense that the active co-operation of Christian citizens in the solidarity movement must be seen. Despite a different world view, they show their solidarity with the national liberation struggle side by side with communists and non-party members.

In which way does the GDR express its support for the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia?

The support for the struggle of the peoples in Southern Africa, especially in South Africa and Namibia, takes a central place in the GDR's anti-imperialist solidarity. The high priority we attach to the liberation struggle of the ANC and SWAPO has been expressed vis-à-vis the leading representatives of both organisations, the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, and the President of SWAPO, Sam Nujoma, in several meetings by the Secretary General of the Central Committee of the SED and chairman of the State Council of the GDR, Erich Honecker. Besides the GDR government and the leadership of the SED and the other four friendly political parties which consistently speak up for the abolition of the inhuman apartheid system and a just settlement of the Namibia question, based on the UN Security Council Resolution 435, the country's social forces, and thus especially the GDR solidarity Committee as co-ordinator and mouthpiece of the solidarity movement, constantly reiterate this attitude. Several times, the last time in 1983, the GDR Solidarity Committee was given the opportunity to explain its position before the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid and to report about its activities. However, we do not stop at words. The material support for the ANC and SWAPO has been continuing in many different forms for many years.

For example, the support we provided to the ANC and SWAPO in setting up refugee camps at Kwanza-Sul in the People's Republic of Angola and the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom

College of the ANC in the People's Republic of Tanzania. These projects include kindergartens, schools, medical facilities and small workshops.

We attach great importance to the training of cadres at technical college and university level, which, in our opinion, is the most effective form of solidarity. For this our Committee makes available, as already mentioned, approximately 50 per cent of the funds it has at its disposal. At the moment, about 1 000 cadres from SWAPO and the ANC are being trained in the GDR. More than 200 wounded fighters of both liberation movements have been treated in GDR hospitals since 1967. In this connection, I regard it necessary to mention the daily solidarity of hundreds of people who devote themselves with particular attention to the students, apprentices, the wounded and children from Southern Africa staying in the GDR in order to convey to them the feeling that they have found a second home in the GDR and to make them experience a piece of real socialism.

Comrade Secretary General, how do you assess the future role of the GDR Solidarity Committee in the struggle of the peoples of South Africa and Namibia for liberating themselves from the last vestiges of apartheid and white minority rule?

Our Committee is only the representative of a movement of millions and this movement feels, of course, as a firm part of the worldwide solidarity movement of all anti-imperialist forces. At the moment, the solidarity movement in the world cannot be seen isolated from the continuously broadening front for maintaining peace. Thus we regard it as our foremost task to make our contribution to eliminate regional conflicts which seriously threaten world peace endangered by the imperialist policy of armament and confrontation forced upon by the USA. This also includes our firm stand for the establishment of peace in Southern Africa, the rejection of the Reagan administration's hypocritical policy of 'constructive engagement' and the peaceful settlement of existing conflicts in this region.

Our people know, of course, very well who prevents peace in this region: not South Africa's and Namibia's patriots who are fighting a just struggle for their legitimate rights, but the racist regime in Pretoria and its supporters in Washington and other Nato states.

The contribution we are able to make is certainly small, compared with the magnitude of the problems to be solved, but we share the optimism of our comrades from the ANC and SWAPO. Besides, we have often experienced the power of worldwide solidarity, eg when the prison doors opened for Andimba Toivo Ja Toivo, whom we have also been able to welcome here. We shall continue with the same energy to call for the freedom of Nelson Mandela and his comrades so that we can show

them too around our country one day.

Of course, we shall continue our material solidarity in future and try to organise it in a more effective manner. We do not underestimate the utilisation of all the possibilities. Our Committee has to mobilise more forces for the struggle against the apartheid regime, whether through our co-operation with the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid or via our support in printing important organs of the ANC and SWAPO, such as *Sechaba*.

Naturally the struggle is conducted in Namibia and South Africa, by the courageous fighters of PLAN, the determined people of Crossroads, and many others. It is our task to encourage and support them, and we shall do everything in order to let their victory come closer — their opponent is also our opponent.

Finish the Job Smash Fascism in South Africa

By Arnold Selby

Certainly a lot will be written these days recalling the 40th anniversary of the crushing of Nazi Germany. As can be expected the most reactionary and aggressive circles of imperialism and its media, headed by the USA military-industrial complex, will make a big hullabaloo distorting and playing down the liberatory aims of the Second World War. Their rewriting of history is attempting to erase from record the heroic patriotism of the Soviet people and its leadership, who bore the main brunt of the struggle in crushing Hitler fascism.

To mark the occasion I would like to express some thoughts on the contribution of the anti-fascist and democratic forces in our country to the defeat of the most reactionary circles of monopoly finance capital — the militarist German-Japanese-Italian axis.

With the crushing of Hitler fascism in May 1945 a gigantic march of thousands, headed by the black-green-gold flag of the ANC, surged through the streets of Johannesburg, win-

ding up in a mass demonstration meeting at the Old Market square. Under the slogan, "Finish the job — smash fascism in South Africa," the event was organised jointly by the ANC, the Communist Party and the Council of Non-European Trade Unions.

The pro-Nazi fascists had sunk into a pit of despondency at the crushing of their hero, Hitler, while the pro-British imperialist Smuts government, though welcoming the defeat of an imperialist rival and colonial competitor, felt deeply concerned at the turn of events and the anti-imperialist liberatory aims which emerged in the war after Nazi Germany had invaded the Soviet Union. Hence the South African ruling circles did not hold any official celebrations marking the defeat of imperialist Germany.

The slogan, "Finish the job ... smash fascism in South Africa" reflects a spirit extending far beyond the borders of our beloved

country. It accords with the demand of the broad masses of the people the world over — there must never be a return to the pre-war days when imperialism dominated and plundered five-sixths of the world. The crushing of the aggressive German-Japanese-Italian axis created favourable conditions for the emergence of socialism as a world system and the break-up of the imperialist system of colonialism.

Armed resistance movements and peoples' liberation armies, under the impact of the heroic patriotism of the Soviet people, were born in those countries of Europe and Asia which were occupied by Nazi Germany and imperialist Japan. With the victory of the anti-Hitler coalition alliance, the masses of the people the world over demanded that "the job be finished." In the countries of Europe and Asia that suffered from the fascist aggression of Germany and Japan and Italy, in the colonies and semi-colonies as well as in the USA, Britain and elsewhere, the people came out in support of the principles laid down in the Yalta Agreement for lasting peace and the right of all peoples to national sovereignty.

Like the reactionary racist and colonialist forces everywhere, the Smuts government and the pro-Hitler fascists received a shot in the arm with the launching of the cold war by the USA ultras and their allies. The cold war "to roll back socialism" was in fact a world-scale counter-revolution by imperialism to quench the flames of the liberatory aims which emerged from the Second World War and to regain lost positions with the USA ultras as the big, stick-wielding boss.

Taking encouragement and getting support from the imperialist-launched counter-revolution, the South African ruling circles intensified their aggression at home to perpetuate the enslavement and dispossession of the Black population. Smuts stood in the forefront of the stepped-up South African racist-colonialist onslaught against the people by crushing the great African mine workers' strike of August 1946 in a sea of blood. This opened the way for the rise of the criminal apartheid system in our country.

The outbreak of the Second World War saw a split in the South African ruling circles. Smuts, commanding a small majority in the all-White parliament, entered the war on the side of Britain. The fascists, pinning their hopes on a Nazi German victory, declared for neutrality.

From the outset, the Smuts government was more concerned with appeasing the fascists than getting down to the job of fighting the war. Some fascists, like Vorster and Van den Bergh were interned. But outspoken fascists and their organisations, like the Ossewa Brandwag, carried out their activity quite openly. Contact was maintained with Nazi Germany. Bridges, railway lines and other installations were blown up. Mobs of Ossewa Brandwag thugs took delight in beating up individuals or small groups of volunteer soldiers, Black and White.

In appeasing the pro-Hitler fascists, the Smuts government funk'd implementing a policy of mobilising all the people to win the war and introducing selective conscription. The South African army which fought outside the country consisted of volunteers only. But strict segregation was enforced between Black and White volunteers. African, Asian and Coloured volunteers were recruited only as non-combatants. Their status, pay and other conditions of service were inferior to those of the White volunteers.

The war years witnessed an intensification of the struggle in our country for an end to racism and for true democracy. Reflecting the liberatory character of the anti-fascist war, the circulation of the progressive weekly, *The Guardian*, and the Communist Party paper *Inkululeko*, increased by leaps and bounds. A new mood of revolutionary African nationalism came to the fore with the emergence of the ANC Youth League. Progressives in the Indian Congress successfully ousted the timid and moderate leadership in Natal and the Transvaal. This was the time of the growth of the African Mine Workers' Union. In industry, African trade union membership increased. Despite the restrictive, discriminatory labour War Measures aimed at Black workers, official figures show that between 1939 and 1945 there were more than 300 strikes for higher wages

and better conditions — the actual figure is much higher.

Up till June 1944, at meetings and demonstrations, a constant demand was made to Britain and the USA to stop dilly-dallying and get down to the job of winning the war by coming to the aid of their Soviet ally through the opening of a second front. It was only after a lapse of three years, during which the Soviet people made tremendous sacrifices, that the second front was opened. By then the Red Army was advancing on the way to victory, liberating European countries from Nazi occupation.

In 1942, South Africa was in serious danger of an invasion by militarist Japan. The liberation and democratic forces launched a broad "Defend South Africa" campaign. Comrade Moses Kotane, in a pamphlet, *Japan — Friend or Foe?* wrote:

"If the government really means to fight and win this war then it must bring us fully into it. To be able to bring us fully into the war the government must be reasonable with us."

The Johannesburg District of the Communist Party issued a pamphlet, *Arm the People*, which stressed that the only way to secure South Africa against invasion and to mobilise the full resources and manpower of the country was to drop all half measures in fighting fascism. The pamphlet demanded:

"The time to end the pass laws and all other laws which divide and oppress South Africa is now. The non-European people of South Africa must be fully liberated. They must share fully the rights of all citizens in South Africa. That is to be united for defence and victory. The people must be armed. We must have a mass army."

The Black volunteers have a heroic and proud record in their contribution to the struggle for the crushing of Hitler fascism. In recognition for this they have been cruelly and cold-bloodedly discarded by both the Smuts govern-

ment and later by the apartheid state. On discharge, White volunteers received a cash gratuity and a guaranteed job ... In typical racist practice, each Black volunteer received a bicycle.

Disability and "killed in action" pensions paid to White volunteers and their dependents are considerably higher than those paid to African, Asian and Coloured volunteers. And now comes the bitter rub — the Pensions Amendment Act of 1967 increased the pensions paid to White, Asian and Coloured volunteers. At the same time it abolished the pensions that were being paid to African volunteers or their dependents. This is not only blatant fascist inhumanity — it is also a sacrilege against the memory of all those who made the supreme sacrifice everywhere against the fascist and imperialist alliance between Germany, Italy and Japan. 1 700 Black volunteers gave their lives in fighting Hitler fascism.

The African, Asian and Coloured volunteers, now victims of apartheid fascism, must be recognised by the liberation forces at home, and all progressive forces abroad, as fighters against Hitler fascism. Those White volunteers who became active in the fight against fascist racism in South Africa after the war should also be accorded such recognition. In this connection it should be demanded at home and abroad that:

- The pensions stolen from the African volunteers and their dependents in 1967 be retrospectively restored with interest;
- African, Asian and Coloured volunteers be paid the same pensions as those paid to White volunteers and their dependents retrospectively with interest dated from the time the pension payments were granted;
- Representatives of the apartheid state be banned from desecrating the sacred monuments and memorial sites honouring all those who lost their lives at the hands of the Hitler fascists. The sacrilege of Botha's laying a wreath at a war memorial in France must never be allowed to happen again.

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