

are brought up to believe that they are inferior to men and must be passive and subordinate. They have little legal protection and constitute a large part of the unemployed. The Cosas/Azaso-sponsored Education Charter campaign has issued a preliminary set of demands that have so far been expressed — one of them is the elimination of sexism from South African education. The National Union of South African Students (Nusas) organised a conference on women in 1982 which examined women's participation in different areas of our struggle.

● Popular recognition of the importance of the women's struggle is reflected in the regular occurrence over the past few years of well-attended National Women's Day meetings in all parts of our country.

Thus there is an increasing focus on women's role in our struggle in South Africa. Stickers declaring 'Makhosikazi vukani!/Tsongang Basadi!' give concrete expression to the spirit of the Year of the Women. Albertina Sisulu, outstanding leader of our people and veteran of the women's struggle, observed in 1981: 'In the fifties women's participation was higher than their level of consciousness whereas today people are more aware but participation has declined.' She added that awareness among our rural women must increase and women's organisations must mobilise there.

These developments on the women's front reflect a growing awareness among our people of the importance of increasing the scale of mobilisation of women as part of our overall liberation struggle. Clearly a giant task awaits us.

What is to be done

Within our movement, the Women's Section of the ANC is tackling this giant task with the support of the entire movement. Women in every corner of our country, no matter how remote or isolated, must be recruited into the underground of our movement. Our broad strategy for the mobilisation of women must ensure that every group of women is reached — in the bantustans, on the white-owned farms, in squatter camps, townships, factories, in schools and colleges, and in the churches. Propaganda in the form of leaflets, radio broadcasts, articles in *Mayibuye*, *Sechaba*, *The African Communist* and *Dawn* must be stepped up, with the ANC Women's Section organ, the *Voice of Women*, as ever having a leading role to play.

Women should be mobilised by making them realise that our national democratic revolution will free them not only from national oppression and class exploitation, but also from oppression as women. This will give them an extra motivation for joining the struggle. Women should be made aware that

they are expected to contribute at every level in every trench of our struggle — in the military as well as the mass political struggle — as leaders and activists and not as mere supporters and sympathisers. The Women's Section must, as Comrade Shope said, treat the political development of women as a priority. Politically conscious women cadres working among the masses of our women, like yeast in bread, can activate them in the manner demanded in this Year of the Women. Leadership among women must be developed by the political work of our movement.

Our movement also has the task of educating men about the importance of women's emancipation and how this is a vital part of our freedom struggle. Everyone should understand that when we speak of the emancipation of women, we are not speaking of a struggle of women against men, but of the struggle of men and women against injustice and inequality. Ensuring that women play an equal part in our liberation struggle strengthens us; it means that women can act more effectively in unity with men to achieve a speedier victory. All of us in the movement must strive in every way possible to support the Women's Section of the ANC in its vital work and to strengthen and build it. Throughout the movement we should discuss the significance of this Year of the Women, study the history of our women's struggle, study the historic Women's Charter and collectively contribute to the political programme of mass mobilisation of our women.

LET US MAKE THIS YEAR OF THE WOMEN THE LAUNCHING PAD FOR EVER-INCREASING WOMEN'S RESISTANCE!

VUKANI MAKHOSIKAZI!

TSOGANG BASADI!

WOMEN ARISE AND FIGHT FOR PEOPLE'S POWER!

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AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENT

By Du Bois

SUDAN: End the one-man dictatorship!

There was a moment in the history of post-colonial Sudan when the country was poised on the brink of a brighter future for all its peoples, southerners and northerners, Moslems and Christians. That was when the armed forces, led by Gaafar Mohamed Nimeiri, seized power in May, 1969. There was hope that the tide of anti-popular measures and the steady drift toward neo-colonial dependence adopted by successive regimes since independence in 1956 would be reversed. There was hope too that the divisive civil war would be ended and a just and lasting basis would be found to settle the national question which divided north and south of the country on what appeared to be regional, ethnic and religious grounds.

There was both a social and political base which fed this hope — the wide range of social and class forces and their organisations which had fought the previous anti-popular, feudal and neo-colonial regimes. The Communist Party of Sudan was a leading force in this struggle, as were the democratic trade unions, workers, youth and women's organisations. The Party's policy was based on the principle of "critical support" for the regime of the military — to support the soldiers in measures aimed in favour of the people and the country, to fight against any moves in the contrary direction. The Party correctly saw that both tendencies existed within the armed forces and sought to strengthen the democratic, progressive and revolutionary tendency.

In a very short space of time the democratic movement of Sudan took giant steps in the process of reconstructing the country. A number of the Party's

leading members gained places in the Council of Ministers set up in parallel with the Revolutionary Council of the Armed Forces to shape policy. Political and economic measures were adopted to wrench Sudan from the crisis of neo-colonial dependence. Banks and other major financial institutions were nationalised; import and export trade was brought under state control; companies vital to the country's strategic economic development were nationalised and state control was introduced over strategic economic resources.

The war in the south was brought to an end and a Ministry of Southern Affairs was created headed by Joseph Garang, a member of the Party's Central Committee, to work out a policy of regional autonomy — "the building of a broad socialist-oriented democratic movement in the South, forming part of the revolutionary structure in the North and capable of assuming the reins of power in that region and rebuffing imperialist penetration and infiltration". This was the basis of the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement which granted regional autonomy to southern Sudan.

Internationally, Sudan moved closer to the Non-Aligned Movement, the socialist countries and the OAU. This was the Sudan which hosted the first international conference in solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau — the historic Khartoum Conference of 1969. Yet even as this momentous process was in progress counter-revolution and reaction were plotting ceaselessly with none other than Nimeiri as their leading figure. The free development of popular democracy and organisations was constantly being hampered. Nimeiri wanted one great political movement — the Sudanese Socialist Union — to be the only political organisation. The Party refused to disband and abandon its vanguard role and Nimeiri began accusing the party of plotting his overthrow. The May revolution was fast reaching an impasse. Something had to give.

In the event, it was the revolutionary wing of the armed forces which struck to remove the drift toward a one-man dictatorship. In July, 1971 they removed Nimeiri from power. But the emergent revolutionary power had no time to consolidate its positions. Three days later, Nimeiri was back in power aided by sections of the army and foreign intrigue. The democratic movement was decimated in a bloody reprisal of enormous proportions. All political opposition was banned. Worse still, scores of communists and progressives were brutally murdered. Among these were Joseph Garang, Abdul Khalik Mahgoub, the Party's General Secretary, and Shafieh Ahmed Sheik, the Secretary-General of the Sudanese Workers' Union.

This was the beginning of Nimeiri's one-man dictatorship over Sudan. The years since then have seen a decisive corrosion of the gains of that brief early period.

Today, the problems and crisis which the democratic movement of May, 1969 attempted to solve, have become more entrenched. Private enterprise, foreign investment and neo-colonial dependence have plunged the Sudan deeper into an economic quagmire. Whilst a handful of foreign and local capitalists have reaped great profits and power from this process, the mass of Sudanese workers and peasants have been driven deeper into want and poverty. Successive years of trade deficits (approximately 350 million dollars in 1982) have meant greater reliance on the international finance institutions of imperialist control such as the IMF which has promised the Nimeiri regime another standby loan of 237 million dollars to bail it out of its present crisis. IMF loans are not given to uplift the economic conditions of the mass of the working people. On the contrary they always result in cuts in the real earnings of the workers and poor peasants, loss of jobs and greater reliance on foreign capital and finance. Economic mismanagement and corruption have also plunged the agricultural sector, which accounts for 90% of foreign earnings and 40% of the country's gross domestic product, into a serious crisis. Cotton production has plummeted from 1.2 million bales in 1976 to a meagre 600,000 in 1978, and the country is heavily dependent on imports of fertilisers and spare parts for farming equipment. This has meant more borrowing and Sudan's national debt today is estimated to be in the region of 7.8 billion dollars. The brunt of this debt burden will be borne by the workers and peasants.

Genuine non-aligned principles have also disappeared. The Nimeiri regime is tied hand and foot to the global strategies of US imperial interests, especially as they relate to Africa. At the behest of the United States the Nimeiri regime armed and trained the counter-revolution led by Hissein Habre against the legitimate government of Chad — the GUNT. The Sudan is playing a key role, at the instance of US imperialism, to create a strategic military alliance in the Horn of Africa with Somalia, Kenya and Djibouti. Nimeiri and present-day Egypt are numbered amongst the reactionaries in the struggle against Israel and imperialism in the Arab world.

For services rendered, Nimeiri receives large chunks of US handouts. Last year this amounted to 200 million dollars in "aid" — 43 million of which was earmarked for military purposes. For 1985 the US Administration has announced an "aid" package of 271 million dollars for the Sudan — 25% of this will be for direct military expenditure.

North-South Division

What has also been jettisoned is the process of North-South integration intended to enable the southern movement to form "part of the revolutionary structure" in the north and capable of assuming the reins of power in that region". Regional autonomy for the South has been more of a formality than a reality. Real power is still vested in the hands of the Nimeiri dictatorship. The main problems of political powerlessness and economic underdevelopment still persist.

Over the last year or so there has been a resurgence of the guerrilla struggle in the Southern region ignited by a number of unpopular measures introduced by Nimeiri. Firstly, the Southern Sudan government was arbitrarily abolished and the region carved up into three provinces. This effectively was an abandonment of the Addis Agreement and an attempt to divide the southern region so as to control it more effectively from Khartoum. Secondly, the Nimeiri administration changed the country's constitution without consulting the people, least of all the Southerners, to transform the Sudan into an Islamic state. Henceforth the tenets of Islamic Sharia will be the basis of rule in the Sudan. For the peoples of the South, the vast majority of whom are Christians and non-Muslims, this move has been seen as an attempt to impose cultural colonialism on them. And this further fanned the flames of resistance.

The third factor is the way in which the regime has handled the oil discovery. Although the deposits have been discovered in the south, no consultation or discussion of the prospects of oil revenue distribution has taken place. These are estimated at around 200 million dollars a year initially and could fuel to a large measure the country's economic development. Politically, economically and culturally the southern peoples have felt that the regime has not only neglected them, but has indeed attempted to impose a form of colonialism against which the original Anyanya guerrilla movement fought successive Sudanese regimes since independence.

An estimated 2,000-3,000 trained army personnel have already deserted, many of them high-ranking officers, to the ranks of the guerrilla movements. There have been mutinies in the southern barracks, attacks on oil exploration and other foreign workers engaged in prospecting and development and a growing tide of military activity. Two clear movements have appeared among the guerrillas: the Anyanya II and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The former's policy of resistance appears to have as its objective secession from the North and the creation of an independent national state. The SPLA, led by Colonel John Garang, have rejected the

secessionist aims of Anyanya and view the struggle against the dictatorship as a national struggle of all Sudanese, Northerners and Southerners, Muslims and others. To what degree the armed revolt will spread, or take one line or the other, is difficult to judge at the moment. If the guerrilla movement in the south can fuse with the rising opposition to the Nimeiri dictatorship in the north, then it is clear that the days of the one-man dictatorship are numbered.

MOROCCO: Bread and Peace

In January this year the people of Morocco took to the streets in their thousands in defiance of the king, his army and the IMF. In what came to be known as the "bread riots", scores of the poor were killed by the army in major cities of the country. The roots of the present confrontation can be traced directly to the economic strains imposed on the people by the IMF and the unpopular war against the Polisario movement in western Sahara.

In August last year King Hassan's regime negotiated another of many loans from the IMF. The usual conditions were attached to the granting of the loan — austerity, which simply means a drop in the living standards of the workers and the poor and cuts in their real earnings and social services. The net result was that the price of basic foodstuffs sky-rocketed: sugar went up by 18%, domestic oil by 30%, butter by 67%, flour by 35% with no prospects of greater earnings to offset these price rises. The consequence was the "bread riots" which shook the regime to the point where the king had to order his administration to drop all plans for price rises. But not before scores of civilians had been killed and many more arrested on charges of being subversive communist and zionist agents.

The Communist Party of Morocco, which last year celebrated its fortieth anniversary, refuted the charge that the Party had incited the confrontation. It pointed out that the many communist cadres who had joined the people did so because of the severe economic conditions imposed on the masses as a result of the reactionary policies of the Hassan regime.

This was not the first time that popular discontent had spilled out into the streets. There were serious confrontations in the form of strikes and demonstrations in 1965 and again in 1981. The root cause has been the same.

Unemployment, even from official sources, has been chronic. More than 40% of the population is estimated to be living below the poverty line. In the last year alone the cost of living has risen by some 15% and food production has deteriorated to the point where Morocco has to rely on food imports. At the same time the price of phosphates, the source of the country's main foreign earnings, has fallen by some 30% over the last two years. As a consequence the Moroccan regime has resorted to more borrowing, primarily from the IMF and other international capitalist organs. Today, Morocco is one of the most heavily indebted countries in the world with some 11 billion dollars of unpaid debts. Like all countries based on the unequal distribution of wealth, it is the poor who pay the price of economic dependence.

What has added fuel to the fire of discontent has been the war against the Polisario. The war budget now consumes some 40% of the budget and is estimated to be costing the country over a million dollars a day. The war is escalating in intensity with serious repercussions for the peoples of Morocco, the western Sahara and the OAU.

It will be remembered that it was the issue of recognition of the Polisario Front which was used by Morocco, instigated and encouraged by American imperialism, in an attempt to wreck the Tripoli Summit of the OAU.

The Polisario Front has now been engaged in a war of national liberation and for the right to self-determination ever since Spain, the former colonial power, made a secret agreement with Morocco and Mauritania to withdraw from the territory and allow these two countries to carve up the territory between them, irrespective of the wishes of the people. In February, 1976 the Polisario Front proclaimed their independence as the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and has since fought for recognition through diplomatic and armed struggle. In 1978 Mauritania was forced to abandon its claims over the territory. But Morocco has persisted in its annexationist policy. In 1982 the majority of OAU countries recognised the independent Republic of Western Sahara, but the Moroccan regime has persistently violated the demands of the OAU for a ceasefire, direct negotiations with the representatives of the SADR and a national referendum. Instead, it has attempted to impose its own internal solution over the region through a referendum which would exclude participation by the Polisario Front.

Recently, in August, 1983, opposition to the Moroccan king's designs was stiffened by three OAU states — Algeria, Mali and Mauritania, who issued a joint statement that no referendum would be acceptable unless there was a ceasefire and direct talks between Morocco and the Polisario. Senegal and Guinea have also come out in support of this OAU position.

There can be no legitimate reason for any OAU member state to resist this demand — now voiced by the majority of the countries in Africa. Morocco, and its allies need to be resolutely rebuffed. The representatives of the SADR must take their legitimate place among the independent nations of Africa at the next OAU Summit.

PANA: Information Decolonisation

Ten years after an OAU Summit agreed on the necessity of establishing an all-African news agency, the Pan-African News Agency (PANA) has finally come on-stream. The real impetus toward concretising the establishment and work of PANA was given by the conference of OAU Ministers of Information held in Addis Ababa in 1979. The main reason for the creation of the agency was to counter the overwhelming predominance of western controlled news and information being disseminated in the countries of Africa and to set up an alternate pool which would serve the needs of "the consolidation of the independence, unity and solidarity of Africa" and to provide more information about and assist in the struggle against racism, apartheid, colonialism, neo-colonialism and zionism. In this respect one of the beneficiaries of the agency's services and facilities will undoubtedly be the liberation movements in southern Africa — SWAPO and the ANC. The efforts of *Sechaba*, the Namibian liberation press and *The African Communist* as the authentic organs of policy, decisions and information about the liberation struggles in our countries will be greatly enhanced and speeded up by the rapid dissemination of information by PANA.

The headquarters of the Agency is in Dakar, Senegal with four regional centres — Libya (north), Nigeria (West), Sudan (East) and Zambia (South). The agency will transmit in three languages — English, Arabic and French. Each country will transmit information to one of the four regional centres from where it will be relayed to Dakar which will transmit it across the continent.

There can be no doubt that this step by Africa is one of the most important and in line with the creation of the OAU and the Economic Commission for Africa. Our sources of information about each country on the continent have for too long been the major western news agencies and journals printed in

Europe whose sole purpose has been the provision of news and information supporting a capitalist world view and primarily for profits. This is not to deny that the agency will face a number of problems of a political nature. After all, nothing will prevent oppressive regimes from using the agency to supply or suppress information not totally consonant with the realities of their countries. This, like the problem of the development of real independence — political and economic — in each country has to be tackled by the peoples themselves. What is of overriding importance is that the establishment of the agency does represent a giant step forward in the struggle for information decolonisation in Africa.

It is a struggle which has gained world-wide prominence in the last few years, as the developing countries have come to accept that any development strategy has of necessity to include a national information and communications element without which the ideas, values, systems and perceptions created by outside agencies will become the dominant ones. And this flow of directional information has for a long time been one-way — from the centres of imperialism, which for many years held sway over most of the under-developed countries through direct colonial rule, and which today are attempting to perpetuate this domination through neo-colonial methods.

New Information Order

The significance placed on this struggle is manifested by recent conferences, seminars and events organised by the United Nations, the non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The essence of this struggle and process is encapsulated in the UNESCO sponsored International Programme for the Development of Communications, a programme which has come to be known as the New International Order. This is seen by many of the under-developed and socialist countries as paralleling the efforts to establish the New Economic Order to counter the power of the capitalist countries in the field of economic relations.

At the Media Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement held in New Delhi in December, 1983 the issue of who controls the flow of information, the character and purpose of the information and the relationship between information policy and national economic, ideological and cultural development as it relates to each country came under sharp scrutiny. The Non-Aligned Movement has an important historical role in this sphere. At

its Fourth Summit Conference in Algiers in 1973 it proclaimed the urgent necessity for the creation of the New Information Order. It initiated the struggle for information decolonisation. The Delhi Conference established, among other things, the inseparable link between the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism and the fight for a new balance in world information. Information workers — journalists, television reporters and presenters, writers and other media workers have the responsibility and duty to correct the disjointed, often false and distorted images and information emanating from the western controlled media and agencies. The Transnational Corporations, active in the field of telecommunications and other media of information, were correctly seen as instruments of international finance-capital and neo-colonialism.

The key to understanding why the United States Administration of Reagan has threatened to pull out of UNESCO lies in the unremitting efforts of this organisation to give substance to the efforts of the majority of the countries of the world for a New Information Order. Against this, the Reagan Administration has promoted the idea that this process will hinder the "free flow of information".

Who are they kidding? It is precisely through the smokescreen of the so-called "free flow of information" that the minds of millions of people throughout the world are being shaped to respect US imperial interests, the sanctity of private property, vitriolic anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism and the so-called superiority of the free enterprise system of capitalism. This apart, millions of people are being subjected through these western controlled information media about the superiority of western culture and values.

It is precisely because the need for a change has come to be recognised with urgent force that the governments and peoples of the overwhelming majority, have come out against cultural and information imperialism. Africa has made a great beginning in this struggle. The obstacles and dangers on this road are many and cannot be minimised, least of all the fierce resistance by imperialism and the 'INC's who profit by their monopoly of the information technology. But the time for a start was urgent and PANA is seen as the beginning of the process of media decolonisation, as part of the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism on our continent.

100 Years of Imperialism

THE BERLIN CONFERENCE AND THE CARVE-UP OF AFRICA

By Ruth Nhere

This year the world is marking the centenary of the Berlin conference at which the imperialist countries divided up the continent of Africa and shared out the loot amongst themselves. This conference, formally summoned by Portugal but actually initiated by Germany and France, lasted from November 15, 1884, until February 26, 1885. Fourteen European countries and the United States took part in the proceedings. The 'General Act' produced by the conference contained clauses which aimed to lay down the rules governing Europe's 'scramble for Africa'. What created the need for such an accord?

It was the maverick King Leopold of Belgium who was posing the most serious obstacle to the consolidation of territories already held by the major European powers. With the Congo basin under his control, any plan by others to create a unified African Empire was bound to fail. As sovereign master of this huge territory, which separated the west from the east coast of the continent and the southern from the northern regions, Leopold was in a position to prevent contact between regions under the control of any of the other 'great powers'. True, it was possible for any of the other great powers to defeat Leopold with ease, but such a conflict was not in the interests of any of the imperialists at that stage.

The Berlin Conference found a way round this problem. While recognising Leopold's nominal sovereignty over the area, the conference decided that within the Congo Basin "the trade of all nations shall enjoy complete freedom".

The Congo was the priority item on the Berlin Conference agenda, but two more decisions of the conference were incorporated in international law by the General Act: first, 'freedom of navigation' of the Niger and Congo rivers by the signatories was agreed; secondly — and equally important for imperialist expansion — the basis for regulating new occupations of African territory was agreed, laying down the criteria for judging what constituted 'effective occupation' and the mode of setting up a Protectorate by the conquering power.

By the time of the conference the greater part of Africa had already been apportioned between the European powers. Various parts of the West African coast had been occupied by Britain, France and Germany. Southern Africa and a considerable part of East Equatorial Africa were in the hands of Britain and Germany while France and Germany had also seized the coastal regions of West Equatorial Africa. In a number of regions though, most notably Uganda and the Boer Republics in South Africa, the domination of the 'Great Powers' had yet to be established.

Despite a high level of inter-imperialist rivalry, the major European powers were united in their wish to remove a major obstacle to their ability to create contacts between their various possessions. This was 'Leopold's Congo', in the heart of the continent. Breaking the Belgian King's sovereignty would also provide a source of raw materials and a profitable new market. This was essentially what the Berlin Conference was intended to achieve.

The significance of the conference did not, however, lie in its terms of reference. Rather it should be understood as one of the outcomes of a maturing process in the development of capitalist relations in Europe. It clearly pointed to the birth of a new epoch in world history, that of imperialism.

The Stage of Monopoly Capitalism

Lenin's study of imperialism provides the key to an understanding of the forces which gave rise to the convening of the Berlin Conference. He showed that the development of pre-monopoly capital, in which free competition was predominant, reached its limit in the 1860s and 1870s. He wrote:

"We now see that it is *precisely after that period* that the tremendous 'boom' in colonial conquests begins, and that the struggle for the territorial division of the world becomes extraordinarily sharp. It is beyond doubt, therefore, that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, is connected with the intensification of the struggle for the partitioning of the world".⁽¹⁾

This delineation of the transition of capitalism to its highest stage is amply demonstrated by the history of Europe's conquest of Africa. Prior to the 1870s, the 'Great Powers' tried to expand their bases on the coast of Africa. Conflicts between them involved individual capitalists or companies acting on their own or enjoying the support of their respective governments. With the shift to imperialism, battles were fought between monopolistic organisations of finance capital represented by the governments of the imperialist powers.

This qualitative change in the nature of Europe's attack on Africa has often been obscured by bourgeois analysts. Lenin's attack on their evaluation retains its validity today:

"To substitute the question of the form of the struggle and agreements (today peaceful, tomorrow warlike, the next day warlike again) for the question of the *substance* of the struggle and agreements between capitalist associations is to sink to the role of a sophist".⁽²⁾

Monopoly companies were formed in Europe with the task of subjecting whole regions of our continent to capitalist exploitation. The German Southwest African Company (1883), the French Compagnie Francaise de l'Afrique Equatoriale (1880), and the British South Africa Company (1889) were just some of the monopolies set up for this purpose. Their operations involved the importing and plundering of African products, the establishment of plantations, speculation in land and the exploitation of mineral resources.

In South Africa

In South Africa, the discovery of diamonds and gold in the 1880s was to establish the region as a vital base of imperialist interests.

"The transformation began in 1886 ... By the end of the second gold boom of 1895-6, £57m had been invested in the Rand alone ... South Africa for the first time became big business to the British and European merchant and investor..."⁽³⁾

British finance capital was thus confronted with a twofold task to secure imperialism's treasure house in Africa. This meant putting an end to the heroic resistance of the African people as well as tackling the Boer Republics. The Act of Union of 1910 signalled the completion of these objectives.

The wealth of the south was a spur to intensified inter-imperialist rivalry throughout the Continent. Aiming to consolidate their empires the 'Great Powers' indulged in the sending of expeditionary forces and involved themselves in all conceivable means of diplomatic warfare. At this stage their disputes took the form of wars of conquest against the independent African peoples.

The specific features of the socio-economic systems of the metropolitan powers gave different forms to their colonial administrations. Monopoly capitalism was to exert its influence on African societies in far-reaching ways. The process, consolidated by the establishment of colonies, involved the subordination of entire economies to the interests and requirements of foreign capital. The arbitrary division of Africa into colonies was carried out with total disregard for the national and cultural traditions of the indigenous inhabitants. Despite the determined resistance of the African people against the colonial oppressors, the social fabric of African life was twisted and distorted to service the needs of international finance capital.

The imperialist offensive could only be countered by organisation on the part of the oppressed nations. Two processes were to have a decisive impact in fulfilling this need. First, the outbreak of the imperialist war in 1914 and secondly the October Revolution of 1917.

Lenin characterised the war as a continuation of the politics of the 'Great Powers' in their bid to plunder and exploit the oppressed peoples.

"This is a war, firstly, to increase the enslavement of the colonies by means of a 'more equitable' distribution and subsequent more concerted exploitation of them;.."⁽⁴⁾

Although the battles were fought in Europe he underlined that "the imperialist war has drawn the dependent peoples into world history".⁽⁵⁾ It did indeed prove an important political school for the African peoples.

It was in the wake of the war, with the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the breaching of international imperialism, that Africa's peoples were to derive the most significant inspiration for the uplifting of their national struggles. The October Revolution concretely revealed the solution of problems which were similar to those suffered by the colonised nations. It shattered the myth of the invincibility of the capitalists and landowners. It proved that dependence on the imperialist states could be broken. Through its decrees on peace and the rights of the peoples of Russia, the young Soviet state turned the Marxist-Leninist principle of the equality of nations and the right of nations to self-determination into law and applied them in practice.

The First World War had aggravated the contradictions between oppressor and oppressed and the post-war redivision of Africa only served to deepen these. Under the 1919 Treaty of Versailles the mandate system was devised and another form of colonial rule emerged whose substance lay in the distribution of mandates for "spoliation and plunder".⁽⁶⁾ Germany's colonies were divided among the victorious powers. In the process Britain gave her mandate on South West Africa to the Union of South Africa. The Namibian people were thus placed under the control of the white racist minority who already dominated the adjacent territory and its peoples.

While the end of the war led to the increased penetration of the monopolies into almost every aspect of economic life, it also saw the birth of Africa's first working class vanguard parties. In the early 1920s, Communist Parties were formed in South Africa and Egypt and later in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Madagascar. This process was accompanied by the growth and spread of national liberation movements. Mass revolutionary actions took place in those countries with a higher degree of socio-economic development, particularly in northern and southern Africa.

The Communist International

These struggles were being waged under new conditions which made possible the beginnings of anti-imperialist unity. The Communist International founded in March 1919 was to provide the organisational framework for gigantic strides in both the theory and practice of national and social revolution. The Comintern's Theses on the National and Colonial Question, drafted by Lenin, broke new ground in this respect. The revisionist and social chauvinist ideology that had infected the social-democratic parties of Europe and had reached its peak during the First World War was emphatically condemned:

"The Communist International breaks once and for all with the traditions of the Second International, for whom in fact only white-skinned people existed. The task of the Communist International is to liberate the working people of the entire world. In its ranks the white, the yellow, and the black-skinned peoples — the working people of the entire world — are fraternally connected".⁽⁷⁾

The conception of the development of the world revolution against imperialism was set out on the basis of the close alliance of the Soviet Republic and the working class in the advanced countries with the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples. The opening of a new epoch, one of the transition of capitalism to socialism, had been immeasurably advanced by the world's first socialist revolution. Lenin with his customary

clarity grasped the substance of this new development in human history and explained the basis for the unity of anti-imperialist forces:

"... in the present world situation following the imperialist war, reciprocal relations between peoples and the world political system as a whole are determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world."⁽⁹⁾

The Comintern was to make a rich contribution towards the elaboration of the strategy and tactics of national liberation struggles. In the longer term its work and the concrete practice of the young Soviet state were to reveal a way of development for the future independent states of Africa — that of socialist orientation. Lenin argued forcefully that it was correct for the Comintern to advance the proposition:

"that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system, and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage."⁽¹⁰⁾

The national liberation movement was able to make significant advances during the inter-war years. The world economic crisis of 1929-1933 aggravated the contradictions between the colonies and the metropolitan countries. The efforts of foreign monopoly capital to solve the crisis led to heightened exploitation of the African peoples. The economic upheavals of this period sharpened inter-imperialist rivalry by intensifying the struggle for markets, sources of cheap raw materials and spheres of investment.

The Second World War accelerated the dual processes of deepening crisis in the imperialist camp and the strengthening of the anti-imperialist forces. Once again war proved a harsh political school. Roughly one million Africans were mobilised into the armed forces with a further 2 million serving the troops. The war laid bare the contradictions amongst the imperialist powers and at the same time, through the momentous struggle waged by the Soviet people, revealed the strength of socialism. Socialist revolutions in a number of European and Asian countries laid the basis for the establishment of a world socialist system. The irreversible disintegration of the colonial system had begun.

Despite the fine sentiments of the Atlantic Charter of 1941 the imperialist countries limited themselves to promises of constitutional reforms in the colonies after the war. Contrary to the UN Charter (1945) they retained their territories, this time through the trusteeship system. At the same time the flow of foreign investments into Africa continued to increase. The total value of African exports rose from \$1000m in 1938 to \$5440m in 1955.⁽¹¹⁾ This

period also saw the entry into Africa of the USA as imperialism's main military and political force. The US monopolies launched a massive invasion of the continent with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development acting as an important arm of American influence.

Advent of Neo-Colonialism

The intensified activities of the imperialist powers could not, however, prevent an upswing in the national liberation struggle and the birth of Africa's first independent states. But adapting to the new conditions the monopolies were able at this stage to safeguard their basic interests, this time finding a new form of imperialist domination — neo-colonialism.

Western ideologists have constructed a myriad of theories to define the new relationship between Europe and Africa in the post-independence period, hoping to show that with the demise of most of its colonial forms, imperialism had ceased to exist. But the actual experience of the young states under the yoke of neo-colonialism has shown that in this form, too, imperialism retains the export of capital as its most essential economic basis. And it is this basis that continues to account for the economic and financial dependence of African states on foreign industrial, raw material and banking monopolies. The export of capital also remains primarily responsible for ensuring the flow of super-profits to the imperialist powers.

The objective results of neo-colonialism — the maintenance of backwardness and dependence; the plundering of natural and mineral resources; the intensification of exploitation of the working people by the imperialist and local bourgeoisie — have reinforced the growing awareness throughout our continent that capitalism can offer no solution to our problems. Lenin pointed clearly to this inevitable process when he told the Third Congress of the Communist International that

"... in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism."⁽¹²⁾

This strengthened tendency within national liberation revolutions since the 1960s is reflected by those countries of Africa which have chosen the path of socialist orientation. But the advances won in the zone of national liberation throughout the world have goaded the imperialists into launching one of the most dangerous counter-offensives that humanity has thus far seen.

"In the contemporary period we face an imperialism whose inter-relationships have qualitatively changed since the years of 'Great Power' rivalry of the

Berlin Conference. As the Soviet scholar K.N. Brutents has shown, although inter-imperialist contradictions still exist, the whole of post-war experience has shown that

"Whenever truly important interests in the contest between socialism and capitalism are affected in the zone of national liberation, whenever the positions of imperialism as a whole are at issue, the imperialists are guided by the considerations of their global anti-socialist, anti-revolutionary strategy, and bend every effort to act in a common front"⁽¹²⁾

Offensive Against Africa

Utilising subtle neo-colonialist policies, imperialism attempts to continue its expansionist policies. On a world scale the United States staged armed interventions or threatened military force on 215 occasions between 1946 and 1975.⁽¹³⁾ In Africa, the imperialists are following the same course. Reagan's policy of 'constructive engagement' with the apartheid regime has created the conditions for intense military, economic and political pressure being brought to bear throughout the whole region of Southern Africa. Those countries which have chosen the way of socialist orientation have become the prime targets of imperialism's counter-offensive.

Imperialist policy is not confined to the Reagan brand. It is instructive to remember that the monopolies of the so-called 'Contact Group of 5', which has involved itself in the question of Namibian independence, account for 70% of investments in that country's mining industry. The Social Democrats, too, have not been inactive. A 'Socialist African International' held its founding congress in Tunis in 1980, and the ideology and strategy of Social Democracy are clearly reflected in that organisation's Charter which emphatically "rejects the concept of class struggle," which, it maintains, is "at variance with both the traditional structures of African society and its history".⁽¹⁴⁾

The current imperialist offensive aims to undercut the commitment of African countries and the OAU to the policy of non-alignment and to break all forms of cooperation with the socialist countries. The most dangerous development of this policy has been the involvement of some African countries, notably the Sudan, Egypt and Kenya, in US military policy, the establishment of military bases on their territory and the deployment of US arms there.

The aggressive nature of imperialism's foreign policy springs from the very nature of its economic and social relations and the interests of its ruling classes. As Lenin wrote:

"Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom".⁽¹⁵⁾

Despite the violence and force that imperialism displays in its counter-offensive (eg Grenada), the change in the world balance of forces in favour of national and social emancipation is irrevocable. In Africa, communists and revolutionary democrats are reaching higher levels of organisational and ideological unity in their common anti-imperialist struggle. The African revolutionaries are on the one hand the recipients of the all-round support of the socialist countries, but have in turn helped to consolidate the positions of world socialism and advance and influence the world revolutionary process as a whole.

The consequences of 100 years of imperialism for Africa remain painfully apparent in a continent where the extreme impoverishment of the rural and urban masses testifies to the ravages of imperialist plunder. In this centenary year of the Berlin Conference, however, we are also able to record the developing and central struggle waged by the African peoples for national and social emancipation and for a just and equitable world economic order. The past 100 years have witnessed the growth and consolidation of the mighty alliance of world-anti-imperialist forces. We can face the future with confidence. As the late Comrade Yusuf Dadoo, National Chairman of the SACP, emphasised:

"Success in the battles against imperialism are being scored today because of the growing might of existing socialism and the consistent peace policy pursued by the socialist community; the united action by the international working class and communist movement, and the new and major anti-imperialist drive by the liberated countries. Extensive interaction and joint efforts by all these forces are the guarantee that the major achievements in the revolutionary liberation struggle will be firmly consolidated in the new decade"⁽¹⁶⁾

Footnotes

1. V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol 1 p 691
2. V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works* Vol 1 p 689
3. Robinson & Gallagher, *Africa & the Victorians*, 1978, p 210
4. V.I. Lenin, *Socialism & War*, Progress 1975, p 14
5. V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol 31, p 232
6. V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol 30, p 159
7. R.P. Dutt, *The Internationale*, 1964 p 162/3
8. V I Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol 3 p 405/6
9. V I Lenin, *Collected Works* Vol 31, p 244
10. *A History of Africa 1918-1967*, Moscow 1968 p 16
11. V I Lenin, *Collected Works* Vol 32 p 482
12. K N Brutents, *National Liberation Revolutions Today*, Vol 1, Progress 1977, p 54
13. *World Marxist Review*, Vol 24, 1, 81 p 7
14. *World Marxist Review*, Vol 24, 9, 81 p 53
15. V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol 22, p 297
16. *World Marxist Review*, Vol 24, 81, 5, p 37

DOCUMENTS

THE POLITICAL BALANCE IN EGYPT

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN EGYPT WAS ANALYSED BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE EGYPTIAN COMMUNIST PARTY AT A MEETING HELD IN JANUARY 1984. THE FOLLOWING ARE EXTRACTS FROM THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AFTER THE MEETING:

Having made an extensive study of the course of events around the world, in the region of the Middle East and within Egypt in the period since its last meeting in May 1982, and of the effects — both positive and negative — of these developments upon the national liberation movement as a whole and upon the Egyptian patriotic and progressive movement; paying particular attention to the impact of these developments on the political situation in 1984 and the emerging trends at the local, regional and worldwide levels; the Central Committee of the Egyptian Communist Party, meeting at the end of January 1984, draws attention to certain central features of the political situation, with a view to providing for a greater understanding of the pattern of events over the coming months.

I — Spontaneous Strikes and Mobilizations

In the course of this year, Egypt is certain to experience a whole series of spontaneous strikes and upheavals, which will inevitably have an impact on the politics of our country, in view of the following conditions:

- the deepening economic and social crisis, together with the absence of democratic channels for free expression and political change, resulting from the policies of the parasitic capitalism which holds the reins of government and of the ruling National Democratic Party;
- the anger and indignation felt amongst the working class;
- the role of our Party, which remains illegal, and of certain legally-recognized patriotic and democratic bodies, in support of the organized activity and initiative of the popular masses in their efforts to seize their democratic rights and defend their social and economic interests.

These spontaneous strikes and uprisings, and their effects on the entire political life of Egypt, are thus inevitable and inescapable.

It is our duty to be well aware of this situation. We must not simply allow these mass movements to develop in a haphazard and makeshift fashion; that would only lead to an intensification of police repression, the curtailment of democratic rights, the rounding up and defeat of the progressive and democratic forces. Let us bear in mind the lessons of the popular revolt in Egypt on 18-19 January, 1977.

Our Party, and all of our cadres, in every part of the country and in every sector, must work assiduously amongst the popular masses and the toiling classes: the workers, peasants and students. We must take our place in the forefront of their movement and assure them of our support in the struggle to secure the democratic rights of the people — foremost among them the right to strike, the right to occupy workplaces and to demonstrate freely.

That is the only way to ensure that such strikes and mass mobilizations against the ruling circles can become an effective means of seizing democratic, economic and social rights, rather than simply a courageous confrontation which puts some pressure on the government but fails to secure genuine long-term advances.

II — The Parliamentary Elections

Political parties, groups and tendencies have been fighting the Electoral Law on Conditional Proportional Representation, a law devised by the ruling National Democratic Party to suit its own ends. This battle has just ended; with the government successfully defending the said Law and the legally-recognised opposition (the Socialist Labour Party, the Liberal-Socialist

Party, the Patriotic Rally Party, the Progressive Unionist Party, the Nation Party and the Wafd or Neo-Wafd Party) agreeing to take part in the forthcoming parliamentary elections. Nonetheless, these parties are still fighting for guarantees of free and fair elections and for changes in the law, though there is as yet no evidence that the government might give in to these demands.

In this respect, the government is merely following the course dictated by its own circumstances. In effect, the ruling parasitic capitalism finds itself with no way out. The economic and social crisis continues to deteriorate. The living standards of the majority of the people are steadily dwindling; the only people to escape are those classes and strata linked to foreign capital and benefitting from the "open doors" policy towards imperialist capital. In these conditions, it is reasonable to expect that if the forthcoming elections were to take place with the slightest degree of fair play, honesty and freedom, the ruling party and the parasitic capitalists would face the loss of the electoral majority which they managed to contrive in 1979.

The willingness of these other political parties to take part in these elections, on the government's terms, and in accordance with the existing legislation, has led to a break-up of the consensus which had formerly been established among them through the Committee of Patriotic Parties and Forces for the Defence of Democracy. But the battle is not yet over.

Given these conditions, we may draw out three main aims for our Party's work in the course of this struggle.

(1) We must add our weight to the efforts to maintain the unity of the opposition forces, even in the event of their deciding to run separately and against each other in the elections. Our approach will favour an agreement among the parties to include certain points in their electoral programmes, while respecting the right of each party to present its own distinctive platform. The common points for inclusion in each programme are as follows: (a) the basic democratic demands outlined in the manifesto of the Committee of Patriotic Parties and Forces for the Defence of Democracy — in particular, the repeal of the Electoral Law, the restoration of political rights, the annulment of the Law on Political Parties and of the emergency laws, the laws restricting civil liberties, and of all unconstitutional laws; recognition of the right to strike, the right to occupy workplaces; and the right to demonstrate freely; and the abolition of the Consultative Assembly and the Higher Press Council. (b) Acknowledgement of various social rights, especially the right to free medical care and medicines; educational rights; protection for the rights of tenants and small businessmen; protection for

workers against unfair dismissal and against any reduction of their rights in the so-called investment societies. (c) The defence of Egypt's independence, the rejection of any form of American military presence, refusal to submit to economic blackmail and opposition to Israeli hegemonism!

(2) We must concentrate our efforts on three objectives: (a) attacking the Electoral Law and undermining it in the course of the campaign; exposing the interference by the government and the civil service, and highlighting the possibility of ballot-rigging; (b) denouncing the policies of parasitic capitalism, its advocates and representatives in the ruling National Democratic Party; (c) encouraging the other political parties to identify as best they can with the hardships suffered by the masses.

(3) We must put forward some of our own Party members for election to the Popular Assembly.

III — New Forces on the Political Scene

Three new forces have lately emerged on the political scene. Our Party takes a different view of each one. They are, firstly, the Wafd (or "neo-Wafd"), which has just gained legal recognition; secondly, the Independent Nasserites, who have been increasingly active and are building up contacts with other forces; and thirdly, the Muslim Brotherhood.

1: The Wafd — Our attitude towards this party is guided by four inter-related considerations: (a) our consistent and unshakeable principle of support for the right of every political force to form its own party. We will continue to uphold this right, whatever the circumstances. (b) By and large, the Wafd presents itself as a force parallel to the ruling National Democratic Party. It is not an opposition force as such; notwithstanding the presence of factions and tendencies within it which criticise and actually oppose the ruling party and the policies it follows. The Wafd concentrates on invoking its past record of liberalism (albeit a somewhat limited liberalism) and appeals mainly to the social strata which predominate in its leadership: the local bourgeoisie, both the parasitic and productive types; the so-called liberal professions; and some intellectual groups. But the petty-bourgeoisie is not among the Wafd's followers; it tends to lean more towards the left. The Wafd, then, is likely to favour the preservation of the existing regime, though perhaps with a more democratic flavour; less corruption, strong ties with the United States (although under a different form), and a general line of anti-communism and opposition to the popular movement. (c) We must certainly pay close attention to the struggle developing within the Wafd, supporting the wing which fights against the Camp David deals, against dependence on the USA

and in favour of co-operation with the patriotic opposition. (d) Whatever line the Wafd adopts, our main adversary continues to be the ruling National Democratic Party.

2: The Nasserites — Our attitude towards the Nasserites remains one of defending their right to exist as a political party. Our relations with their main force, as a component of the social forces which support progress and socialism, are of fundamental value. For our part, we must take a sympathetic view of their hostile attitude towards the Wafd, as a force which opposed the July Revolution. Our alliance with the Nasserites in the electoral campaign is essential, as a means of furthering the unity of the patriotic and progressive opposition forces.

3: The Muslim Brotherhood — As for the Muslim Brothers: their leaders maintain close contacts with the government (Prime Minister Fouad Mohie, El Dine and Interior Minister Hassan Abou Bacha), and their activities are mainly organised through the Wafd. Nonetheless, there are amongst them some who are willing to co-operate with the progressive opposition, and in particular the Patriotic Rally Party and the Progressive-Unionists.

It is essential to mobilize against the efforts of the enemies of the Palestinian revolution, the Arab liberation movement and the Egyptian patriotic and democratic forces.

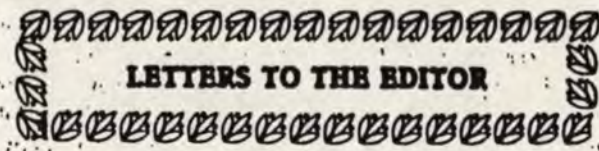
We must step up the struggle against the Camp David line and face up to American aggression against the Arab nation, whether this be pursued by direct aggression of the kind suffered by the people and the national movement in Lebanon; by large-scale military presence on Arab territory, and off Arab coasts, by military bases and facilities such as those granted to the multinational forces in Sinai, or by the installation of US missiles in Europe and in Israel.

The Central Committee Resolves to instruct the Political Bureau:

1) to draw up and publish a detailed study of the situation on the Palestinian scene;

2) to decide how many Party cadres shall take part in the election campaign.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OUR ARMED STRUGGLE PORTRAYED IN FICTION

From T. J.

Dear Editor,

Although your reviewer of Hilda Bernstein's novel *Death is Part of the Process* (AC No.96, 1st Quarter 1984) states that at the time of the book's action — circa 1961 — he was not yet born, he raises a number of interesting points about its action and its characters. These seem to one who *was* born — and who participated in a small way in some of the events — to need comment. It is not my intention to enter into discussion of the literary merits of the book, or of M.F.'s review; readers can make up their own minds. But the book is, as far as I know, the first attempt to deal seriously (in the form of fiction) with the beginnings of armed struggle against the South African state, with which the whole of the South African liberation movement is now fully identified.

It is important, therefore, that its political interpretation of people and events is not passed over too easily. For in those events — and in the revelations of the character of some of the people who made a part of our history — there are important lessons to be learnt, not least by those who did not participate in them, but need to carry their experience into today's revolutionary activities.

One of the experiences of that time — doubtless being repeated today — is that revolutionaries were not all perfect people, flawless, heroic and incorruptible, — much as we would have liked them to be. Some were. Perhaps more were than one would find amongst any other cross-section of the population, because the high idealism and brotherhood of the revolutionary cause rubs off; it inspires revolutionaries to selflessness and self-sacrifice greatly different from the self-seeking 'what's-in-it-for-me' corruption of the society we live in.

But still some revolutionaries are less than perfect, and some are deeply flawed. It is as necessary to understand that today as it was in 1961 when we had not had the opportunity to learn from our experience. Some active participants in the revolutionary struggle — like the Sipho of the book — did turn informer to save their own skins; and some shepherded off many of their erstwhile comrades to the jails and torture chambers. We have our heroes — many of them; but we also have our Bruno Mtolo and Bartholomew Hlapanes and Piet Beylevelds. Today's revolutionaries dare not let revolutionary romanticism blind them to the facts of what *did* happen; and what can surely happen again.

Your reviewer would have liked the book to deal more with the way decisions were made at the time in the upper ranks of the movement, in the High Command; and about the participation, for example, of Mandela and others. One day, no doubt, books about this — both fact and fiction — will be written; but only when it is no longer dangerous to our movement or today's revolutionaries to disclose what must still be "classified" information.

Hilda Bernstein's book deals not with those at the very centre of the Umkhonto we Sizwe organisation, or at the centre of the ANC or Communist Party. It deals with a group which starts on the fringes — in a university-based "human rights committee" — which gets sucked into the fringes of revolutionary action by a government clamp-down on a fairly innocuous, and open, protest demonstration. This group of non-revolutionary origins is drawn closer and closer to the real revolutionary core which constantly needs technical aides, assistants and allies in the "legitimate" world outside their own ranks. Of these aides and allies, some are romantic revolutionaries, like Pila, still with one foot in her bourgeois white milieu and with a less-than-revolutionary flawed consciousness, expressed — as your reviewer notes — in the idea that being arrested somehow "earned" a badge of honour, and in the feeling that "I" have done this for "them". Others develop differently as they move into underground activity — Dick into hopelessness and retreat under the pressure of arrest; and his wife Marge, from an onlooker and outsider, into an activist of courage.

In fact, as those who were there at the time will know, our movement had experience of all developments. The revolutionary movement proved to be a magnet for many; a source of real growth and strength for some that it attracted, but also too fierce and testing a challenge for others.

If I may take issue with your reviewer on one point, it is on the appraisal of the short-lived sexual encounter between one of the revolutionary core,

Indris, black, and the emerging white activist Marge. Your reviewer writes: "The novel seems to suggest that racial consciousness (in Marge) could be alleviated if not destroyed by a casual act of sexual intercourse." I think not. The sex — short-lived though it is, for reasons over which neither of the parties can have any control — is not casual; it is deliberate and deeply felt. It reveals, I would suggest, not that sex alleviates racial consciousness, but that in the context in which it occurs, it is a watershed in the replacement of race consciousness with a non-racial revolutionary consciousness.

Be that as it may, nothing can alter the fact that this book represents the first serious attempt by someone *inside* our movement to portray the reality of the beginnings of today's politics, not through history but through historically accurate fiction. It needs to be treated seriously, by those who were there at the time no less than by those who were not and yet must pick up the traces.

THE SOUTH KOREAN AIRPLANE INCIDENT

From ANC Khumalo

Dear Editor,

Your editorial comment on the South Korean airline incident (*African Communist* 1st Quarter, 1984) began: "Whatever mistakes may have been made on the Soviet side....", leaving it to the reader's imagination to determine what those unstated "mistakes" were. Most of your readers in South Africa and on our continent were subject to biased Western versions of the event.

It is patently clear that the South Korean airliner was on an espionage mission for the CIA, overflying an extremely sensitive area of the Soviet Union. For over two hours it flew 500 km off course over the Kamchatka Peninsula, Sea of Okhotsk and Sakhalin Island. A glance at a map will show the strategic importance of the area. The USA and her Japanese ally, which covets the Soviet Kuril island chain enclosing the Okhotsk Sea, aim to hem the Soviet Pacific fleet within this sea in the event of a Third World War. There are consequently numerous Soviet military installations and bases in the

area and Soviet defence forces are on full alert to defend Soviet territory. All foreign vessels and planes have been warned to keep away from this strategic military area and this warning is carried on international navigational charts. Warnings or not, it has of course been the practice of the USA to carry out provocative spy missions against Soviet territory, in order to obtain reconnaissance data and test the Soviet defence system. The Gary Powers U2 spy flight was perhaps the most notorious example of this policy but it has since materialised that French and South Korean civil airlines have been party to the CIA's dirty tricks.

The Soviet defence force had no way of knowing the South Korean flight carried civilian passengers. It was intercepted on a sneak night flight during poor visibility by Soviet fighter planes who repeatedly ordered it to identify itself and land — all to no avail. In the eyes of those Soviet defenders, guarding the security of their frontier and people, the intruder plane was either on a spy mission or even a potential nuclear attacker. At a time of Reagan warmania the latter possibility can never be ruled out. It would have been a dereliction of duty, a betrayal of vigilance, had the Soviet interceptor planes stood idly by. In fact, given the same set of circumstances no alert defence force in the world would have ignored such an intruder. Yet the Soviet Union did not go in "guns blazing" the moment the intruder appeared on the radar screens. A great deal of restraint was exercised. Two hours is a mighty long time in military terms. In all that time not a murmur from USA or Japanese air control which was monitoring the South Korean flight; no information to the Soviet side that the intruder was a civilian flight!

The Soviet Union, a leading force for peace and humanity, deeply regretted the loss of civilian life. The action it took was inevitable in the circumstances, tantamount to a sentry guarding a key object, firing in the dark at a sinister intruder who fails to identify himself. The blood of the innocent victim, callously used by Reagan and the CIA as pawns in a game of death, stains the hands of Washington and not the Soviet Union.

What was the error committed by the Soviet Union? If they received bad publicity in the West that is hardly their fault.

REVIEWS

THE FASCIST LOGIC BEHIND BOTHA'S REFORMS

The Rise of the South African Security Establishment: An Essay on the Changing Locus of State Power, Kenneth W. Grundy South African Institute of International Affairs, August 1983. Bradlow Series No 1 39pp

Grundy is a North American academic who, it seems, frequently visits South Africa and, as this pamphlet makes clear, is no Marxist. His conception of state power and its 'changing locus' is unrelated to the economically based clout of a ruling class and he is anxious to 'save' the South African state through a restructuring exercise which apparently falls somewhat short of the demands of the Freedom Charter. Indeed, Grundy counts himself among those who have 'genuine moral and philosophical misgivings about South Africa's system' but are not (what a 'balanced' 'liberal' approach!) prepared 'to participate in a crusade or even in economic activities to undermine the Republic'. Moreover, although he questions official propaganda about a Soviet-inspired 'onslaught of Marxism', he ludicrously depicts Soviet policy, in southern Africa as a 'mirror image' of the destabilising activities of the apartheid regime as though forging solidarity with the liberation movement is (that fair-minded 'liberal balance' again) just as reprehensible as seeking to sabotage them!

Nevertheless, despite its right wing orientation, Grundy's analysis of the South African 'security establishment' is instructive, not least because it

actually *enhances* the case for economic sanctions and the international boycott and in fact undermines Grundy's own implied preference for a reformist alternative to democratic revolution.

Grundy's argument is that the South African Defence Forces (SADF) have moved to the centre of political power and stand at the heart of a 'security establishment' which embraces the police, the intelligence community, many academics along with para-statal corporations like Armscor and their economic subcontractors. This establishment does not merely implement policy, it makes it and its vehicle is the State Security Council: the most import of the five cabinet committees in the Botha government.

Not only has expenditure on the military massively escalated since 1962, but since the late 1970s, the SADF have become, Grundy argues, increasingly preoccupied with 'strategic planning'. With the demise of Vorster, military men have been given a much more central role to play in decision making as part of P.W. Botha's drive for greater efficiency, professionalism, coordination and coherence within the state machinery. Power has been centralised and Botha has drawn upon the contacts he developed as Minister of Defence to inject into government the kind of 'energetic' managerial elitism he had encountered and encouraged in the SADF.

In addition to streamlining the cabinet committee system, Botha has downgraded the Department of Foreign Affairs and Information (notorious in the Vorster period for its slush funds and slovenly administration). The Security Police and particularly the Department of Military Intelligence have largely supplanted General van den Bergh's old BOSS organisation and civil servants and public officials, specialists from the universities, industry and institutes of research have been used to insulate government from pressures from the white parliament, the Nationalist party and 'grass roots' white opinion. As Grundy puts it, a 'paternalistic, centralist regime' is imposing a '*verligte* dictatorship' upon what some right-wing Afrikaner nationalists like to think of as 'democracy for the Herrenvolk'.

Total Strategy

Central to the emergence of this new 'Executive state' is the conception of a 'total strategy' to resist a 'total onslaught'. The military interest extends well beyond conventionally defined military matters and 'virtually everything', foreign or domestic, becomes a fitting subject for state policy and guidance. A war on all fronts demands a 'co-ordinated, holistic, counter-revolutionary strategy'. The battle on the borders must tie in with what Malan calls the

battle on the 'second front' (i.e. against the black population within South Africa). 'Military planning' — the notion of 'area defence' with its provision for rapid military call-ups on a selective basis; the designation of particular locations as 'key points' so that factories may have to store weapons and communications equipment in the event of 'attack' — is to be integrated into 'economic planning' as private companies enter into a 'partnership' with the state to provide technical expertise and research information on security matters. Tenders from Armscor (tenth largest arms manufacturer in the world) touch practically every sector of South African industry and the military insist that 'sensitive' information with regard to sources of supply, levels of production and trading links remain secret.

What is happening, as Grundy puts it, is that the private economic sector has become committed to what can be justifiably regarded as a 'military-industrial complex'. Not much of a role here, it would seem, for the 'liberalising' influence of EEC-type 'codes of practice'!

The State Security Council as a powerful cabinet within the cabinet sees the need not only to militarize the economy, but to militarize society in general. White education places increased emphasis on security 'consciousness' and paramilitary discipline; professionally handled press liaison and public relations bodies monitor the media to ensure that the military are projected in the most favourable possible light and Grundy also notes a tendency to make covert entries into 'partisan politics' in order to discredit other white political parties, spread disinformation in labour disputes and veto decisions taken in other branches of the administration. Grundy instances as examples of growing military influence the reversal of the decision to turn District 6 in Cape Town back to a Coloured group area and the way in which the land deal was floated with the Swaziland government in 1982.

But perhaps the most significant aspect of all of the 'deepening militarization' of the economy, education and society is the fact that it provides the real context for an evaluation of Botha's 'reforms'. It is, as Grundy notes, 'one vital aspect of the counter-revolutionary strategy' that proposals should be introduced which revise 'the trappings of apartheid without tampering with the essentials'. In other words, if militarization is to be effective, it must also involve a philosophy of 'winning hearts and minds' (with the appropriate acronym WHAM).

The Civic Action programme, for example, trains national servicemen to perform as teachers, doctors, engineers, administrators, agricultural specialists etc. to work in Namibia, the Bantustans and other sensitive areas

so that 'cultivating goodwill' neatly dovetails with the task of gathering intelligence. In short, the 'reform' strategy is an integral part of the military strategy — Operation Apartheid Face-lift. The 'changes' are not — as right wingers like to imagine in the West — modest steps in a 'liberal' direction: they are the carefully presented propagandist manoeuvres of a garrison state.

Botha is alleged while still Minister of Defence to have received a memorandum from some of the SADF general staff implying 'that some form of military takeover might be necessary to bring about socio-political changes' and the link between the two is all revealing. A coherent 'total changes' means, as Grundy puts it delicately, 'imposing marginal (though symbolically significant) reforms on a constituency that resists' i.e. acts of 'homeland consolidation', forays into 'multi-racial' sport for overseas consumption, constitutional changes etc. which the 'herrenvolk democrats' may not like. The real face of these 'reforms' emerges, however, in the military opposition to the Namibian settlement; wrecking the economy of southern Angola and terrorising its people; massacres at Matola and Maseru and of course the tortures, executions, shootings and the dumping which continues at home. The fact that the 'brown shirts' (the 'populists' whom Hitler eventually liquidated) in the shape of the HNP or the Conservative Party may squeal about the 'verligte dictatorship' merely serves to confirm the inherently fascist logic of the apartheid regime.

JAH

LISTEN TO

RADIO FREEDOM

Voice of the African National Congress and Umkhonto We Sizwe, The People's Army

Radio Lusaka

Shortwave 31mb, 9505 KHz

7.00 p.m. Daily
10.15-10.45 p.m. Wednesday
9.30-10.00 p.m. Thursday
10.15-10.45 p.m. Friday

Shortwave 25mb, 11880 KHz

8.00-8.45 a.m. Sunday

Radio Luanda

Shortwave 31mb, 9535 KHz
and 25mb

7.30 p.m. Monday-Saturday
8.30 p.m. Sunday

Radio Madagascar

Shortwave 49mb, 6135 KHz

7.00-9.00 p.m. Monday-Saturday
7.00-8.00 Sunday

Radio Ethiopia

Shortwave 31mb, 9595 KHz

9.30-10.00 p.m. Daily

Radio Tanzania

Shortwave 31mb, 9750 KHz

8.15 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday
6.15 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

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