

KOMATI ? AND THE FUTURE FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

Once again we are reminded that the future cannot be foretold. Who could have studied the political developments of Southern Africa only one year ago, and foretold the events of the past months? Which analyst would have been bold enough to foretell that in April 1984, the Mocambican government headed by the Mzrxist-Leninst Frelimo party would be brusquely deporting the cadres of the South African revolutionary movement from their country? Or raiding ANC homes and offices in Maputo under the supervisory eye of a joint Mocambican-South African commission?

Yet these, and other actions of a similar kind - are all the fruitso consequences of South Africa's foreign policy whose general lines were in evidence over a year ago, but whose detailed working out are only now becoming apparent. The ANC presence in Mocambique has been reduced from a substantial working cadre to a "diplomatic mission" only of six approved members; all otherx ANC cadres are being deported, or restricted to refugee camps to which the ANC leadership will be denied access; the ANC's Freedom Radio, bemed to South Africa, is closed down; and at the frontiers, Mocambique's troops "... exercise ... rëgorous control over elements propoasing to carry out or plan" hostile actions against the apartheid state. The so-called Kpomati Agreement, entered into between Mocambique and South Africa at the town of Komatipoort on 16th March this year, made provision for all this, and more - in fact for the virtual liquidation of counter-apartheid propaganda and revolutionary orgainsation in the territory. In the propaganda gloss put upon this Agreement by the South African and world press, there is constant reference to the liquidation of ANC and Umkonto "armed bases"; but in fact, as South Africa well knows, ther are not and have never been any such bases in Mocambique; planning of operations, perhaps; passage of personnel to operations, perhaps; but no armed bases.

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apparently reciprocal nature of the Komati Agreement. As quid-pro-quo for all that the Mocambican government has undertaken to do, South Africa reciprocally undertakes to refrain from allowing hostile broadcasting from its territories, and to rein back its aid and assistance to anti-Frelimo armed forces in Mocambique. On the paper, it all appears eminently equal and reasonable. But the test of the fairness and equality of such an Agreement is not to be made on the paper where it is set down, but on the ground of actual political operations. Here already there are the gravest signals that all is not what it might seem on paper. Already since the Agreement, there have been new and savage assaults launched inside Mocambique by ~~its~~ counter-revolutionary mercenaries of the MNR, who everyone knows and admits are the paid running dogs of South African foreign policy, trained, paid for, equipped and directed from South Africa. There is nothing in South Africa's past history of relations with its black neighbours to give any confidence that the post-Agreement policy will be anything more than the continuation of the pre-Agreement policy but differently wrapped to suit new advertising campaigning.

But the camouflaged intentions of South Africa lie not merely in its unlikely adherence to the spirit of the Agreement. More im=portant

But there are aspects of this camouflage which are more important than even whether South Africa can be trusted to honour the spirit of the accord.

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But what was the pre-Agreement policy? We are told by the South African propaganda machine that its policy towards the front-line states generally is one of friendly co-operation; that towards Mocambique and Angola particularly, it has been concerned to attack ANC-UMkonto armed camps and bases and to prevent armed incursions across the frontiers

camps and bases, and to prevent armed revolutionary incursions into South Africa from across its borders. If this is so, why did its MNR running dogs then not attack ANC personnel and positions, rather than the important Mocambican industrial, economic and transportation installations which have been its main targets? The MNR was S - perhaps still is - South Africa's surrogate in Mocambique. Its purposes and aims are South Africa's purposes and aims. And those purposes were never ~~the~~ to counter the ANC and its revolutionary efforts against apartheid, but always to counter the Frelimo government and its efforts to reconstruct and develop Mocambique. Only the most naive will now believe that, because the ANC presence in Mocambique is to be severely reduced and limited, the South African policy of undermining the Frelimo government's policy and future has been cancelled. T

Such long-term considerations as these cannot be allowed to be overshadowed by the important but essentially short-term problems thrown up by the Komati Agreement. Neither South African nor Mocambican policy can be seen as short-term, temporary expedients to cope with an imagined threat of an ANC incursion across the Mocambique-South Africa frontier. It can do no good for the revolutionaries in either country to pretend that yesterday's running sore has been cured by Agreement. Perhaps a sticking-plaster has been applied to the wound, but underneath the old sources of Southern African infection remain. South Africa's apartheid regime lies at the core of the cancer, promoting discontent and revolutionary upheaval at home which it seeks to contain by a combination of police-state terror and corruption of a black elite; promoting conflict and upheaval outside in all the front line states, to roll back the advancing tides of independence and reassert a new era of colonial-st type economic and political dependence. The front line states correctly understood their real situation when they created a cordon sanitairs of isolation around South Africa. The Komati Agreement marks the breaking of that cordon; the South African infection of apartheid and neo-colonialism has broken out. And the infection is not ended, but set free to spread

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THERE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION.

The Komati Agreement, though strictly a Mocambican-South African affair cannot be isolated in principle from a whole international dimension which includes the repeated armed incursions into Angola, the attempted Murozewa putsch and subsequent internal destabilisation of Zimbabwe, the suborning of the Swaziland ruling authority, military incursion and counter-revolutionary sabotage in Lesotho, military rapine and conscription of Namibia, and so on. All these many facets of South Africa's overt and covert operations in all the neighbouring territories follow a single, consistent foreign policy and programme.

It is customary in South Africa, and elsewhere in the capitalist world, to present that policy as a native product of South Africa. And to present the Komati Agreement as the greatest triumph of that South African policy and a vindication of the so-called "new directions" in which P.W. Botha is said to be leading the apartheid state. The truth however is not that simple. The Komati Agreement may have been hatched in Pretoria, but the strategy behind it has been formulated in Washington. Washington, before Regan but more particularly since Regan's presidency, has had a simplistic view of the world, and an equally simplistic view of Africa.

In that simplistic view, every dispute or division in the world can be satisfactorily described as 'good or evil' - or, in interchangeable terms - 'pro-Communist' or 'democratic.' terms, as anti-Communist or Communist. There are no shades in between. Everywhere - but especially in Africa - every non-aligned state which does not concede knee-jerk obedience to Us policy is seen as a "... puppet of Moscow." Every anti-imperialist and popular liberation movement is understood to be a "front for communism". And Washington, as leader of the imperialist alliance of Western states, has devised an appropriate strategy for dealing with the world. It has been described by Regan himself as "... rolling back the frontiers of communism."

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That strategy has been followed relentlessly, world-wide. Every weapon in the American arsenal - money, control of world markets, leadership of international agencies for development have been allied to the world-wide network of CIA agents of subversion. In total, these weapons constitute international terrorism to strangle national economies of independent states, to disrupt their links with their allies and the rest of the world, to purchase international subversion and sabotage, to arm counter-revolution, and finally - when all else fails - to set the scene for direct US military intervention against sovereign but independent states. International terrorism has been financed everywhere - to overthrow disliked regimes as in Nicaragua and Guatemala and Chile; to finance wars as in Lebanon and Afghanistan, to promote invasions as in Grenada and Vietnam; it has supplanted international diplomacy and international negotiations wherever peoples of the under-developed world choose to form their own governments and plan their own economic ways forward out of poverty.

Africa as a whole, and Southern Africa as well have lived through the same period of US-led international terrorism. Client states, like Botha's South Africa and Smith's Rhodesia have been encouraged and supported in the maintenance of military dictatorships based on racial oppression of black majorities; US strategic interests have determined policies of

Africa - and Southern Africa - are not exceptions to the global strategy. Where there are client states, pliable enough ~~to~~ or venal enough to serve US aims - as in Botha's South Africa or Smith's Rhodesia, there has been generous US aid and support for regimes which maintain themselves through police-state terror and oppression of black majorities. UDI has been acceptable; illegal occupation and military dictatorship of Namibia has been acceptable; armed invasion of Angola and internal subversion by military means of Mozambique have been acceptable. All conform to the grand strategy of rolling back the frontiers of "communism" as seen from Washington, and recreating a continent dedicated to serving as cog in the world of free enterprise and the pursuit of ~~private~~ of private profit. The hand on the Komati Agreement and in the many facets of destabilisation of the front line states may be South African. But the policy and strategy is that of the US. Everywhere, in the recent events in Southern Africa, the shadowy figure of the US special agent Chester Crocker figures as the controller, offstage.

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THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DIMENSION.

US led international terrorism has been in evidence in all the front-line states of Southern Africa, as its peoples seek desperately for the ways to break out of their colonial pasts, to throw off their shackles of dependence and colonial-style poverty. Nowhere has terrorism operated as openly and fiercely as in Angola and Mocambique - the two countries of the area where the way forward has been seen most clearly as lying in the building of socialist societies. Elsewhere in many parts of Africa there has been lip-service paid to the aim of socialism, often used as a mere slogan symbolising a better way of life. But here, in Angola and Mocambique, socialism has been turned to a realistic programmes of social reconstruction, based on Marxist theory, in states headed by Marxist parties which aim to mobilise the masses to create their own destinies. These two countries are thus at once the main carriers of the hopes for socialism in Africa, and the main targets of the US-led terroir.

All the weapons in the arsenal have been used against them; economic isolation and strangulation, diplomatic isolation, fermenting of internal armed subversion, and mounting of external armed invasion. World markets have been manipulated to provide for rising prices of essential imports of machine-tools and manufactured goods, at the same time as falling prices of vital exports of raw materials; "aid" schemes have been ~~devised~~ proposed with heavy reliance high technology and vast capital intensive scheme, 'development' aid has been slanted to produce schemes based on capital-intensive processes and high technology, while undermining traditional economies and their accompanying social orders.

Yet despite it all - and despite the cruel circumstance of one of the worst and most prolonged droughts of recent times - despite it all, it must be remembered that neither Angola nor Mocambique have fallen, as Ghana's socialism under Nkrumah or Zaire's under Lumumba fell. This is one of the most important facts of the present time in the era; not that Mocambique has been brought by force majeure to sign a scarcely creditable Agreement; but that its socialist orientation and government have survived. It is argued forcibly by many of Frelimo's friends that the combined weight of drought and foreign terrorism against her had brought Mocambique to the point where the stark choice was between the Komati Agreement and total collapse. If it is so,

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Perhaps so. But that is not a judgement that any of us in the South African liberation movement should seek to make on their behalf, any more than we could accept the right of others to make their own independent judgements about what is best for us in our own country. If our comrades in Frelimo judged their situation in their country in this way, we accept and respect that judgement. If they concluded that force majeure had left them with no alternatives between the collapse of their revolution and a reduction in our facilities in their country, that too we accept, much though we regret it.

But there are conclusions of a different sort which arise from the Komati accord which are not the province of our Frelimo comrades alone. It is being said, in some quarters, for example, that now that the Komati accord has been reached, the appetites of the US and South Africa in that part of the world have been satisfied, and therefore the international terrorist actions against Mocambique are at an end. And, by way of extrapolation from that: that if other front line states too enter into similar - though regrettable - accords with South Africa, they too will have set their enemies at rest, and created a peace for themselves in which to pursue their aims of national development and independence.

We do not agree. The harassment of the Anc, which is the ostensible centrepiece of the Komati Agreement, is nothing more than a single peice in the whole global strategy of "rolling back" the frontiers of national independence and economic independence. Other and more severe pressures will follow - for Mocambique, for Angola, and for all others - pressures which will use the full terrorist arsenal, excluding nothing; and pressures which will not be ended until independent governments have been overthrown, or bought into subservience, and independent economies tailored into the world-wide net of imperialist relations of inequality. The Komati Agreement is not a peace signal for Africa. It is, in our view, the fore-runner of worse pressures, worse aggressions to come, for all the front line states. And a warning to them all to prepare.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN DIMENSION.

No one has felt the immediate increase of imperialist and reactionary pressure more sharply than our own South African liberation movement, headed by the ANC, and supported by all the main popular and patriotic forces and organisations at home and abroad, including this journal and its publishers, the South African Communist Party. Our position in regard to the Komati Agreement is unique, not directly shared by others. The agreement is designed not to maintain an inviolate Mocambique, or even to protect South Africa; it is designed for the purpose of destroying our movement, and our challenge to the apartheid regime; undermining the front-line states is merely a by-product.

It is we South Africans revolutionaries who are at the centre of the Agreement, and its single target. Yet it is we who, uniquely, are never to be party to any discussion with our own government, never to be asked

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whether any accord is possible; never to be asked even to talk about a treaty whose subject is, after all, ourselves: us; our country; our people; our future.

And just because we and our revolutionary movement are at the centre of the Komati Agreement, it is our movement and our people who are most directly affected by it, and who feel its most immediate consequences. No one could possibly pretend that the Agreement has not adversely affected our freedom to operate, and will not adversely affect our propaganda and human traffic across the borders of South Africa. Of all the valuable and important international aid our movement has received from many countries, the facilities accorded to us by Mozambique in the past have been amongst the most important. The absence of those facilities from here on require our movement to make many adjustments, many rearrangements of personnel and forces.

But of themselves, they do not appear to us to demand any new policies. It was never our strategy to seek to conduct the struggle for our country's liberation from outside its borders. Activity outside our borders was forced upon us, unwillingly, in the worst period of our movement's decimation in the early 1960's. After the period of the Rivonia trial and the mass arrests, imprisonments and torture of our militants, the movement then had been brought close to ineffectiveness. Had it remained totally committed to work only within the country, it was our judgement then that our organisation would be totally extinguished. It was decided to commence the building of an apparatus outside the country which would take on the task of rebuilding an organisation out of the remnants of the wreckage - an organisation once again within the country but working with the fraternal assistance and support of our

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That central strategy has never altered. The ANC leadership outside South Africa, like the Communist Party leadership, has never seen itself as permanently in exile. It has always seen itself as a temporary caretaker for the movement which had to be rebuilt, regrouped and re-established in confidence at home. That the task of rebuilding would never be easy was always understood by those who had experienced for themselves the real difficulties of building a revolutionary force anew within the terror of the South African apartheid state. It has been under way for over twenty years. And though it is still not a task that can be said to be completed, it has achieved signal successes. Within South Africa today, every aspect of our people's struggle contrasts sharply with the bleak days of 1960. Today there is everywhere widespread readiness for struggle, which flares up repeatedly in a myriad of local actions by workers, peasants, squatters, students, house-holders, professionals and politicians. Everywhere, on a local level, there are respected and trusted local spokesmen and leaders, together with local organisations who fill the vacuum created by the 1960 setbacks. And there are now the evidence everywhere of the existence of an armed force of saboteurs, guerillas, freedom fighters, operating within the country and surviving amongst the people "... like fish in the rivers."

This is not to claim that everything that happens to present mass popular resistance to the regime in township or factory is organised by the ANC. Far from it. But the ANC presence is there, everywhere; its influence and re-putation, upheld and spread by the external leadership, gives coherence, unity and self-confidence to every popular movement. To this extent, the external ANC leadership has fulfilled a large part of its task, - the essential part of sponsoring the spirit of mass resistance amongst the people, without which there can be no safe basis for a rebuilt organisation.

Now, for sure, the basis is there for the rebuilt organisation, underground and yet ubiquitous within South Africa. Whether, or in what strength such an organisation has in fact been built already, is not something that can possibly be discussed in such a forum as this. But certainly the objective circumstances for it are there. And so the external leadership has done what it set out to do - in part at least. It has created the conditions of a return of the organisation and its leadership to South Africa. It has fought its way back through propaganda and underground organisation; and it has fought its way through the training and cross-border introduction of the armed fore-runners of the peoples' liberation forces^{1/2}.

Our organisation has had over twenty years hospitality in the front line states to make this possible. If the curtailment of facilities in Mocambique have any long-term influence on our movement, it will be simply to speed up the pace at which this process of fighting our way back into the country is followed, and thus expediting the date at which an internal ANC leadership is once again established - this time securely surrounded by an armed cadre and an aroused and supportive population. The difficulties of the Komati

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FACING THE FUTURE.

On us in South Africa's freedom struggle, then, there is now intense pressure to meet these long term challenges by re-establishing the centres of our movement clearly within the borders of South Africa. It is a formidable challenge; but not more formidable than that faced in 1960 -- and accomplished -- of resurrecting our movement from the ashes of defeat.

For all the front-line states too there are formidable challenges. All are now being subject to the international terrorism which finally brought the government of Mocambique to Komatipoort, with the aim of finally forcing each of them in turn to sign a Komati-style agreement.

But the main issue, as we argued above about Mocambique, is not the signing of an agreement itself, even though such an agreement may seriously handicap the South African freedom struggle. The fundamental issue is what will happen thereafter; and thereafter. For the containment of the ANC is not the final strategy of the US-South African axis, but the "rolling back the frontiers" of national liberty and independence, of economic independence and of self-sufficient nationhood. Against that strategy, will any front-line state ultimately be able to hold fast to its chosen course towards its own better future? This is the main question for Southern Africa at the moment. Behind it is the overriding first question for Southern Africa to solve for itself, before which all the other manifold problems of Southern Africa must take second place.

The equation looks improbable. Against the vast financial, military, economic, technical and diplomatic resources of the aggressor, only the spirit of independence and the still feeble economies and armies of the victims. Can there be any doubt of the ultimate outcome.

And yet we must say, again and again, that despite the seeming disparity between the contending forces, history cannot be precisely foretold. Who would have foretold the military triumph of ~~Vietnam~~ puny, underdeveloped Vietnam over the military strength first of the French empire, then of the United States? Or the political and social survival of the people's struggles of El Salvador and Nicaragua against improbable odds? The future is not fore-ordained. It depends finally on the decisions of peoples, and their willingness to follow them through to the end.

What possible strategies present themselves for the Peoples of Southern Africa against the juggernaut? It is not for us, in this journal, to dictate strategies either to the whole South African liberation movement, and even less so to the front-line states. But we can put forward -- as we do here -- some ideas for their consideration, in the hope that even now, at this late hour in the Southern African conflict, the prospects of successful resistance can be discussed, debated, and agreement reached which might provide the basis for our mutual success against the axis.

There IS an alternative strategy to that followed by Mocambique at Komatipoort.

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Angola thus far has resisted the pressure because it has been able to call on substantial support and underpinning from fraternal Cuba. Zimbabwe resists the pressure by virtue of a better economic base and a precariously maintained alliance with Britain and the West. But in the end, there is, in our view, only one realistic long-term strategy for Southern African independence to survive, and that is in long-term co-operation and unity against aggression.

There is nothing new in that. But the tragedy of toidays dilemma is not that Mocambique signed the Komati accord, but that it decided to do so without consultation with its partners on the front line - as an individual decision, reached single-handedly. If that is to be the pattern of future conduct for the front-line states, then there is no doubt but that they will go under

twelve.

Even in conditions of total unity of the front line states, the balance in a conflict with the aggressor enemy looks unfavourable, an unlikely guarantee of victory.

But to see matters in this way is to see things only as they are here and now, not as they could be, not as they might be in the future. For today the front line against imperialism excludes the people of South Africa. It is necessary for to consider how substantially the balance would change were our South African revolutionary struggle to advance still further, and to demand that the whole of South Africa's military and economic resources be concentrated at home against it. And even more, to consider how fundamentally the balance of Southern Africa against the axis would change, were the South African revolution to succeed in its aims and overthrow the South African apartheid state.

Here indeed lies the prospect of a real future for all Southern Africa's peoples. But it depends on the advance of the South African freedom struggle and the emergence of a new, people's South Africa - socialist oriented South Africa - to lend its weight - moral and material - to the front line alliance. Here alone, in our view, lies the only real security for the region, and the only way finally to secure its future against the "rolling back" inroads of imperialism.

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It is a simple and obvious conclusion to which this leads: namely that while our South African revolutionary movement needs the steadfast resistance of the front-line states in order also to facilitate our own work, even more certainly do the resistance forces of the front-line states themselves need the advance and growth of our revolutionary movement to ensure the future of their own independent futures.

Southern Africa is now , more then ever, interdependent. And the people of South Africa, represented by the ANC and our liberation movement, are now more than ever to be seen as a vital part of that inter-dependence.

ENDS.

An Workerism, Socialism & the Communist Party.

WORKERS CONTROL ONE.

: "We have set the theme for this Congress - 1987: the Mineworkers take control - in the firm belief that when mineworkers, and for that matter the South African working class take control of their lives at all levels, we will be able to solve the problems facing this country of ours... We wish to control our lives on every front. To start this process is to lay the foundations of a new democratic order. ... Either negotiations start with the NUM (and the mine owners. T) to begin the process of dismantling the migratory labour system and establish workers' control of the hostels, or the mineworkers seize control.

James Molabi. President of the National Union of Mineworkers.

1987.

[Towards workers' control.]

Mineworkers have always blazed the trails of ~~new~~ militant action in South Africa, as befits the largest ~~single~~ industrial workforce in the largest single industry. It was so with the white miners in the days of their class militancy in 1913 and in 1922. It has been so with the black miners in their turn, in 1946 and 1986. So too today, in the great debates which rage in the ranks of the South African working class and ~~the~~ black liberation movements. Molabi's ~~startling new~~ proposition of 'workers' control' burst like a fire-cracker on the political scene.

New? Well perhaps not altogether new. Workers' control ~~is~~ an idea which has been around in the workers movement for a long time. Around the turn of the century it was ~~one of the~~ ^a central ideas of many trade-union federations in Europe and America, notably the "wobblies" of the American IWW. Even in South Africa it had its formidable proponents, including the grand old man of white trade-unionism, W.H. Bill Andrews. In 1919, under Andrews advice, striking white municipal engineers and tramwaymen in Johannesburg set up their own 'Board of Control' and ~~continued to run~~ the services themselves until the municipal council capitulated to the ^{demands} of the so-called 'Johannesburg Soviet.' And ~~again~~ ^{soon after}, in Durban, a similar 'Soviet' of striking municipal skilled workers won its strike by taking 'control'. Control, then, is not a new idea. And yet it must have appeared as dramatically ~~new and~~ ^{to them.} startling to the Witwatersrand mineworkers ~~when~~ Molabi first articulated it. For black workers, at least, it was a new concept, and one which had not been ~~put~~ ^{proposed.} forward so forcibly in their ranks before.

Whether Molabi's proposition caused convulsions in the thinking of the black South African workers or not is not clear. It would appear that his proposition of 'workers control' has been ~~taken to be~~ ^{viewed as.} an interesting, militant proposition for dealing with the running sore of compound labour on the mines, and largely passed over as a proposal for a fundamental tactic of the working

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in the present South African struggle. The debate on tactics, strategies, long-term and short-term aims has been proceeding ~~in~~ in the ranks of the working class and the liberation movements for some years. Positions have been taken up by contending currents of opinion; and as time goes on those positions ~~begin to~~ become rigid, as though set in slowly drying concrete. It often takes something like Molabi's off-beat ^{and} ~~but~~ dramatic proposition to be ^{thrown} ~~plunged~~ suddenly into the congealing mix of ~~opinions~~ ^{opinions} to force them all to be considered again, from a new starting point.

Consider the ^{concept} ~~challenge~~ of 'workers' control'. It cuts sharply across the settled ^{positions} ~~divide~~ in the continuing debate between what have come to be known as 'workerists' and 'charterists' or 'populists,' ^{the} ~~which is being~~ ^{It takes the debate} ~~carried on~~ in the arena of 'theory', and places ~~itself~~ before the working class a concrete programme for immediate action. It has the unmistakable merit of being clear, easy to understand, simple in conception. ^{DAK.} But is it realistic? Is it feasible? Can it be achieved? The 'workerist vs populist' debate has ~~power~~ ^{the} to shift ~~the~~ established ground of disputation ^{and} to reckon with these new, seemingly simple and direct problems. The established ground is well ^{ploughed} ~~ploughed~~ over: Can the working class 'go-it-alone' to reshape the whole of society on a new basis? Can the trade unions at the shop floor serve as their vehicle in ~~the~~ mission? Is nationalism a distraction from the pure class aims of the working people? ^{Does the} ~~and thus the~~ national liberation movement ^{therefore not} ~~attempt~~ to divert the class from its own aims and sink them in some ~~kind~~ national' struggle for the victory of a mixed ~~the~~ alliance of classes? Is the struggle really ~~one~~, in the first place, ^{aimed at} ~~for~~ a 'national liberation' or ~~out~~ socialism? And so on. ~~But~~ Molabi moves the debate away from the theoretical, and focusses it sharply on ~~the~~ practical and immediate ^{action} ~~task~~.

three.

[From compounds to industry].

At the forefront of Comrade Molabi's ~~thinking when he made his proposal~~ to the Union conference was the matter of compound conditions. His starting point- ^{was} that control, that is management and administration of the compounds should either be radically improved by way of negotiation between ~~the~~ workers and management, or the workers should take over control of the compounds. From this starting point, he developed ~~the~~ ^a general ~~idea~~ ^{prospect} of ~~the~~ ^{the} spread ~~of workers~~ ^{of workers} control to the industry as a whole, and then - through ~~the~~ ^a spread ~~of control~~ to other industries - the vision of the workers reshaping society as a whole in a new and better way.

~~Through~~ ^{but} the vision of a workers controlled social order may be revolutionary as well as visionary; ^{but} there is nothing terribly revolutionary in the idea that management and control of compounds might be taken over by the mine workers themselves. It can be argued - and indeed is argued by the mining companies and their political spokespeople - that the mining industry in South Africa cannot survive without the continuation of migratory and contract labour. Though that argument is, in my view, wholly untenable and unacceptable, it is not necessary here to debate it. What does, I believe, go almost without saying is that direct company control of the ^{daily} management and administration of the compounds themselves is ^{not} an essential and necessary ^{part} aspect of mining's continued profitability. Mining - and for that matter even the migratory system of labour - are surely totally compatible with a more popular form of administration of the compounds than that ~~which has been~~ developed by several generations of mining companies and their compound managers. The mining companies have clung fiercely to their system of harshly authoritarian apparatus; they have refused at every ^{instance} ~~time~~ to devolve any part of management's sole control over conditions of compound life or even catering to anyone; they have upheld the totalitarian regime of compound managers' absolutism against ~~every~~ ^{all} protest, ~~against every~~ ^{and every} proposal for democratisation; they have called in their private and ~~the~~ state police ^{to} ~~to~~ ^{enforce} ~~to~~ every direct action of the workers to remedy grievances, rather than enter negotiations which might ^{dilute} ~~weaken~~ the absolute dictatorship of compound order.

Perhaps the mining companies are persuaded that once they concede anything - anything at all in the closed world of ^{S.A.} mining discipline - the whole structure will ~~collapse~~ ^{erode}; devolve ~~even a~~ ^{to} any particle of control anywhere, even in ~~the field~~ ^{areas as} off-duty ~~housing, recreational or catering conditions~~ ^{housing, recreational} to the workers will ~~be the edge~~ ^{commence} a slide ~~to~~ ^{the} avalanche which ~~will~~ ^{will} bring the whole edifice of migratory labour, colour bars and race discriminations crashing into ~~an~~ ^{the} abyss. Perhaps. But whatever terrors such devolution of authority may have for them, looked at rationally there is little reason why the workers should not control their own compounds. Rational employers would negotiate a transfer of rights from compound managers to workers, ~~when~~ ^{under pressure} ~~when~~. Irrational employers - or those so steeped in the time encrusted practices of baasskap as to be unable to break loose ~~from their own preconceptions~~ - will resist to the end every negotiating opportunity, until ultimately the ^{power} ~~power~~ of decision will be taken from them in struggle. Workers' control of the compounds IS ^{possible} ~~possible~~.

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~~It is a realistic proposition, which mining companies could realistically agree to bring about through negotiation rather than class confrontation.~~

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It is also realistic. Whatever problems might have faced workers in their attempts to manage compound life ^{in the past} ~~at a time~~ when most mine workers were under-going their first experience of urban and industrial conditions of life, no such problems of unfamiliarity with the urban or industrial scene apply today. Today's miners ~~and~~ and their union - have shown themselves capable of far ^{more complicated} ~~greater achievements~~ ^{undatakye} than running a compound. They have mastered the far more complex matter of building and running a trade union in the ^{very} centre of the mine-field of South Africa ^{given} race and class confrontations; they have mastered the problems of uniting ~~in~~ thousands of people despite their total diversity of ~~their~~ cultural backgrounds, ~~the~~ languages and even their national allegiances; they have overcome ^{all} the divide-and-rule practices of the state and ^{the} companies, ^{all} the legal obstacles thrown up ~~in their path~~ at every turn by state and company laws, regulations, and strong-arm squads. The existence, strength and prestige of the Mineworkers' Union itself is the proof - if proof were needed - that today's miners are more ^{than} capable of ~~mastering~~ the comparatively simple tasks of managing their own accommodation, recreation and ~~some~~ catering services ^{within} the compounds. 'Workers' control' is the demand that they should be allowed to do so. The call for them ^{should} the companies fail to give them that right to "seize control" is a radical call for the miners ^{workers} to raise their eyes from the mundane round of daily ^{demands} ~~demands and protests~~, and to start constructing their future for themselves. Of such challenging calls, revolutionary movements are made.

five. [INDUSTRY TO SOCIETY.]

It is not intended here to suggest either that the mine owners will concede control over the compounds without a struggle, or that the workers can ~~confidently~~ expect to take over such control through negotiated ~~means~~ without recourse to struggle or even ~~war~~, ultimately, "seizure" of control. But ~~not~~ the possibility of a negotiated devolution of compound control from mine-owners to workers IS possible without ^{the} a revolutionary overthrow of the mine-owners as a group or the capitalists as a class.

But can one extend that possibility to ~~take in~~ the wider horizons which Comrade Molabi's proposition opens up ~~before the miners~~ - the vision of workers' control first of their own industry, then of the whole of "their lives on every front." Consider first ~~the possibilities of~~ workers' control of the mining industry. There can be little doubt that miners who have managed the complex tasks of union building in conditions of the greatest difficulty could learn also the skills of managing the industry. It would take time; there are technological and technical skills to be acquired, and skills in management accounting, financing, marketing and so on which are outside the present experience of the workers. But all can be learnt - from study and from practical on-the-job experience - as they have been learnt by the present ^{managers} managers. Management skills are learnt, not inherited along with white skins. Learning would take time. In the change-over there ^{might well} ~~would~~ be uncertainties, fumbings and mistakes - a period of learning, experimentation and confusion which would cause some disruption to the smooth progress of the industry. But in the end, the workers could manage the industry without the present managers; and manage it in their own interests, in their own way, according to their own desires. Or so it would seem, if one looks only to ~~the~~ matters of technique ~~of management~~, of expertise and ability.

But management of industry takes place not in a closed experimental cocoon of its own, but in society. Control requires more than ^{these} ~~the~~ technical abilities, it requires also ^{an appropriate society in which - to operate} ~~that the ability to fit into and to function within the surrounding~~ ^{industry} ~~industry~~. Could workers' seizure of control of the ^{industry} ~~industry~~ really ^{enable it to} ~~enable it to~~ ^{survive in today's society.} ~~survive~~? Could it ~~make possible the~~ ^{Such matters} ~~assemble~~ ^{challenge to} ~~of~~ all the resources that make mining possible - ~~of~~ ^{power} ~~power~~ supplies, of transport, marketing and so on? ~~That question~~ ^{technical} ~~takes~~ ^{control} ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ of workers' ~~power~~ far outside the boundaries of the mining properties, and far beyond the ~~technical~~ ^{of the miners} ~~abilities~~ and skills. It takes the matter into the whole territory of South African and world

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commerce and trade, into the world-wide territory of finance and credit; into the territory of inter-state treaty arrangements over labour recruiting and exchange controls; and so on. The point need not be laboured; to run any industry - and especially one so vast and fundamental to the economic and social basis of ~~the state~~ ^{society} as mining ~~is~~ in South Africa - involves the whole fabric of social relations and social activities. Could the mining industry survive without arrangements with neighbouring states concerning the labour and material supplies it is dependent on? Or without settled arrangements in regard to rail and sea transport, port facilities, power supplies, stores of food, machines, materials? Or without settled arrangement with banks for credit and for receipt of payments and exchange of foreign currencies? Or without a manageable system of security for works, workers and finished products?

Can one then think realistically at all about control of the mining industry without thinking simultaneously about ~~the~~ control of Escom which supplies its electrical power? Without ~~the~~ control of the S.A. Railways and Harbours, which ^{manages} ~~control~~ its main transport links? Without control of the Treasury and the bank, which ^{dominates} ~~control~~ its financial arrangements? Without control of the Diplomatic Corps and Foreign Ministry which supervises its foreign trade treaties and arrangements? Without control of the S.A. and mining company police who supervise security? And so on. The list can be extended ~~out over~~ ^{to} every facet of South African life. And ^{thus} ~~to~~ one inevitable conclusion: there can be no workers' control of the mining industry - nor, for that matter of any other major branch of our productive resources - without simultaneous workers' control of the whole of society, all its main commercial and industrial undertakings - and above all, the apparatus of

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state - including the Parliament which makes the laws under which the present capitalist order functions, together with its apparatus of laws, courts, judges, policemen and jailers.

"lives on every front" ^{the whole of our} ~~our whole way~~ ^{now have} ~~of work and life.~~ ^{life} ~~Its implications extend far beyond the mere taking over of~~ ^{at it may at first appear -} ~~management of a workplace or many workplaces, beyond the taking over of a~~ ~~single industry or even a nation-wide network of industries.~~ ~~It is essentially~~ ~~a proposal which requires the transfer of power from those who exercise it in all~~ ~~spheres of industry, the economy and the political and social~~ ~~life~~ ~~of society,~~ ~~to the working class.~~ ~~Such a transfer will not be effected by a voluntary surrender of power from those who now have it.~~ ~~It will of necessity - as Molabi~~ ~~appears to accept - have to be "seized".~~

'Workers control,' clearly, is no simple formula for changing ~~the~~ ~~present~~ ~~conflicts~~ ~~over~~ ~~our~~ ~~country's~~ ~~future.~~ ~~It~~ ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~a~~ ~~proposition~~ ~~which~~ ~~can~~ ~~be~~ ~~treated~~ ~~as~~ ~~something~~ ~~segregated~~ ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~whole~~ ~~country-~~ ~~wide~~ ~~conflict~~ ~~which~~ ~~embraces~~ ~~all~~ ~~classes~~ ~~and~~ ~~groups~~ ~~of~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~society,~~ ~~and~~ ~~confined~~ ~~to~~ ~~a~~ ~~special~~ ~~sphere~~ ~~where~~ ~~only~~ ~~workers~~ ~~and~~ ~~trade~~ ~~unions~~ ~~are~~ ~~concerned.~~

'Workers' control' then is not ^{and} ~~an~~ ~~easy~~ ~~alternative~~ ~~to~~ ~~some~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~difficult~~ ~~challenges~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~present~~ ~~conflicts~~ ~~over~~ ~~our~~ ~~country's~~ ~~future.~~ ~~It~~ ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~a~~ ~~proposition~~ ~~which~~ ~~can~~ ~~be~~ ~~treated~~ ~~as~~ ~~something~~ ~~segregated~~ ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~whole~~ ~~country-~~ ~~wide~~ ~~conflict~~ ~~which~~ ~~embraces~~ ~~all~~ ~~classes~~ ~~and~~ ~~groups~~ ~~of~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~society,~~ ~~and~~ ~~confined~~ ~~to~~ ~~a~~ ~~special~~ ~~sphere~~ ~~where~~ ~~only~~ ~~workers~~ ~~and~~ ~~trade~~ ~~unions~~ ~~are~~ ~~concerned.~~

^{to the fundamental questions} ~~If~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~taken~~ ~~seriously,~~ ~~it~~ ~~leads~~ ~~directly~~ ~~back~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~centre~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~wide~~ ~~debate~~ ~~about~~ ~~the~~ ~~way~~ ~~forward~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~whole~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~people;~~ ~~and~~ ~~thus~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~debate~~ ~~about~~ ~~the~~ ~~aims~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~revolutionary~~ ~~movement~~ ~~as~~ ~~a~~ ~~whole,~~ ~~and~~ ~~a~~ ~~revolutionary~~ ~~transfer~~ ~~of~~ ~~power.~~

REVOLUTION AND SOCIALISM.

^{and} ~~No~~ ~~such~~ ~~debate~~ ~~can~~ ~~fail~~ ~~to~~ ~~confront~~ ~~the~~ ~~prospect~~ ~~of~~ ~~socialism~~ ~~as~~ ~~the~~ ~~real~~ ~~alternative~~ ~~to~~ ~~present-day~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~capitalism.~~ ~~This~~ ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~the~~ ~~result~~ ~~of~~ ~~some~~ ~~arid~~ ~~political~~ ~~theorising~~ ~~drawn~~ ~~from~~ ~~text-books,~~ ~~but~~ ~~a~~ ~~reflection~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~real~~ ~~experience~~ ~~of~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~majority~~ ~~under~~ ~~the~~ ~~detested~~ ~~apartheid~~ ~~state.~~ ~~Living~~ ~~experience~~ ~~teaches~~ ~~that~~ ~~all~~ ~~the~~ ~~injustices,~~ ~~oppressions,~~ ~~social~~ ~~and~~ ~~economic~~ ~~miseries~~ ~~of~~ ~~apartheid~~ ~~have~~ ~~grown~~ ~~and~~ ~~flourished~~ ~~within~~ ~~the~~ ~~economic~~ ~~order~~ ~~of~~ ~~South~~ ~~African~~ ~~capitalism.~~ ~~Theorists~~ ~~can~~ ~~-~~ ~~and~~ ~~de-~~ ~~argue~~ ~~whether~~ ~~racism~~ ~~apartheid~~ ~~was~~ ~~a~~ ~~necessary~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~growth~~ ~~of~~ ~~capitalism,~~ ~~or~~ ~~whether~~ ~~it~~ ~~was~~ ~~merely~~ ~~a~~ ~~racist~~ ~~excess~~ ~~spreading~~ ~~like~~ ~~fungus~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~capitalist~~ ~~structures.~~ ~~Whatever~~ ~~the~~ ~~rights~~ ~~or~~ ~~wrongs~~ ~~of~~ ~~that~~ ~~particular~~ ~~argument,~~ ~~no~~ ~~one~~ ~~can~~ ~~doubt~~ ~~that~~ ~~apartheid~~ ~~and~~ ~~capitalism~~ ~~have~~ ~~fed~~ ~~upon~~ ~~each~~ ~~other,~~ ~~providing~~ ~~the~~ ~~conditions~~ ~~in~~ ~~which~~ ~~labour~~ ~~has~~ ~~remained~~ ~~plentiful,~~ ~~cheap~~ ~~and~~ ~~coerced,~~ ~~profits~~ ~~have~~ ~~remained~~ ~~high~~ ~~and~~ ~~easily~~ ~~come~~ ~~by,~~ ~~and~~ ~~control~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~country's~~ ~~natural~~ ~~wealth~~ ~~by~~ ~~a~~ ~~small~~ ~~class~~ ~~of~~ ~~private~~ ~~owners~~ ~~has~~ ~~been~~ ~~protected.~~

It is logical then that whenever talk turns to matters of change, to destroying the system of apartheid, it turns simultaneously to the matter of the future of the capitalist system, and to its replacement by something radically new. 'Freedom' and the end of apartheid have become inextricably

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~~interwoven with the aim of ending~~ ^{the need also to end:} its twin - capitalism. The present generation of freedom fighters in South Africa have ~~learned from their own lives and experiences~~ ^{cannot be content} that the struggle against apartheid is intertwined with a struggle against capitalism; and that the overthrow of apartheid ~~raises~~ ^{raises} sharply the question of the future of South African capitalism as well. Can it survive without being propped up by apartheid and national oppression? Should it be allowed to survive even if it cannot or should it be fought and if possible ended? And if it is to be ended, how; and what system of society can be built to take its place, ~~and~~ ^{and} how and by whom? These vital questions thrown up by our own experience of struggle are not ~~hardly~~ ^{hardly} answered by experience alone. On these issues, experience of life and struggle needs to be helped forward by political theory, ~~which advanced revolutionaries and thinkers seek to distil from our own experience and the experiences of other freedom fighters in other places and times, and in different conditions.~~

~~Throughout this century, theoretical answers have been given put forward by such theorists~~

Since the beginning of this century, advanced thinkers from the ~~ranks of the~~ ^{revolutionary} revolutionaries have been putting forward ~~the~~ ^{the} vision of 'socialism' as ^{the} realistic alternative to the system of capitalism. The first advocates of socialism- revolutionaries like Bill Andrews and Ivor Jones around the time of the first world war came from the labour oriented ranks of the white trade unions of miners, engineers and builders. They ~~were~~ ^{seen now} like prophets crying in the wilderness, advocating ideas still far ahead of the ~~working people to whom they were put.~~ ^{criticisms of the} That pioneering role of preaching 'socialism' as a prospect of the future was taken over by the Communist Party from its birth in 1921. For many years, ~~several~~ ^{through} generations of workers, its voice too was isolated from the main-stream ~~and~~ ^{seemingly} crying in the wilderness. Ideas advance slowly; new concepts require new awareness amongst the people before they ~~can be~~ ^{can be} universally accepted. Socialism in the 1920's - and for the next sixty years - was a slowly growing idea.

But now, when the prospects of the overthrow of the existing order of society seems realistic and realisable 'in our lifetimes', the ideas of socialism has come of age. Everywhere, our people who are ~~engaged in~~ ^{carrying on their} political struggle, are raising the slogan of 'socialism' as their aspiration for the future. The National Union of Mineworkers, for example, whose President spoke ~~so strongly~~ ^{met} for 'workers' control', ~~raised a banner~~ ^{under a banner} at their congress proclaiming "Socialism means freedom."

~~It is not immediately clear what that slogan implies. Does it mean that once we have built socialism, freedom will be achieved? Which implies that freedom will not be achieved until socialism has been built. Or does it mean perhaps that socialism and freedom are really the same thing, different words meaning the same?~~

nine.

The sentiment~~s~~ behind the slogan is clear enough: that in South Africa, freedom and socialism are organically linked together by the ~~very~~ same sinews ^{plial} as bind capitalism and apartheid to each other. But, beyond the sentiments, it is essential to clarify the politics of ~~the sentiment~~, if the desire~~d~~ for socialism and freedom are to be transformed from wish to reality. Is the message that there will be no freedom before socialism ~~is won?~~ Or, contrarily, that there will be no socialism without freedom being won? Or even, perhaps, that socialism IS freedom, and vice versa, each being merely another word for the same thing? In the sharp political crisis which overhangs our country and people at this time, there is no room for confusion or ambiguity on such matters.

['WORKERISTS ']

Two main schools of thought on the matters of relationships of freedom to socialism are gradually crystallising out of the debate - the so-called 'populists' (or 'Charterists'), and the so-called 'Workerists.' Neither camp represents a single, precisely defined ideology. 'Populists' for example, range from those whose 'socialism' extends no further than the Freedom Charter's proposals for changing the ownership of mines, monopolies and land, to the Communists whose ultimate aim is the public control of ALL the means of production and the abolition of all private ownership. ^{The camp also} ~~is~~ takes in a range ^{limited to the} of social reformers, including those who see socialism is concerned with nationalisation of the 'commanding heights' of capitalism, in the manner of many Western European social democratic parties. [^{PAVE} Likewise, the 'Workerists', whose ranks ^{take in} ~~range from~~ the ultra-leftists who reject freedom and democracy as 'bourgeois' red-herrings, ^{and} ~~to~~ the syndicalists who believe in ~~the~~ society reconstructed ^{one} ~~as a single~~ big union, created by the workers going-it-alone; and so on.

ten.

Yet it must be stressed that all these tendencies within both groups have ^{/both} freedom and socialism as their end goal. The arguments between them relate not to the goals, but to how to achieve them. (there are, naturally, groups within the country who seek 'freedom' and reject the idea of socialism; ^{/who} this article is will not attempt to deal with _(not concerned with them)).

What then are the areas of agreement, and of disagreement between the various tendencies? All are agreed that in order to construct socialism it is necessary to eliminate ~~the~~ private ownership of the means of production and ~~the~~ private exploitation of wage labour on which ^{/the} capitalism ^{f/system} is based. All are agreed that in such an undertaking, the working class must inevitably occupy the central stage ^{/in bringing} ~~and bringing~~ the new social and economic conditions of socialism into being.

But the disagreements are about how ^{that will come} ~~to bring all that~~ about. It is in answer to the question; How?, that the seemingly simple and direct proposal of 'Workers' Control' is put forward. Implicit in that proposal is the concept of a trade-union led take-over of management at the workplace, followed by a trade-union led workers' management ^{/which} reconstruct ~~sm~~ work practices and social conditions. But that would be 'control' at its most simplistic; ~~more complicated consideration -~~ ^{as argued} ~~such as those advanced earlier~~ ^{/more extended consideration at} in this article about the relations of ~~the~~ workplace and ~~union~~ management to the ~~whole~~ of surrounding social and political

conditions - leads ^{could} inevitably to more complex and developed versions of how 'control' ^{its} ~~might~~ pass from ~~the~~ starting point of taking over the workplace to ~~the~~ final goal of ~~establishing~~ a socialist society. But all ^{place in the} ~~are~~ based on the same premise: that the trade-union movement can lead the workers forward as a spearhead; ^{its} ~~which~~ ^{that} ~~and thus~~ ^{which} breaks through the capitalist order by direct action at the workplace, and thus ^{opened} ~~opens~~ ^{the} breach through which they will be able to take over the direction and control of the whole of society ^{/will be achieved and} ~~and commence~~ the construction of the new order of society. ^{commenced.}

Not all variants of the 'control' or 'workerist' ideology ignore ~~entirely~~ ^{as} ~~far as~~ might be suggested by the summary above, the fact that the wage-workers as a class are only a part ^{/and} generally a minority of the ~~the~~ oppressed and exploited population. Some view these others - the housewives and the white-collars, professionals and farmers and students and shopkeepers and so on - as 'camp followers', whose role is ^{/only} to trail along in the wake of the barn-storming workers; others see them as ineffectual onlookers at the great passage of social change; and ^{/still others see} ~~yet others~~ recognise them as allies - actual or potential - who will pour through the breach the workers make, and ~~will~~ join in the process of making the whole of society thereafter. But working class leadership is the essence; and ~~that~~ working class leadership ^{/which is} ~~itself~~ ~~will be~~ trade union led.

eleven. A.

[POPULISTS....!]

There are many criticisms of this conception. Some are of a purely practical type that trade unions live by dividing workers along lines of craft or industry - metal workers from miners from cooks etc - and so are not ideally suited to the task of uniting all workers into a single unity - and still less ~~the task of~~ uniting all sectors of the oppressed regardless of their class; that the expertise and experience of trade unions lies in defending ~~the~~ working conditions of their members against the employers, and not in the far wider fields of social administration, public affairs and politics which lie at the centre of the task of constructing socialism. Other criticisms are of a more fundamental and theoretical type: that trade unions develop the class consciousness of their members, but are not specially geared up for or suited to the wider task of developing a real socialist consciousness, without which the deliberate construction of a new society cannot succeed; that because they are narrowly based in the work-place only, they cannot ~~look~~ ^{operate} directly ~~amongst~~ ^{to lead} the majority of those who ~~seek~~ ^{are ready for} change but who live and work outside the industrial and ~~tradeunion~~ workplace ambit of the unions.

Against 'workerism' therefore, the so-called 'socialist' criticism

eleven contd. B .

The critics of these 'workerist' conceptions - who have come to be known as 'Populists' - also have differences of outlook amongst themselves. They are far from ~~being~~ ^{forming} a single, solid bloc of ideology, although they have many ideas which are common to all. Central to their concept - and therefore also to their critique of 'workerism' - is the belief that if the working class is to ~~fulfil its role of leading~~ the broad freedom-socialist movement, it must take its place within that movement; it cannot isolate itself as a class outside, in a pure workers-an-unions only constituency, which other classes and groups cannot enter but are yet expected to follow. So-called 'Populism' then starts from ~~a position which accepts~~ ^{pure of} the broad national movement as a necessary part of the ~~advancing~~ front for socialism; whose strengthening and development is ~~not in competition~~ ^{does} with the cause of socialism but ^{and that is} essential ^{is} bit. ~~for the advancement of the cause of socialism no less than of national liberation.~~

That broad national movement, ^{is} composed of men and women from all walks of life, and ~~at~~ ⁱⁿ all classes, ~~it~~ serves the immediate aims and interests of all such sectors amongst the oppressed. If the working class is to be the leading force for socialism, it must establish its ~~firm~~ ^{role} by playing a leading part in all the immediate struggles, whether of a class or a 'national' character.

Such general ^{is} agreement ~~amongst~~ ⁱⁿ the 'Populist' camp does not, however, wipe out ^{all} differences amongst them. ~~who accept it.~~ In detail, there are as many variants of 'Populism' as of 'Workerism'. There are some, for example who believe that the ~~simple~~ limited economic changes proposed in the Freedom Charter (in regard to land, mines and monopolies) themselves constitute 'socialism'; ~~others~~ and that the working class will automatically float to the top of the broad front because of its numbers, or of its position in the hub of capitalist production. There are others who believe that the present mix of class elements - without any recognisable 'leading class' - is all that is needed 'for now'; that the Freedom Charter can be achieved within the framework of the capitalist system, and that the working-class leadership only becomes an issue thereafter when it will have to lead a new march forward to socialism. ^{this} Such a concept is properly described as 'a two-stage concept' - first fundamental freedoms with a system of things-more-or-less-as-they are; then a second, worker led stage, for the abolition of capitalism and the construction of socialism.

[AND COMMUNISTS].

The Communist Party, drawing on a long historical experience of advocating ~~the~~ socialism, ~~and defining the task of socialists as precisely as~~ ^{It has developed} political theory ~~and~~ a complex and not always easily grasped variant of 'populist' concept. It has wrestled with the complex equation of relationships between class and national factors in South Africa for over sixty years, gradually refining and clarifying its proposals. Starting not only from the premises of Marxist theory, but also from ~~a continuing~~ ^{affirms} study of the realities of South African society, the Party ~~accepts~~ that the national liberation

twelve

struggle and the Freedom Charter are in the immediate interests of ALL classes of oppressed and exploited people in South Africa; ~~That~~ ^{for} it awakens the consciousness of wider masses ~~of~~ ^{is} than ~~is~~ possible ~~be done~~ by any more narrow class or setarian movement, and draws them into mass struggle without which social change is unthinkable; ~~That~~ ^t within that broad alliance of classes, the workers have always shown themselves to be the most militant and determined sector, with the greatest unity in action ~~drawn~~ ^{secured} from their united experience in the workplace. As working class organisation and unity in the workplaces develops - as revealed by the great trade-union campaigns which have shaken South Africa in recent years - ~~it~~ ^{she does} advances in self-confidence and political maturity. Its class consciousness spreads out ~~to embrace ideas of socialism, which sub off~~ ^{in turn influences all} ~~all other movements like~~ its supporters, fellow-travellers and allies in all the movements of the people.

Thus socialist consciousness spreads, well beyond the restricted ranks of organised trade unionists, and there is everywhere growing support for socialist aims, ~~even~~ within the broad front. There are some 'workerists' who argue that, for that very reason, anything less than socialist ^{goals -} - anything such as the changes of the Freedom Charter or simple 'national liberation' - ~~it~~ ^{becomes} almost irrelevant, and a distraction from the real goal of socialism. The Communist Party, ^{however draws totally opposite lessons from the fact} ~~on the other hand, accepts~~ that socialism is becoming an ever more important current of belief amongst the people; in fact, it sees that development as partly of its own making, ^{and a pay-off for} ~~and partly a consequence~~ of its constant reiteration of that socialism as the goal. But it rejects totally the idea that as ^{public support for} ~~socialism - as an end goal~~ - advances, the importance of the freedom Charter and the national liberation movement ~~receives~~ ^{des}. Freedom, national liberation are the immediate goal, ~~But they are~~ not the end of the road. They are a way-station on the ~~maximum~~ road to the socialist goal, worthwhile and valuable and worth fighting for for themselves; but yet only a way-station on the road ahead.

thirteen.

The arguments given above against those who would equate working-class leadership^{3/p} with trade-union leadership of the whole struggle are valid. Experience shows us that, in South Africa's entire history, no single national campaign or struggle of the national movement embracing all sectors of the population has ever been trade-union led. And for good reason. Politics and the art of making political change is as much a specialist art to be learnt as is the art of organising trade-unions or negotiating with employers. While leadership of the working class in their workplaces and in their class relations with their employers is best exercised by specialist trade unions, so leadership of the working class in the wider arena of political life is best organised by specialist political organisations. Working class leadership of the national movement, then, is not to be based either on a separated and somehow 'pure' trade-union led crusade outside the broad stream; nor on the hope that the working-class fitness to lead will automatically float to the surface in the natural course of history. Working class leadership, in the Communist view, must be established by a specialist political party of the working class formed within and operating within the broad national movement; a party distinguished from the national movement by its total dedication to the cause of BOTH freedom and socialism; a party built up from within the ranks of community and trade union organisations by the best and most experienced activists a party which has an advanced theoretical understanding of the nature of society and of politics which will enable it to act as a guide to the whole working class, and thus permit the class to exercise its leadership role.

But leadership in what sort of an advance? IN a two-stage advance as visualised by some of the 'populist' camp? Or in a single frontal assault on the whole established order- a direct all-out campaign for socialism, as visualised by some of the 'workerists'? In the still raging debate around this question, the Communist position is again neither simplistic; but nor is it dogmatic. It starts from the aim of building working-class leadership within the national movement; it understands that, even with such class leadership, freedom cannot be bypassed, but is a way-station on the road to socialism; The speed of the march beyond that way-station, its historical duration and which sectors of the population continue in the active ranks, how arduous and painful that continuation will be is not a matter of dogma or certainty; it cannot be proclaimed from the sacred Marxist texts. It will depend entirely on how fully the working class is able to exercise its leadership at THIS stage of the struggle to reach that freedom way-station. Historical events beyond that point are not pre-determined; they depend totally on what is done here and now, by socialists and freedom fighters, by the working class and the political organisations of the working class. The way station WILL be reached - of that there is no doubt. But whether it will prove to be the opening of a broad highway for rapid advance to socialism or the entry to a new and long-drawn struggle forward depends on how the working class is able to put its stamp of authority on the march up to the way-station.

thirteen.

Some critics and commentators describe this Communist Party view as a "two-stage theory". I think mistakenly. It is decidedly NOT the 'populist' two-stage theory described above, which sees a first stage ending with national liberation, and only then a second stage ~~beginning~~ ^{of a} in the drive to socialism. The Communist view ~~which~~ has been clarified and finely honed over many years ^{it views} is both more flexible, and more complex. Paradoxically, ^{as an outgrowth of} the dogmatic "two-stage theory" of some populists ~~grew out of a~~ fundamentally workerist conceptions: that the national liberation stage is not something in which the workers as a class have ~~no~~ ^{will be} real interest; and that the socialist stage ~~is~~ a workers-alone stage in which other classes have no interest. Workerism and populism - whatever clashes they produce on the ground, ^{of} in the daily political ~~battles~~ ^{activity}, are clearly ideologically involved in each other, like two sides of a coin.

The Communist ~~concept~~ ^{see} is that national liberation is a way-station - not a halt - on the road of human progress whose goal is socialism. It is a way-station which cannot be bypassed; and therefore every socialist has a deep interest in ^{advancing the socialist future by} speeding up the advance to that way-station; and to carrying the advance on, beyond it, to the socialist goal. For this reason, the national liberation struggle is as vital to the working class ~~as~~ ^{perhaps inevitable} as ~~is~~ to all other oppressed - and perhaps even more vital. The Communist concept, then, is of an unbroken path from where we are now, through the way-station of national liberation, to socialism.

[STAGES & STATIONS]

Critics argue that there must, inevitably, be a halt ~~and~~ a hiatus at the way station; and that the prospect of an unbroken advance is a mirage; there will, it is argued, inevitably be a halt when all except the socialist working class will drop off before the "second stage." That argument depends ^{on method, on dogma, and} not on ~~an~~ analysis of the actual position at the time of national liberation - since that lies in the future and cannot be precisely known now. ^{We can not be} ~~accept perhaps~~

^{guided by} ~~seers~~ ^{or} prophets. The Communist view is not a prophecy of the future, but ~~an aim~~ ^{solely} to be worked for. ^{outcome will turn not on dogma but on} The argument returns to the issue of 'leadership'. In the Communist view, the working class has ~~both~~ ^{as well as} the vital interest in national liberation ~~and~~ the ~~ess~~ militancy, unity and experience to lead the whole national liberation alliance. If it does so successfully and wisely, if ~~within~~ that national struggle it establishes its prestige ~~and standing~~ amongst all classes of the oppressed, wins their confidence ~~and trust~~ ^{to them that} and proves ~~itself~~ ^{done} a trustworthy guide to the road ahead - if that can be achieved, then the prospect of an unbroken advance from the way station to socialism ^{becomes:} is possible; without any halt, ^{without any break-up of} ~~any breaking up of~~ the ~~exxxx~~ liberation front on sectarian lines. Without, in short, "two stages." It is precisely that outcome that the Communists ^{seek to} ~~work to~~ ^{the development of} ~~bring about through working to~~ develop working class leadership in all the struggles of today. The communist ~~perspective~~ ^{"perspective"} is neither the "immediate socialist ~~assault~~" of some workerists, ^{who would by pass} nor the "two-stage" theory of some populists, ^{also would postpone socialism to a later date.} but a subtle synthesis of the thinking ~~which in a simpler formulation - underlies them both.~~

fourteen.

~~To complete the Communist view, it is necessary~~

~~fourteen.~~

Its essential component is that the working class must be enabled to lead the mass struggle from now to the end of the road.

But the Communist view of working class leadership ~~can not be interpreted~~ ^{is not to be equated with} ~~as~~ trade-union leadership of the struggle. Our experience ~~will~~ shows that no single campaign or mass struggle of the national movement, ~~which~~ ^{embracing} all sectors of the oppressed, has ever been trade-union led. And for good reason. Politics and the art of bringing about political change is as much a specialist art as organising trade unions or bargaining with employers. It is an art which has to be learnt, through study, through practical trial-and-error, and through experience of both successes ~~and~~ and failures ~~and~~. Leadership of the working class in the workplace and in their worker-to-boss relationships is exercised by specialists in the art - the trade unions. ^{Correctly so.} Leadership of the working class in the wider arena of political life is similarly, in the Communist view, best exercised by specialist political organisation. Working class

leadership of the national movement ~~will~~ ^{does} not result either from waiting for it to, magically, float to the top; nor from separating ^{the class from the broad stream,} a pure 'trade-union led crusade, ~~from the broad stream.~~ It will result from the development of a specialised political party of the working class within the broad movement,

which

participates ~~es~~ in the broad movement, and yet maintains ~~se~~ its special class identity. Such a party will be distinguished from the broad movement not by ^{separateness, nor by} peculiarities of immediate aims, but by its total dedication to the cause of both national freedom and of socialism. It ~~will~~ ^{should aim to} draw into its ranks the most dedicated, active and disciplined members of the trade unions, national and community organisations. It ~~will~~ ^{should} seek to ~~lead~~ ^{guide} the people steadily along the road to socialism ~~by~~ ^{by} constantly developing its own theoretical understanding of the nature of society and politics ~~as a guide to the whole working class.~~ ^{of the}

If such a party is to be capable of raising the working class to lead not just in the national struggle but beyond, to socialism, its leadership ~~will~~ ^{must} be ~~established~~ ^{won} not by proclamation ~~at~~ ^{its own} itself, nor by claiming any special privileged position for itself, ~~but by the fruits of its work.~~ ^{It can be won only for its example, and the practical successes it inspires.}

[How LONG THE ROAD]

Our country and people are on the march, in a spirit of confidence and militancy never before experienced. The way-station of liberation ~~is~~ ^{comes} into sight, and will ~~be~~ ^{be} reached 'in our lifetime'. The time for working-class leadership can not be deferred till then, ~~or~~ ^{lest} the movement ~~will~~ ^{will} indeed grind to a halt at the way station. Working class leadership must be ~~established and strengthened~~ ^{developed} now, to preserve the possibilities of an unbroken advance. ~~The working class must place its seal of authority on the mass movement to guarantee the prospects of socialism,~~ and an open road from the way-station to that end.

What distance - how many years- separate the way-station from the socialist dream? Lenin, writing on the morrow of the triumph of the 1917 Russian revolution could well have asked the same question. Already the revolution

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