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threat against all those who "undermine the public order or good morale of the Republic." The regime must be cruel only to be kind.

"A free press is essential to a free democratic country,"

said Dr Van Rhyen in parliament in January 1950, when introducing the motion which led to the appointment of the notorious Press Commission; but his motion went on to declare that:

"all activities and tendencies to undermine or abuse such freedom ... should therefore be combated."

Press control, the Nationalists maintain, is essential if a press is to be free. In the 40 years since it came to power the Nationalist government has piled one measure of control on top of another. The South African press is certainly controlled; but who would be so brave as to maintain that it is free?

## P W Botha Protects the People

In banning the *New Nation* and *South*, cabinet ministers justified themselves by alleging that the papers had identified themselves "absolutely" with Communism, and once again the argument is trotted out that in the fight against Communism anything is justified. P W Botha himself maintained that the banning of the UDF, COSATU and the other organisations and individuals in February 1988 was:

"not to oppress people, but to prevent others being oppressed by a communist dictatorship."

Hitler had the same approach. In his book, *Mein Kampf*, he maintained that:

"Democracy is the breeding ground in which the bacilli of the Marxist world pest can grow and spread."

Thus his campaign against Communism necessitated the elimination of democracy, and set the world on the course that led to the second world war and the destruction of 50 million lives. The anti-Communism of the Pretoria regime is clearly setting us on

the same course. At home we live today in a condition of civil war, as our people battle to defend themselves against the repression of the state and the violence and brutality of its security organs and their agents and allies, the vigilantes and death squads. Abroad, the assorted agents and allies of South Africa, like UNITA and the MNR, sow death and destruction in the Front Line States in pursuit of the regime's policies of domination over the whole sub-continent.

From the first moment they came to power, the Nationalists took steps to entrench apartheid and eliminate the opposition. In their first months of office, legislation was introduced to limit the franchise rights of Indians and Coloureds — the beginning of a campaign eventually extending over more than a decade to produce their dream of an all-White parliament. At the same time, the Minister of Justice, C R Swart, appointed a departmental committee to "investigate" Communism.

## Anti-Communist Legislation

The Committee, working in secrecy with extraordinary rapidity, produced within a few months a report declaring that Communism was a national danger that had to be extirpated from "our national life, our democratic institutions and our Western philosophy." The fruit of this 'research' was the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, which not only outlawed the Communist Party but also produced our first casualty in the sphere of newspaper production: the newspaper *Inkululeko*, which had carried the message of the Party to all parts of the country and in which the views of Party stalwarts like Moses Kotane, J B Marks, Edwin Mofutsanyana and many others were published in several of the main languages of the country. *Inkululeko*, which at its peak had a circulation of about 10 000, was arbitrarily suppressed, together with *Freedom*, the theoretical organ of the Party, and other intermittent Party publications.

The Suppression of Communism Act, which forms the core of the Internal

Security Act of 1982 under which most of our activists are detained, prosecuted and persecuted, gives the regime the power to ban any periodical or other publication which promotes the spread of Communism or:

"serves inter alia as a means for expressing views or conveying information, the publication of which is calculated to further the achievements of any of the objects of Communism."

If Pretoria had been able to produce any evidence to justify its charge that the *New Nation* or *South* were identifying themselves "absolutely" with Communism, it could have used the Internal Security Act to ban them; not for three months but for good. The fact that it has not done so can be accepted as proof that no such evidence is available. Under the emergency regulations, as Judge Curlewis pointed out in the *New Nation* case, the Minister of Information does not have to give reasons why the *New Nation* offends him.

"It is not our job to pass opinion on a minister's opinion,"

said the judge. Under the emergency regulations the Minister can and does do what he likes, and the victim has no recourse to the courts. The judge's advice to newspaper editors was,

"If in doubt, don't publish."

When the law is so unclear, and the penalties so severe, who can be sure of anything?

## Opposition Banned

During the last 40 years, the regime has made it plain that it will not tolerate anybody who, to adapt Karl Marx's famous thesis on Feuerbach, not only interprets the world but also tries to change it. The apartheid regime doesn't mind anyone saying he is against apartheid provided he does nothing about it. Gatsha Buthelezi, for example, constantly proclaims he is opposed to apartheid, but because he does nothing to end it — indeed many will argue that in practice he helps to perpetuate it —

no action has ever been taken against him

On the other hand, those who try to mobilise effective opposition to the system are struck down with ever-increasing viciousness and violence. Ten years after the banning of the Communist Party, the time came for the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress to be banned in 1960, followed by the Congress of Democrats in 1962, the Black Consciousness organisations in the 1970s and the 18 organisations in February 1988, prohibited from doing anything except write to their lawyers and keep their books in order.

In the sphere of the press, the bannings have been equally draconian. In 1952, two years after the disappearance of *Inkululeko*, it was the turn of the weekly newspaper, the *Guardian*, banned by the Minister of Justice in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act.

## Democratic Press Fights for Life

The *Guardian* had been launched in 1937 as a journal of the labour movement, but over the years had become established as the mouthpiece of the forces in South Africa fighting for national liberation and socialism, and against racism, capitalism and imperialism. At its peak during the war and in the immediate post-war period, it had a regular circulation of 45 000 — one issue, at the time of the 1943 general election, topped 55 000. Throwing its considerable weight behind the projected Defiance Campaign, the *Guardian* was a force the regime could not ignore. The paper was banned, not because it was propagating communism or breaking the law in any other way, for which it could have been prosecuted, but because it was said to be under the control of people who had been members of the former Communist Party of South Africa before it was banned in 1950. The paper had never been an organ of the Communist Party, though it supported its policies. It was banned because it stood in the way of the apartheid juggernaut.

The paper was replaced immediately by



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the *Clarion*, which had to change its name for technical reasons to *People's World* and then to *Advance*, which was banned in 1954 to be replaced by *New Age*, which was banned in 1962. The line was finally brought to an end in 1963, when all the members of the editorial staff of *Spark* were prohibited from producing any material for publication, and no replacements could be found who were not under similar restrictions.

It is worth recalling these episodes because we must never allow the history of either repression or resistance to be forgotten. When the *Spark* was doused, other media were brought into the front line, sometimes involuntarily.

### Spiral of Repression and Resistance

In October 1977 it was the turn of the *World*, a White-owned paper directed towards the African market, which had achieved a circulation of 150 000, the second largest of any daily in South Africa. It was banned together with its week-end edition, the *Weekend World*, and the *Christian Institute newspaper, Pro Veritate*. The editor of the *World*, Percy Qoboza, was detained, while the editor of *Pro Veritate*, Cedric Mayson (today an active member of the ANC) and the editor of the East London *Daily Dispatch*, Donald Woods, were banned. Various organs of the Black Consciousness Movement also disappeared.

The spiral of repression keeps advancing, but so does that of resistance. In 1950 it was the Communist Party alone that was the target of attack, but in 1987 it was 18 organisations that were restricted by the regime — 18 organisations campaigning for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. In 1952 it was the *Guardian* that was banned; today, in addition to *New Nation*, *South and Weekly Mail*, a whole range of 'dissident' publications are under threat — *Sowetan*, *City Press*, *Saamstaan*, *New Era*, *Work in Progress*, *Grassroots*. What is impressive is that the groundswell of opposition has grown to tidal wave proportions,

and where the freedom fighters could once be counted in thousands, they now number millions. The dialectical relationship between repression and resistance flows from the central contradiction of South African society — colonialist White domination of the Black majority. The resolution of this contradiction is fast approaching, as the consciousness spreads that the regime can offer no solutions and that a united people's front must be formed to bring the apartheid era to a close. The regime takes refuge in a permanent state of emergency.

The freedom of the press in South Africa is today restricted by over 100 laws plus the emergency regulations. An editor knows that if he publishes any criticism of the regime he does so at his peril. It is an offence for a newspaper to publish unauthorised or 'untruthful' information about Departments of Defence, Police or Prisons, or the treatment of prisoners. Since the only criterion of truthfulness is, in the last resort, the say-so of officials of these departments, the effect of these laws is that the press publishes only what the regime allows it to publish.

Under the emergency regulations introduced since June 1986 it is an offence to write or reproduce any "subversive" statement, which is again defined so loosely that anyone saying almost anything can be brought within its ambit. Thus, in addition to promoting the aims of an unlawful organisation, it becomes an offence to discredit military service, promote sanctions, encourage disinvestment or "weaken or undermine the public's confidence in the termination of the state of emergency."

### Overseas Coverage Shrinks

Perhaps the measure which has had the most serious effect abroad has been the proclamation issued by the regime in November 1985, during the first state of emergency, prohibiting any person from photographing, filming or recording, as well as broadcasting or distributing within or outside South Africa, any film or recording of any public disturbance, strike or boycott, or any damage to property, or any assault or killing, or even any person

present at any of these activities. The proclamation also banned the photographing or filming of any member of the security services engaged in any activity relating to the termination of the state of emergency without the permission of the authorities. The Minister of Law and Order at the time, Louis le Grange, said the presence of television and camera crews in "unrest situations" had proved to be "a catalyst to further violence." In fact, however, the violence had continued, but the effect of the proclamation had been to wipe off the TV screens of the world all visual evidence of police and military brutality against the people.

A study done by the Canadian Department of External Affairs has found that United States network air time on South Africa declined by about two-thirds following the tightening of media restrictions. *West Africa* magazine, published in London, reported on March 28th 1988 that, at the same time, the survey had found:

*"a levelling off and even a decrease in the American public's understanding of the issues in South Africa."*

Side by side with the suppression of its critics, the regime concentrates enormous resources on the spread of its own propaganda. Because of the odium created by the apartheid system throughout the world, one of the first tasks undertaken by the Nationalist government when it came to power in 1948 was the reorganisation of the information services to counter the unfavourable publicity abroad. Following the Sharpeville shooting and the economic crisis of 1960-61, the external propaganda drive was greatly stepped up. In 1962 a separate Department of Information was set up, and the sum spent on information services was boosted from a meagre R100 000 in 1949-50 to R4 159 000 in 1968 and to R28 850 000 in 1986 — more than double the figure for 1985. The 1988-89 allocation was R31 600 000. In fact, South Africa's outlay on information is a matter of conjecture, for, as the Muldergate scandal revealed, the regime has devoted untold millions to the development of undercover propaganda agencies at home and abroad.

### Money Power

A memorandum submitted by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement to a seminar on the mass media in Berlin in 1981 stated that the South African propaganda drive:

*"... depends on the methods, skills and persuasion of modern advertising and public relations, backed by world-wide market research surveys and supported by extensive special supplements in newspapers, shrewdly slanted television programmes and an enormous number of fellow-travellers in the West's governments, media, industry, commerce and even charitable organisations and church groups. It is without doubt the world's most carefully planned campaign of mass indoctrination, beside which the racial propaganda campaigns of the late Dr Josef Goebbels pale into insignificance. And it is spearheaded by the mass media of the West."*

It is not only the regime that restricts the freedom of the South African press. Class and national divisions also play a role. The monopoly of economic power by the White minority ensures that the Black majority is starved of the capital needed to launch a newspaper. Most South African newspapers are owned and directed by Whites, even those aimed at the African market, and apart from a handful of 'alternative' or communally based journals Black South Africans have no press at their disposal. Of course there are organs of the liberation movement, but one cannot regard them as a free press, since even possession of a copy can incur imprisonment.

Even among the Whites there is a vital division in the extent of press control. With the exception of the *Citizen*, which is owned by Nationalist capital, all English-language daily newspapers oppose the regime and the apartheid policy, however feebly, and all the Afrikaans-language daily newspapers support one or other form of apartheid. The circulation of the English press outnumbers that of the Afrikaans press (plus the *Citizen*) by three to one, which is one reason why the Nationalist government has regarded the press as a source of ideological danger ever since it came to power.



Monopoly control of the press also restricts freedom of expression. Effective control of the Argus group of newspapers is held by the Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa via Charter Consolidated (an Anglo-controlled British company) and the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company. Up to 1985, the Argus group owned 39.2% of South African Associated Newspapers, with a further 20.9% of SAAN being held by the Advowson Trust, which was set up by Anglo-American interests in 1975. In September 1985, the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company bought 13.5% of SAAN shares from the Abe Bailey estate and the Bailey Trust, thus giving Anglo-American effective control of both SAAN and the Argus group, which between them control almost all the English-language press.

The power of advertising in influencing editorial policies is also a factor ensuring that the press dances to the tune of the ruling class. The media directed towards Africans receive only 6% of all print advertising revenue, while Africans account for 40% of all retail sales. We know that advertisers were reluctant to support the *Rand Daily Mail* because of its large circulation among Blacks and that this was perhaps the main cause of its demise. The drive to free the press from the 'money power' must be seen as part of our overall struggle to free South Africa from the grip of monopoly capitalism, racism and imperialism.

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares:

*"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."*

This Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10th 1948, but has never been signed by South Africa. The recent actions of the regime make it clear that freedom of opinion and expression is today further removed from the grasp of our people than

ever. Yet never has the need for it been greater.

## A Future South Africa

Journalists in South Africa have launched a Hands off the Press Campaign, and we have a duty to promote this campaign with all our energy and enthusiasm, not only in the interests of a free press, but also to help bring into existence the united, non-racial and democratic South Africa outlined in the Freedom Charter. The Conference on Culture for Another South Africa (CASA), held in Amsterdam in December 1987 and attended by 300 delegates from inside and outside South Africa, set out some guidelines to assist us in this task. The conference resolved:

- To internationalise the campaign to defend the progressive press in South Africa.
- To build solidarity between South African media workers and those abroad.
- To call on governmental and non-governmental organisations abroad to pressure the South African government by:
  - a) reviewing the position of South African press attaches (in their countries) in the light of repression in South Africa,
  - b) curbing the practice of allowing foreign journalists to be used for government propaganda.
- To call on the international community to insist on its right to be informed and to evolve methods which ensure there is a constant flow of information into and out of the country.
- To call on solidarity movements internationally to increase financial assistance to media projects within the national and democratic structures.
- To encourage media workers to organise themselves into truly national and democratic structures.
- To set up appropriate structures in the country that will survive the state onslaught in the long term.
- To regard media training as a priority in all sectors and to promote the incorporation of women fully into media projects.

More than two dozen progressive South

African journalists meeting in Amsterdam issued a separate declaration stressing that the freedom of the media depended on:

*"... the right freely to inform and be informed (and) the right to live peacefully in a non-racial democratic society based on universal franchise."*

The declaration continued:

*"As journalists we believe we are entitled to live and work in a society based on these principles. And we believe that only in a society based on those principles is a truly free South African press possible."*

The face of journalism in South Africa is changing. Speaking in the no confidence debate in the House of Assembly in February 1987, the Minister of Home Affairs, Stoffel Botha, deplored the development of a new breed of journalist who saw his duty not as being to report the news but to make the news:

*"This new breed of journalist sees himself as an agent for change, with a mission to convince his readers to his way of thinking."*

Stoffel Botha thought this was dreadful, and called on the Media Council to put its house in order. Perhaps we journalists can take pride in the fact that our efforts to tell the truth about what is happening in South Africa are helping to bring about the changes we all want to see.

## South African Democratic Journalists

Yes, it is true that a new breed of journalist has been developed, a journalist who associates himself fully with the democratic cause, who respects the truth, but understands that there can be no freedom of the press in an unfree society. From ancient times, philosophers have argued that the pen is mightier than the sword. Even Stoffel Botha declared in October 1987:

*"The journalist with a poison pen contributed just as much to the revolution as did the man with a gun, or the bomb thrower." (Daily News, October 16th 1987)*

respect to Vladimir Lenin, who, in *What is to Begin* in 1901, wrote that revolutionaries can learn from their press how to live and how to die.

*"A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser,"*

he said, stressing the importance of political organ to a political movement. He criticised those working in the underground who immersed themselves almost completely in local work,

*"... which narrows their outlook, the scope of their activities and their skill in the maintenance of secrecy and their preparedness."*

A party newspaper could help to overcome these shortcomings, he said.

*"This work will train and bring into the foreground not only the most skilful propagandists, but the most capable organisers, the most talented political party leaders, capable, at the right moment, of releasing the slogan for the decisive struggle and taking the lead in that struggle."*

Lenin always stressed the unity of theory and practice. And he also always stressed the need for a vanguard party to strengthen its links with, to be rooted in, the masses. In *Left-Wing Communism — an Infantile Disorder* in 1920, he said:

*"Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone. The broad masses of the working people, those oppressed by capital, must become involved."*

This is achieved, of course, not only by propaganda, but also by their own experience gained in struggle. Our cadre engaged in various forms of organisation and action must remember that they are also propagandists, and that the purpose of all their work, in journalism as elsewhere is to arouse, educate and mobilise the masses within South Africa to revolutionary activity.

Journalists in South Africa today are in the front line. Let them not feel they are isolated and alone, but part of a mighty army which despite all setbacks, is steadily advancing on the road to freedom.

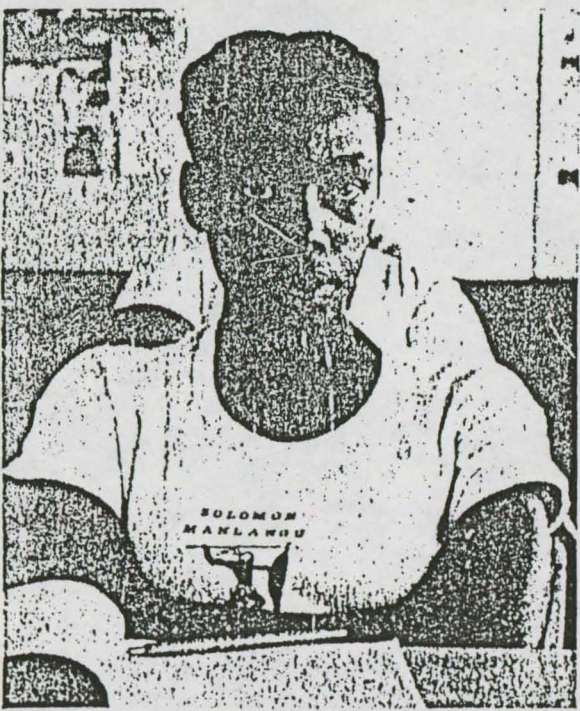
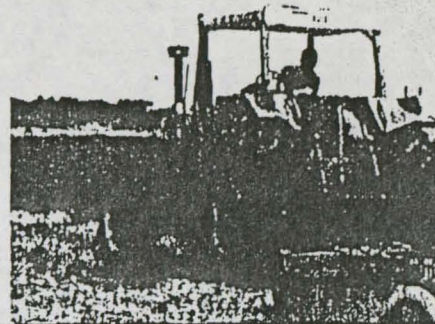


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# THE NAME OF A HERO

Solomon Mahlangu left South Africa at the time of the uprising in 1976, and was one of the first of that generation to return to his country as a trained cadre of Umkhonto We Sizwe. His life was brief; he was captured in 1978 and hanged in April 1979, ten years ago this month.

His name is given to the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College near Mazimbu in Tanzania. The College is ten years old this year. It is a sanctuary for other South Africans forced to leave their country because of political repression, and its aim is to produce a new kind of South African, free of the effects of racial discrimination and oppression.





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# BIRTH OF THE FEDERATION SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN MOBILISE

By Sara



Ida Mtwana, President of FEDSAW

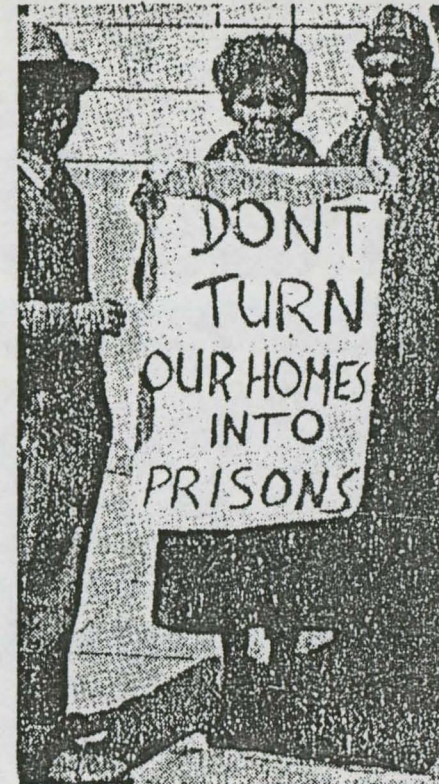
Sechaba today salutes with pride the 35th Anniversary of the founding conference of the first national non-racial progressive women's organisation in South Africa. This was the Federation of South African Women.

The first national conference of women in the history of South Africa was held in Johannesburg Trades Hall over the weekend of April 17th-18th, 1954.

The Conference received messages of greeting from organisations representing 140 million women in 66 countries all over the world; some from leaders and

Presidents, others from people's leaders, trade unionists and individuals.

More than 160 delegates were present, representing over 230 000 women from all the main centres in the country. Ray Alexander was the central figure in organising that historic conference and she presented the opening address.



A woman demonstrates against the house arrest law, Cape Town, April 1962

As members of the National Liberation Movements and Trade Unions, in and through our various organisations, we march forward with our men in the struggle for liberation and the defence of the working people ... As women there rests upon us also the burden of removing from our society all the social differences developed in past times between men and women which have the effect of keeping our sex in a position of inferiority and subordination.

— Women's Charter, 1954

Walter Sisulu, then Secretary-General of the African National Congress, spoke about women he had met in China. Other leading members of the organising committee also presented papers. Hilda Bernstein spoke on the struggle of women for peace, Ida Mtwana on the position of women in South Africa and Fatima Meer on the terrible disabilities of Indian women.

Then the conference was open to delegates representing urban and rural working women, mothers and housewives. All spoke from the floor, of their sufferings, their hardships and their struggles, but also of their dreams and aspirations and their determination to stand together for freedom.

The level of civilisation which any society has reached can be measured by the degree of freedom that its members enjoy. The status of women is a test of civilisation. Measured by that standard South Africa must be considered low in the scale of civilised nations.

— Women's Charter, 1954

## Pre-Conference Planning

Previous to 1954 Port Elizabeth had been in a state of political unrest with influx control a major issue. The African community there was already highly politicised for many reasons; among them was that reasonably stable and sexually-balanced African community had developed the trade union organisation was strong, and there was considerable popular support for the African National Congress.

Florence Matomela, Provincial President of the ANC Women's League, Francis Baard, local organiser in the African Food and Canning Workers' Union and Ray Alexander, who was attending a trade union conference in the city, felt it was appropriate time to call a meeting of women. The main aim was to focus attention on the part women could play in the struggle for liberation. These three comrades had worked closely together in the



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We women share with our menfolk the cares and anxieties imposed by poverty and its evils. As wives and mothers, it falls upon us to make small wages stretch a long way. It is we who feel the cries of our children when they are hungry and sick. It is our lot to keep and care for the homes that are too small, broken and dirty to be kept clean. We know the burden of looking after children and land when our husbands are away in the mines, on the farms, in the towns, earning our daily bread.

— Women's Charter, 1954

past. Although they had often had discussions on the importance of establishing a national women's organisation, somehow the opportune moment had not come.

In 1953, however, an informal planning meeting was called by word of mouth and took place the same evening. About 40-50 women attended. None of them represented any particular organisation; they came along as individuals belonging to the Congress Alliance.

We know what it is to keep family life going in pondokkies and shanties, or in overcrowded one-room apartments. We know the bitterness of the children taken to lawless ways, of daughters becoming unmarried mothers whilst still at school, of boys and girls growing up without education, training or jobs at a living wage.

— Women's Charter, 1954

Ray spoke about the international perspective of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) and the banned Communist Party. She pointed out that women had made significant contributions to the struggles for liberation in other parts of the world. Then the women present

spoke of the daily issues of their own lives — influx control, passes, rising food prices and bus fares as well as many other grievous hardships.

The meeting decided that the real issues raised affected other women throughout the country and therefore a national strategy was needed if improvement was to be made. This led towards the calling of the First National Conference which took place a year later; Ray was entrusted with the responsibility of organising the conference.

### Jubilant and Joyful

At this First National Conference of Women the atmosphere was joyful and festive, with jubilant singing and dancing. Much of the time was taken up with speeches, there was not enough time to discuss the business matter. This came later. According to Cheryl Walker in her book, *Women in Struggle in South Africa*, the women agreed that the Conference was a great success:

*"... a landmark in the history of women's organisations in South Africa."*

The main structure of the new organisation was adopted and its broad aims established. It was formed for the purpose of uniting all women in common action for the removal of all political, legal, economic and social discrimination. Another important feature of the Conference was that it elected a National Executive Committee, with its head office in Cape Town, as follows:

President: Ida Mtwana.

Vice Presidents: Gladys Smith, Lilian Ngoyi, Bertha Mkize, Florence Matomela.

Secretary: Ray Alexander.

Treasurer: Hetty McLeod (September).

Committee: Elizabeth Mafeking, Dora Tamana, Katie White, Freda van Rheede, Annie Silinga, Louisa Mtwana, Cecilia Rosier, Winifred Siqwana, K. Egelhof (Cape Town), Hilda Bernstein, Hetty du Preez, Albertina Sisulu, Helen Joseph (Rand), Frances Baard, Miss Njongwe, Chrissie Jasson (PE), Fatima Meer (Durban), Miss M.F. Thompson (Kimberley).

It is our intention to carry out a nation-wide programme of education that will bring home to the men and women of all national groups the realisation that freedom cannot be won for any one section of the people as a whole as long as women are kept in bondage.

— Women's Charter, 1954

No name was given to this new organisation until the Second Conference two years later when a constitution was adopted defining the structure of the organisation and it became known as the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW).

After the basis of a national organisation of women had been laid at the planning meeting, a Women's Charter was drafted.

### Women's Charter And Its Aims

This was the major achievement of the conference. The Charter was a manifesto composed from the many ideas which came out of the inaugural conference. It was felt that such a charter was necessary in order to assert women's rights although they should be subordinated to the main struggle for equality. The Charter declared the women's aims to be:

*"... striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that; discriminated against women and deprived them of their inherent right to the advantages, responsibilities and opportunities that society offers. The women would strive for the right to vote and be elected to state bodies; for full opportunities and equal conditions in all spheres of work; for equal rights with men in relation to property, marriage and children; for free compulsory education for all; for health care for mothers and children; and for proper homes for all, with the amenities of modern civilisation. They would aim for the removal of laws restricting the freedom of individuals and democratic organisations; the spread and strengthening of South African women's organisations; co-operation with women's organisations*

*throughout the world and permanent peace in the universe."*

### Demands And Ideals

The delegates left the Conference satisfied that the Charter embodied their demands and ideals and that all the women's organisations and committees would gain great strength from working as one.

We shall teach men they cannot hope to liberate themselves from the evils of discrimination and prejudice as long as they fail to extend to women complete and unqualified equality in law and in practice.

— Women's Charter, 1954

Incidentally, an amusing facet was that all the catering and serving of refreshments at the conference was done by male volunteers. The credit for this role reversal went to Hilda Bernstein who had suggested it.

Although FEDSAW has never itself been banned, most of its leaders were at one time and another banned and served with severe restriction orders. In addition many of its leading members have been forced into exile. Fortunately there have been many other women's committees springing into action so that the struggle was able to continue. The successful consumer and rent boycotts are the results of work behind the scenes by many trade unionists and housewives.

At the conference, Ida Mtwana said that women's place is not in the kitchen but side by side with men on the road to freedom.

Since the formation of the ANC Women's League and FEDSAW, women have come a long way. They are with the men in the forefront of the struggle as never before. Many women cadres and freedom fighters are sacrificing their lives to free all our women of the triple oppression that Black women in South Africa face of race, class and gender. In the new democratic South Africa women's aspirations will be fulfilled and they will stand proudly on an equal footing with their menfolk. The role of FEDSAW in this progress is inestimable.



# ANC INTERNATIONAL

## Nicaraguan Award For Mandela

The highest honour Nicaragua can offer is the Augusto Cesar Sandino Award. In the 1930s Sandino founded and led a Nicaraguan revolutionary movement that fought against United States imperialism, and the Sandinista movement, which led the Nicaraguan revolution to its successful conclusion in 1979, was named after him.

On February 21st this year, the 55th anniversary of Sandino's death, the Augusto Cesar Sandino Award was bestowed on

Nelson Mandela. The presentation was made in Managua by Danielo Ortega, President of Nicaragua, and the award was received on behalf of Comrade Mandela by Comrade Ruth Mompoti of the National Executive Committee of the ANC.

Comrade Mompoti was inspired by her visit to this small, brave, embattled country, which has fought hard first to achieve its revolution and then to preserve it. She was impressed by the political and revolutionary consciousness of the people, and says that speaking to women veterans of the Nicaraguan revolution is one of the greatest experiences she has known.



Fastening demonstrators and their supporters in London

## UK Solidarity With Hunger Strikers

At the initiative of the London office of the ANC, demonstrations took place in February in solidarity with South African detainees on hunger strike. Comrades Thozamile Botha, Shanthie Naidoo, Siphon Pityana and Pula Napa, all ex-detainees and ANC members, fasted for 24 hours on the pavement outside the apartheid embassy in Trafalgar Square on February 14th-15th. A supporter, Ambika Bharati, fasted with them, and they were joined during this time by other members and supporters.

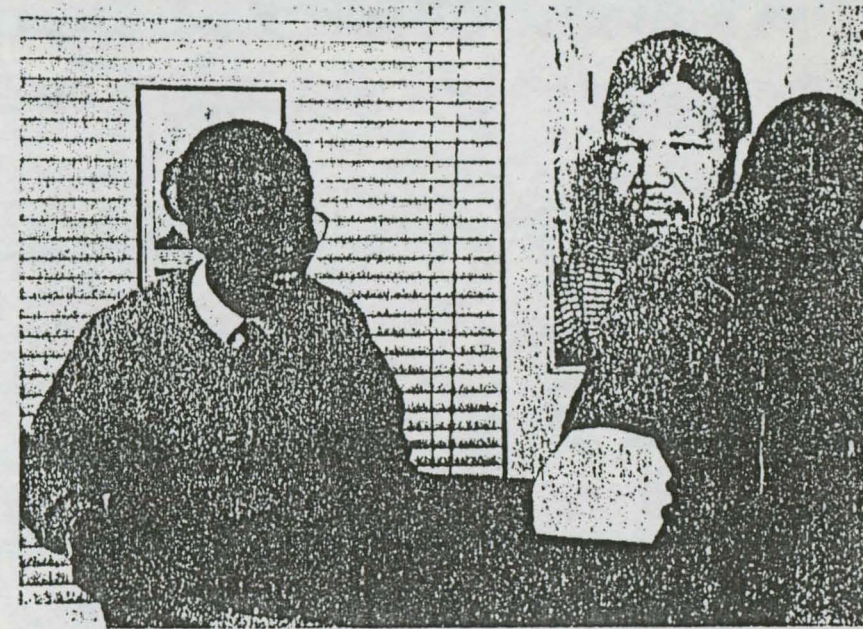
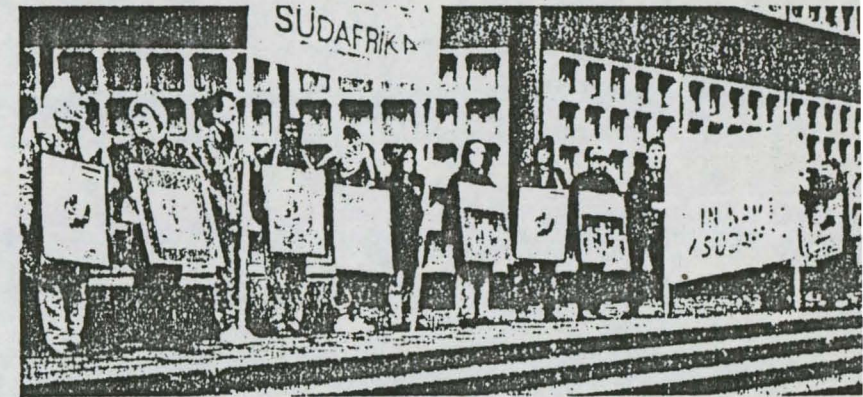
On the 21st, the detainees were remembered at a service at St Martin's Church near the embassy, followed by an hour-long vigil.

The next night, the ANC held a rally where members and supporters demanded an end to detention in South Africa. Comrade Mendi Msimang, ANC Chief Representative in the United Kingdom and Ireland, addressed the gathering, and the Anti-Apartheid Movement sent a fraternal speaker. Poems were read by two celebrated writers: Harold Pinter, the British playwright, and the South African writer, Comrade Wally Serote of the ANC.

## Demonstrators Fast In West Berlin

Encouraged by the London example, the Anti-Apartheid Bewegung in West Berlin organised a solidarity fast on February

19th-20th. It also organised a demonstration outside the International Tourism followed by a rally, which was addressed by the chairman of the Trade, Banks and Insurance Union, South African Movement leader, the Maulana Farid Esack, andrade Thuthukile Radebe of the ANC.



British Labour MP Bernie Grant draws the prizes in the ANC raffle in London, which raised £28 000. With him is Comrade Billy Masethla, ANC Deputy Chief Representative. The first prize, a holiday in Cuba, was won by a couple aged 78 and 74.



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## ANC Pioneers Form International Bonds

The Pioneer movement in the ANC was first formed in 1958 by Comrade Walter Sisulu (then Secretary-General of the ANC) and the late Comrade Duma Nokwe, and it was organised under the Women's Section of the ANC. Then the organisation lapsed, because of other political organisation taking place in the country at the time, especially the formation of Umkhonto We Sizwe. At the Youth Conference of the ANC at SOMAFCO in 1987, it was decided to revive the Pioneer movement as part of the Youth Section.

The large and active wing of the Pioneers at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College at Mazimbu in Tanzania is named the Masupetsela A Walter Sisulu, after the ANC leader, who has now been in prison for 25 years.

Comrade Jackie Selepe, member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and Secretary of the Youth Section, gave an interview to Page Makgatho about the philosophy behind the Pioneer organisation and its activities:

*"Its activities are within those of SOMAFCO, which are aimed at producing a new cadre, a liberator and a true representative of the South African people. This is done mainly by teaching them South African geography, the social structure of South Africa, the tactics of the struggle, why it is vital to fight for their land, why their task is to learn the traditions and culture of their people, and to be able to note where their talents lie. This is the reason why the mot-*

*to of the Pioneer organisation is: "Ever ready to learn and to defend the cause of the South African people."*

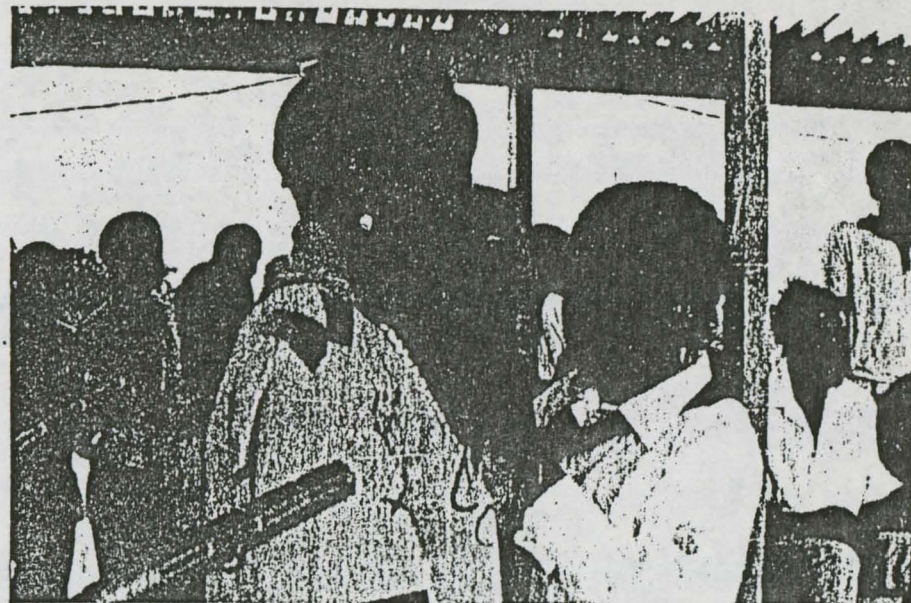
Meeting comrades from other parts of the world, exchanging views and ideas with them, promotes peace and friendship between nations and is an essential part of the political education of Pioneers. It is important to give the majority of our Pioneers a chance of having this kind of experience, for most of them have had no opportunity to attend camps in other countries, though they have heard report-backs.

Therefore, in August 1988, while the regime in South Africa was arresting, torturing and killing children, the ANC organised an international Pioneer camp at SOMAFCO. The Masupetsela A Walter Sisulu invited representatives of Pioneer organisations in various other countries.

There were about 700 delegates at the camp, including guests, and they were organised into three groups: nine years old, ten to 13 and 14 to 16. Students from SOMAFCO acted as guides for the groups, and their duties included waking the pioneers on time for gymnastics, shower and breakfast. Other activities at the camp included sport, indoor games, a quiz, a cultural performance, excursions and camping out in the nearby mountains.

The Pioneers decided to send a special message to Comrade Walter Sisulu in prison.

Comrade Selepe told Comrade Makgatho that she expected the Walter Sisulu Pioneers to have gained experience that would stand them in good stead when they organise their next camp.



*A Pioneer ties a Pioneer scarf round the neck of Comrade Gertrude Shope of the Women's Section, at the opening of the Pioneer camp at Mazimbu*



*Above and left: Pioneers of the Masupetsela A Walter Sisulu, with their banners*



# DISCUSSION ARTICLE REVOLUTION OR NEGOTIATIONS?

By Neil Zumana

The writer of this article takes up some points made by Comrade Alex Mashinini in his article, *People's War and Negotiations*, which appeared in *Sechaba* of August 1988.

Comrade Alex Mashinini raises questions which demand that every one of us in the liberation alliance be politically vigilant. Introducing his article, he writes:

*"It appears that these developments have obliged the liberation movement to adjust certain of its tactics and forms of struggle to adapt to this increasingly changing political terrain. The conditions of struggle are changing continuously, and they are fluid and difficult to observe.*

*A relatively new concept, that of a negotiated settlement of the South African conflict, has already won itself a prominent position in the political vocabulary of the country." (p.25)*

Our movement is accused of having to react to events, and apparently is finding difficulty in doing so as a result of the fluidity.

In the next paragraph, Comrade Alex speaks of a thesis put forward of a stalemate in the South African conflict, providing favourable material conditions for the warring parties to leave all hostilities and begin a process of negotiations. It is suggested that such concepts as armed struggle, peo-

ple's war and so on, are becoming increasingly irrelevant and will have to be abandoned. Maybe it would have been advisable for Comrade Alex to give the source of this thesis, so we would have no reason to be suspicious. He goes on:

*"Our strategic objective of the transfer of political power from the racist White minority regime into the hands of the democratic majority ... The transfer of political power appears as, and actually is, the final act, the crowning event, in the liberation struggle." (pp.25-26)*

On p.27 is one of the most interesting statements in the whole article:

*"Since we are confronted with conditions under which absolute victory is impossible, conditions in which both sides must necessarily make compromises on certain positions, we can conclude that the outcome of any negotiation that can be successfully conducted must end up in partial victories for warring parties. Both sides would have failed to defeat each other absolutely, and would have to be content with partial victories."*

I'm not sure who "we" are, but Comrade Alex can't be referring to us, the liberation alliance, nor the fighting people of our embattled fatherland. It would be a pity if they had to settle for partial victories. History would never forgive our liberation movement if it adopted such a defeatist position, when our enemy is in such crisis, and is holding power only by strained threads.

Perhaps political short-sightedness makes some of us believe that the state of emergency, detention, deaths in detention, torture, kidnappings, the countless crimes perpetrated against our people, make the enemy invincible.

## Concept of 'Partial Victory'

One question Comrade Alex raises is that of "partial victories," which both the oppressed and the oppressor would have to settle for, and the:

*"ability of politicians and political movements and parties to transform these victories into absolute victories, without resuming armed hostilities." (p.27)*

Concretely, what is meant by "partial victories"? I can't even guess. It is worth noting that Comrade Alex writes:

*"... a negotiated settlement of the conflict will inevitably lead to a partial victory, and so impose some limitations on our programme of social emancipation. In practical terms, this means that the concept of partial victory implies the de jure abolition of apartheid, and says less about its de facto abolition." (p.27)*

What is surprising is the conclusion:

*"... an infrastructure of democratic transformation is created now, within the womb of the moribund apartheid system and within the process of the struggle, to destroy it." (p.28)*

The infrastructure talked about — is it part of the partial victories that we are to settle for? — and how has it now become possible to destroy the "moribund apartheid system," when we are "confronted with conditions under which absolute victory is impossible"? Is it through politicians trans-

forming these into absolute victories? — by how is that possible when it is stated quite categorically that "both sides would have failed to defeat each other absolutely and would have to be content with partial victories"? Are "we" not creating a "stalemate of partial victories"?

## Organs of People's Power

Another milestone is reached when discussing the role of the organs of people's power, Comrade Alex states:

*"They should be engaged as instruments to effect the destruction of moribund organs of domination. This means, above all, that they should be seen, and made to function as, political organs ... As a power base of our strategy of a people's war, they should be prepared and shaped to accommodate any eventuality in the course of our liberation struggle." (p.28)*

In *Sechaba* of May 1987, in an article, *Dual Power and the Creation of People's Committees*, a conceptual lecture to Comrade Mzala on the concepts of communes and committees, Comrade Alex wrote:

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

The dramatic shift cannot escape our eyes from "organs of insurrection" to "organs of accommodating any eventuality."

I'm not sure what is meant by the following statement:

*"The intensification and escalation of the people's war made it impossible for the*



Pretoria regime to destroy the liberation movement, and (should such conditions arise) would provide a carpet on which to walk, undefeatable, to the negotiating table."

It's not the only statement I'm not sure about, but my interest in it lies in:

"... we have introduced a new element, that of the negotiated settlement, and if we share the belief that transition in South Africa will have to come through negotiations, then it is imperative to address and review the strategy of a people's war."

Comrade Alex, when you say "we," could you kindly explain to whom you are referring, because the ANC statement on negotiations, of October 9th 1987, says:

"We are convinced that the Botha regime has neither the desire nor the intention to engage in any meaningful negotiations; on the contrary, everything that this regime does is directed at the destruction of the national liberation movement..."

Who is then prepared to negotiate with whom? The arrogance, the intransigence, demonstrated by the fascist clique in Pretoria is evidence that Botha has no intention whatever of negotiating. It is precisely for that reason that repression has reached such heights, and this should not be seen as the strength of the enemy, but as admission by the regime that apartheid is moribund, decaying. In the NEC message of January 8th 1987, the question is dealt with:

"... is it possible today and in the future to enter into negotiations with self-confessed enemies of democracy, with the aim of creating a democratic South Africa?"

Comrade Alex says:

"We have argued that the introduction of the concept of a negotiated settlement does not affect our strategic objective of the transfer of political power into the hands of the majority, but simply identifies a possibility of how our liberation struggle is likely to arrive at a successful conclusion."

(Who is "we"? By whom is the concept introduced?)

## Our Strategic Objective

Unfortunately, this does affect our strategic objective — that is, the strategic objective of the national liberation movement — of an armed seizure of power, especially since, in the words of the statement quoted above, it has been introduced:

"... to defuse the struggle inside our country by holding out false hopes of a just political settlement which the Pretoria regime has every intention to block. Secondly, this regime hopes to defeat the continuing campaign for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions by sending out bogus signals that it is ready to talk seriously to the genuine representatives of our people."

Irritatingly, Alex continues:

"If we share the belief that transition in South Africa will have to come through negotiations, surely there is no reason to panic and think that the content of our strategy of a people's war is fundamentally subject to questions." (p.29)

If comrades express individual opinions and views, they shouldn't use "we." The term "we" is usually connected with the people, in this case, our fighting people.

## Political Responsibility

My concern in this extract is the word, "will." It has serious implications. It gives enough reason for me to panic and think that the content of our strategy of a people's war is fundamentally subject to questions, especially in the light of these like these:

"It is argued that should the reality of a stalemate be ignored by warring parties, hostilities will be prolonged and can lead only to a futile war of attrition entailing untold loss of life, and that this obvious political irresponsibility should be rejected and condemned on moral grounds." (p.25)

We would have reason to panic if we were

to continue with a people's war that would lead to our being "politically irresponsible," because that amounts to the liberation movement having to be rejected and condemned on moral grounds.

In short, the question of negotiations does affect our strategic objective, and perhaps it is for that reason that Comrade Alex no longer refers to our strategic objective as the armed seizure of power, and refers to the transfer of political power as "the final act, the crowning event." Maybe it is for the same reason that he sees:

■ Ambiguity in the concept of the armed seizure of power.

■ We are confronted with conditions under which victory is impossible. (History will tell.)

■ Partial victories for warring parties are the solution to the South African revolution.

■ We believe that transition in South Africa will have to come through negotiations.

■ We should exercise our minds on the art of transforming our partial victories into absolute victories.

■ Our organs of insurrection should be shaped to accommodate any eventuality.

■ We have introduced a new element, the concept of a negotiated settlement.

■ The imperative is to address and review the strategy of a people's war.

He raises many other questions, and maybe we should look into them with 'realism' in the light of the 'new political thinking,' but our realities have not changed yet. The fascist clique remains intransigent. Perhaps, when one looks at our situation, one should understand correctly the dialectic of new thinking and our struggle.

## Partial Victories Are Not Enough

The methods of repression used against our people, our people's organisations and the people's leaders, have had an effect on the state of organisation of the mass democratic movement. But our people have now learned to organise under semi-legal and illegal conditions, the mass democratic movement has not been crushed, and we

have no reason to surrender or settle for partial victories. Our people are striving to act in unity through organisation and to organise through united action, for people's power, and not for partial victories.

Our people's army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, is growing in quality, and our military operations reflect this fact. Our army is transforming its military operations into a generalised people's war for an armed seizure of power (what Comrade Alex considers a mere method) and not to walk undefeatable to the negotiating table.

The ranks of the enemy are in tatters. Whites are beginning to realise that apartheid has no future. Young White conscripts are now refusing to serve in the racist army for political reasons, and not as conscientious objectors any more.

In the address to the nation of January 8th 1987, Comrade President O R Tambo said:

"... we will have to wade through rivers of blood to reach our goal of liberty, justice and peace."

I hope this is not what Comrade Alex considers political irresponsibility. In the same statement, addressing himself to the youth, our President urges:

"You are right to be impatient for victory."

Here, the President does not even hint at partial victories. He speaks unhesitatingly about absolute victory — armed seizure of power, our strategic objective.

Comrade Alex concludes, interestingly:

"At any rate, throughout the whole history of armed conflicts, major and minor, the factor of a weak economy has always contributed largely to the defeat of the power controlling it." (p.29)

This is true for our enemy. Its economic reform policies — deregulation, privatisation, inflation, state spending — are a dismal failure. The economic crisis is growing, and the sanctions-busting campaign adds to the taxpayers' funds robbed by the enemy.

In the process of learning to work under conditions of repression, our people have made irreversible gains. Revolutionary vigilance, security consciousness, are some of the experiences accumulated — a fighting people learns through its own ex-



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perience. The enemy has not cowed our people but has instead matured them — the masses have risen to the challenge.

### Revolutionary Situation

The state of emergency, the detentions, torture, kidnappings, killings and so on, are signs that the enemy can cling to power only by the use of naked brute force; the enemy is admitting that it can no longer rule in the same old way and that our people refuse to be ruled in the same old way.

Of the 12.4 million Black South Africans who should be economically active, only about 6.9 are employed. This means, therefore, that 5.5 million are unemployed, and the number threatens to increase. Whites, too, are suffering, hence the soup kitchens. The suffering and want of the oppressed have grown more acute. Our people live in poverty, hunger and misery.

In the past year, the masses of our people have considerably increased their independent actions — the formation of gigantic conferences, such as SAYCO and the UDF Women's Congress, the holding of the NWC Conference, the great stay-aways. Our people have been engaged in campaigns such as the Living Wage Campaign, rent boycotts, consumer boycotts, strikes by COSATU affiliates. There was a massive rejection of the October 'carrot.'

These factors prove that a revolutionary situation exists in our country. It is clear, too, that they are not enough. Lenin wrote:

*"Revolution arises only out of a situation in which the abovementioned changes are accompanied by a subjective change, namely the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary mass action strong enough to break (or dislocate) the old government, which never, not even in a period of crisis, 'falls' if it is not toppled over."*

In our country today, politically active workers have demonstrated that they are prepared for armed seizure of power, and are prepared to lay down their lives for their cause. During strike actions, the workers have stood up against an armed enemy, and have engaged that enemy in battles, using

rudimentary weapons. Our task is to train them, arm them, and lead them into battle for the armed seizure of power.

### The Vanguard and the Masses

It is not enough for the revolutionary class to be prepared to die for the revolution; the broad masses should support it directly or take up a position of sympathetic neutrality. This element is ripe in our country today, as was shown in the stayaways of May and June 1988, when broad masses of our people stayed away from work, pledging solidarity with the working class.

The last factor is the presence of a militant revolutionary organisation with a scientifically grounded programme of revolutionary action, and the ability to guide the masses into action for a victorious revolution. The alliance led by the ANC is that living organism. Its evaluations of historical developments, in general and at specific stages, have proved correct. It is capable of monitoring and analysing developments in our country and world-wide so as to exploit any moment when both objective and subjective factors are ripe.

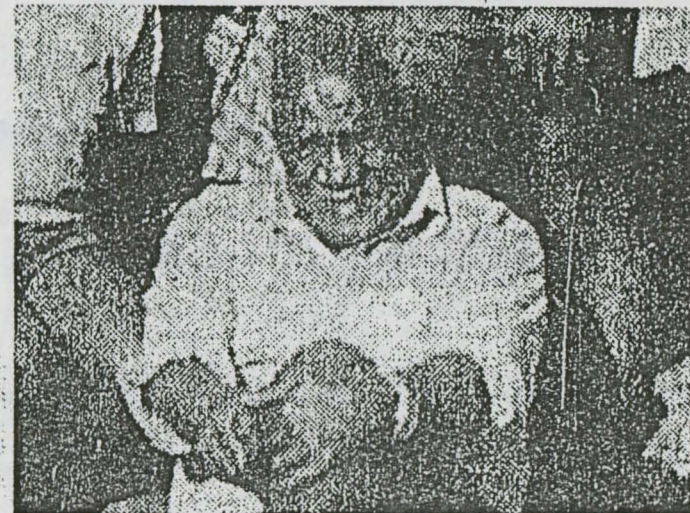
We are aware that a revolutionary situation is a product of internal developments in a given country, but external factors can have a decisive influence on the internal situation, though, alone, they cannot be enough. The situation in Southern Africa and in other parts of the world contributes to creating favourable conditions for a victorious revolution in our country. The demoralising defeat of the SADF at Cuito Cuanavale, the implementation of Resolution 435 in Namibia, have great significance for our struggle. History is on our side.

If this is so, is revolution impossible in our case? If it is not, why, then, settle for partial victories? All revolutions are about state power, and ours is no exception. In answering the question: Revolution or negotiations? — look analytically at the correlation of forces in our country and internationally.

I am aware that I have not done justice to some of the interesting questions raised by Comrade Alex — it would have meant writing a book. But the debate is still open. This is my humble contribution.

# OBITUARY

## HECTOR SIKHUMBUZO NKULA



Born on January 3rd 1910 in Hackney (the Africans call the place Hekeni) in the district of Queenstown, Northern Cape, Hector Sikhumbuzo Nkula grew up under the guidance of his grandparents, since his parents were working and living in Cape Town.

He had problems in attending school, which was over ten miles away, until he was 'adopted' by a relative, Tony Makiwane, who was also the headmaster of the school. He was with the Makiwanes until he passed Standard Five. Since there was no Standard Six in the rural schools, he had to go to school in Queenstown for a year, where he joined Father Shaw of the Anglican faith and had to go through the whole church ritual: joining the church choir, practising on Saturdays, blowing bellows during services on Sundays. There was no time for sport.

Just before he died, Comrade Nkula wrote a short autobiography — presumably the beginnings of a *magnum opus* which unfortunately could not see the light of day.

In it he remembers that during his stay in Queenstown the Bulhoek massacre took place, when 69 people were killed by the Smuts regime and their leader, Enoch Mgi-jima, was arrested, charged and sent to prison. This religious sect — the Israelites — had committed the crime of refusing to move from their ancestral lands to some place chosen by the Smuts government. Comrade Nkula says:

*"Though I was a boy of 13, I could understand what is going on; prayers in church offered by Father Shaw helped me to understand most of the affairs."*

After completing his Standard Six, he went to St Matthew's near Kingwilliamstown, where he could not stay long because of climatic conditions — he was asthmatic — and had to go to Healdtown Institute near Fort Beaufort. There he spent three years, completing his teacher training course before proceeding to Lovedale Institute where he did his higher teachers' course.



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