

Commenting on this report Stan Newens, former Labour Party MP and at present a member of the European Assembly for Central London, wrote in *The Morning Star*:

"Yet overseas aid has been cut by Britain and many other western countries and states not oriented towards the West, like Ethiopia, have been subjected to callous political discrimination in the provision of development funds. The bulk of investment in Third World countries is in actuality carried out by western-based multinational companies, whose objective is not to improve living standards for the poverty-stricken masses but to establish profitable enterprises producing raw materials or manufactured goods destined for the world market".

Investment by these multinationals focuses on the exploitation of mineral resources and crops whose price is forced down by cartel agreements and pressures, while the price of industrial goods imported by third world countries has increased enormously. The result is that most third world countries have become hugely indebted to western banks. Between 1971 and 1981, the external debts of developing countries increased from 35 billion dollars to 500 billion dollars. It is estimated that by 1985 they will have doubled again. The interest payments alone in 1982 amounted to almost 10% of the export earnings of all developing countries:

Thus, says Newens, "many desperately poor countries far from receiving a net import of development capital are expected to export capital to developed countries, but without any possibility of a return". It is a vicious circle, turning perpetually to the disadvantage of the developing countries, but ultimately threatening even the financial security of the developed countries, who face the prospect of ever-mounting bad debts and the collapse of the banking sector.

Newens concludes:

"It is therefore not enough just to fight for famine relief today — absolutely vital as this is. Socialism and a new international economic order are the only solutions in the interests of humanity as a whole".

The socialist world has for years been taking practical steps to bring about this change. Whereas western aid to Ethiopia has largely taken the form of a charitable hand-out which leaves the underlying problems unsolved, the aid of the socialist countries from the inception has been designed to strengthen the national agricultural potential, attain self-sufficiency in the production of foodstuffs, and establish an independent economy at all levels.

Soviet Aid

The Soviet government, for example, has in the present emergency sent Ethiopia foodstuffs, equipment to drill water wells and specialists to operate

it. The main problem has been to deliver food to the drought-stricken areas and evacuate their population to more fertile areas, and to achieve these objectives the Soviet Union has sent transport facilities with drivers, transport aircraft and helicopters with crews. The Union of the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies sent medicines, blankets and food.

But longer-term co-operation between the Soviet Union and Ethiopia is already well under way. In 1977 for example, a scientific phytopathological laboratory (SPL) was opened in Ethiopia with Soviet assistance.

"Today", reported the journal *Sovetskaya Rossia* on December 25, 1984, "all Ethiopians know about this laboratory. For Ethiopia, where there was practically no plant selection work to speak of before the revolution, improvement of the seed stock and the introduction of new disease-resistant varieties of agricultural crops are of primary importance. The construction of the laboratory and the delegation of Soviet specialists to work there have all been accomplished on a free basis.

"The SPL annually carries out more than 60 investigation programmes which are part of the general national programme of agricultural research. This autumn, a tractor assembly plant which is yet another project of Soviet-Ethiopian co-operation turned out its first machines."

A Long-Term Programme of Economic Co-operation between the Soviet Union and Ethiopia was signed in Addis Ababa on September 8, 1984, providing for the delivery of Soviet land-improvement equipment to Ethiopia which will not only help to overcome the consequences of the drought but will also develop agricultural production in the valley of the river Avash on an irrigated territory of up to 60,000 hectares. The Soviet Union is also assisting with the establishment of a state veterinary service. Ethiopian agriculture will also receive thousands of qualified specialists trained with the participation of Soviet teachers.

Other socialist countries are also helping with famine relief. A large number of lorries and huge consignments of food and other necessities have arrived from the GDR, while tons of polyvitamins come from Poland. One hardly needs to mention the extensive aid in all spheres which has been rendered by Cuba. Specialists from all the socialist countries are involved at all levels in the economic development of Ethiopia. President Mengistu has more than once expressed the thanks of the people and leadership of Ethiopia to the government and people of the socialist countries for their disinterested and timely assistance.

A hullabaloo has been raised in some sections of the western media over the Ethiopian government's plans to move 1½ million people from the drought-stricken regions of the north to more fertile regions in the south. On January 18 the Johannesburg *Stars* said that the resettlement programme was

"described by reporters as a program comparable only to the World War 2 organised massacre of Jews by Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler." Other commentators have alleged that the scheme, which depends on Soviet logistical support, has been undertaken for political reasons — to undermine the secessionists in Tigre and other northern areas.

A more balanced view was provided in an Associated Press report from Addis Ababa published in the Johannesburg *Star* on January 4.

"While it is clear that inhabitants of some areas of Tigre do not want to move, foreign relief workers have not reported any coercion", said the correspondent. He quoted one "western diplomatic source" as saying: "You cannot overlook the fact that people have to be moved", while a western economist who had visited a resettlement area said: "It was a very impressive community effort". The economist had personally seen 275 Wollo region people warmly received by earlier settlers from their home province who had built them shelters in advance of their arrival. "They're much better off than where they came from", he commented.

Poor Ethiopia! Poor Soviet Union! No matter what they do, the professional anti-communists will find fault with them. Its all part of their cold war tactics. By contrast the Israelis, who secretly whipped off tens of thousands of Ethiopian Falashas (black Jews) from the drought-stricken north to resettlement camps in Israel, were hailed in the bourgeois press as heroes. It all depends whose side you're on.

SWAZILAND: NOT YET UHURU

From a friend in Mbabane

Swaziland has been an object of politico-analytical neglect by the relevant progressive forces that in one way or another are supposed to bring revolutionary influence to bear in Southern Africa. It is true that finally it is from us, the people of Swaziland, that such an initiative should come, being in the thick of the situation. But Swaziland's role in the South African liberation struggle is a matter of concern not only for the Swazi people but also for the senior and leading organisations of the South African freedom struggle.

When you leave a vacuum of political influence here, please know that the South African racists will not fail to fill it, and this country will gravitate more and more towards being another South African Bantustan.

For the ordinary Swazi in the street, independence is a meaningless term. What independence? Independence to live in slum conditions, those crudely built mud structures in Msunduzi, Nkwalini and KwaKhoza locations where people are so crammed and so close together that one can almost hear someone else breathe next door? No privacy! No street lights! No water and sanitation facilities! Cholera, yes. Tuberculosis, yes. What a fine example of how neo-colonialism leads to a death trap. Hospitals, even right down at Hlatikhulu, are full with patients whose living standards are terribly low. The gap between the highest paid and the lowest paid in this country is an embarrassing figure.

You have to be in Swazi prisons, see the attitude of the detainees — the poor diet coupled with the beatings to extract confessions — to understand the level of alienation of the government from the people. You have to live with the unemployed youth in the ghettos to understand the simmering discontent among the people against these intolerable conditions. Then there are the unemployed women who, because they are unable to satisfy basic needs from tilling the small plots of land in the rural areas, as well as from unreliable remittances sent by migrant husbands, flock into the towns seeking employment of any kind, including entertaining the South African white tourists who visit Holiday Inns, Royal Swazi Spa, Highland View and other entertainment centres, to make a living — 'the ladies of the night' we call them.

When the question "What will happen when the king dies?" was asked in virtually all circles of Swazi society before the death of King Sobhuza II, it partly reflected just how much the politics of this country pivoted around him. To many a Swazi the name Sobhuza came to be synonymous with Swaziland, and to imagine one without the other could be achieved only by straining one's imagination. For 60 years he ruled the tiny nation (there are less than a million Swazis) with feudal power that kept even the most militant of his political opponents still under his armpit. For example, when the leader of the once powerfully developing Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC), Dr Ambrose Zwane, at one stage after a series of detentions under the emergency laws eventually left the country to continue political opposition to the Kingdom from exile, King Sobhuza simply sent a delegation to call him back home and, like the biblical prodigal son, Dr Zwane unconditionally came back.

The figure of King Sobhuza towered behind the seeming political stability of the Kingdom, although it should be said that the strength of the ties of the Swazi people with the King were more cultural than political.

An Economic Hostage

Although it is politically independent, Swaziland, like Botswana and Lesotho (with whom it has a common political heritage as former British Protectorates) is an economic hostage of South Africa. South African capital has an octopus-like grip on the Swazi economy, preventing with its power not only the possibility of the rise of a native bourgeois class but also bringing to its knees for worship the very feudal government under whose political direction it is supposed to operate. Making a virtue of Swaziland's cheap labour structure, and the infamous Southern African Customs Union agreements, etc., South African capital has rapidly risen to dominance, displacing in the process British capital with all the historico-colonial advantages it had in the period before 1968, the year of independence. That Dlamini man you see going up and down Allister Miller Street or Nkoseluhlaza Street in Mbabane and Manzini respectively, in a 7351 BMW car, is only a manager but not the owner of the South African company or agricultural estate named after Swaziland.

Foreign capital has developed an economic alliance with the Royal family (the ruling section from the Dlamini clan), and whereas in the past the economic base of the traditional political power was the pre-capitalist sector of the economy, nowadays financial institutions like Tibiyo Taka Ngwane Fund (a parastatal organ which is controlled by the King but is run jointly with Lonrho and Tate and Lyle) indicates the material basis for ideological partnership as well. It is no wonder then that the attitude of the government to workers' organisation is so hostile. The Swazi rulers' fear of trade unionism can best be illustrated by the fact that, twice during 1982, the *Times of Swaziland* ran the headlines: "BEWARE OF COMMUNISTS!", the first one reporting a response to an article in the same newspaper about attempts at forming trade unions, by Senator Nhlabatsi, and the other, some months later, a report by the *Times News* Editor, James Dlamini, of an address by Siphetswe Dlamini, Minister of Education. We asked ourselves: now who are these communists suddenly threatening Swaziland?

In actuality no trade unions are allowed in Swaziland. The permanent state of emergency declared by the late King in 1977 when he suspended the constitution and ruled the country by decree, prohibits even the holding of a meeting of a motorcycle club without the written permission of the

Commissioner of Police, not to mention a meeting by the workers. The absence of functioning trade unions of course makes Swaziland very attractive to foreign investors, who reap super profits from imprisoned labour.

Most of the news reporting about trade union activity in this country has referred to the small Bank Workers' Union, a petty-bourgeois orientated union of intellectual workers (the only union that is recognised by the employers) which never takes up issues beyond trying to improve promotion prospects of the Swazis who do not receive promotion as quickly as white employees. A visitor to a workers' seminar recently, supposedly organised by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, found a group of workers' representatives being lectured by one George Palmer of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on how to stabilise industrial relations, to avoid mischief and riotous methods of settling disputes with the employers.

The Government Labour Department, run by the Deputy Prime Minister's office, always sides with the employers in the event of a labour dispute. Therefore government participation in such companies as Commonwealth Development Corporation, Libby's Citrus, etc. does not benefit the Swazi worker in any real way — except as a politically expedient excuse to enable the royalists to claim that the Swazi people have a share in the Company. The government ends up with the task of holding the whip over the workers, said a sociology lecturer in a lecture at the University of Swaziland, "reminding them that the companies are here to help them, and that they should be grateful for the jobs that they have."

Government claims that Swaziland is a peaceful country, perfect for foreign investment, do not reflect the real mood of the people at the grass root level, the mood of the workers in the sugar plantations of Simunya and Big Bend, Usuthu Pulp and Ubombo Ranches who make these excessively high rates of profit for the foreign companies. The Swazi urban workers and rural toilers know that they are exploited, they know how much these multinational companies are making every year, because they produce the wealth. What they need is a political outlet.

The Myth of the Peaceful Swazis
Views that the Swazi people are traditionally peaceful and obedient to authority are quite non-materialistic, unscientific and go contrary to the class approach at analysis. Whether they are held by our traditional rulers or by other people outside our country, they remain untrue and ahistorical.

But such views do exist. For example, when the students as well as teachers (organised under the now banned Swaziland National Union of Teachers) went on strike in 1977, voices were heard from as high as Parliament in Lobamba condemning such a just uprising as traditionally unSwazi, and many politicians blamed the event on the "bad influence of the Soweto children" who were increasingly seeking refuge in Swaziland. Again, responding to a miners' strike at Havelock, Zonke Khumalo, the then Deputy Prime Minister said:

"Trade unionism is a foreign ideology to the Swazis. All workers in this kingdom are his Majesty's regiments."

What an insult to the intelligence of the Swazi people! Do we need foreigners, "Soweto children", to influence us to fight against what is unjust, what is wrong? If then we are "traditionally peaceful and obedient", why make the 60 days detention without trial laws, why the banning of political parties and organisations?

The Swazi petty-bourgeoisie and its intellectual spokesmen will certainly find continuation of the Dlamini rule an obstacle in their aspiration to meaningful control and ownership of the land and other small-commodity enterprises. Their tactic may include the mobilisation of the working masses as the storm troops of the impending class battles. Appointments to senior posts in the civil service, police force and army on the basis of how related one is to the royal family will be politically challenged in defiance of the laws that bar such activity.

My view, however, is that South African capital as well as racist political power, more interested in securing Swaziland as a buffer zone against the drive of the South African liberation struggle, will judge the balance of forces and assist whoever is likely to control state power in favour of South Africa (in a broad sense). If it shall be the bourgeois democratic forces rather than the feudal structure that can best fulfil the role of making Swaziland an 'anti-communist' outpost of apartheid, then be sure that Swaziland will simply be 'Kenya-ised'. Even if it is the other way round, the most influential and determining forces will be considering Swaziland not only for itself but in relation to the developing liberation struggle in South Africa.

Can Swaziland be Turned into a Lebanon?

Now that King Sobhuza is gone, one suddenly remembers that he had an attachment to the ANC. At the inaugural conference of the African National Congress in 1912, the Swazi royal family was represented. When Swaziland, under the Queen Regent Labotsibeni, sent deputations to England to argue for the Swazi land, founding leaders of the ANC were part of the delegation.

So that, in actuality, the relationship between the Swazis and the South African people should go beyond the question of Nguni kith-and-kin; it should be a political relationship of an African people in a common struggle against imperialist forces that still colonise some parts of Africa.

Those few of us in Swaziland who understand that the ANC does not seek to fight its wars on foreign lands (Swaziland not excluded), hope that the ANC men found by the Swazi army or police on their way to South Africa (for they cannot fly over Swaziland nor swim under it) should never be provoked and create a situation which the Pretoria boers would very much love to see, African fighting African, battles fought outside South Africa instead of inside.

You would be surprised to find out how many people in Swaziland are with you in your just struggle.

LESOTHO: No Truck With Apartheid

Vincent Makhele, Foreign Minister of Lesotho, recently visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Soviet Committee for Afro-Asian Solidarity. He gave an interview to INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS concerning a number of issues, including the situation in Southern Africa.

Q: The Pretoria regime seeks to foist a "non-aggression treaty" on Lesotho. Your country has refused to yield to the racists' pressure. Could you elaborate on the stand Lesotho takes on this issue?

A: The situation in southern Africa remains exceedingly complex. Our country is one of those affected by the destabilization policy pursued by the Pretoria regime. A case in point is the pressure the racists are putting on Lesotho in various forms to sign a non-aggression treaty.

We do need peace in order to solve our numerous social problems. However, we feel that peace will not be achieved through the signing of a treaty that lacks sincerity. I want to emphasise that our experience of contractual relations with South Africa indicates that we cannot be absolutely sure of its strict observance of the provisions of a non-aggression treaty.

And another thing I would like to stress: we are positive that there can be no genuine peace as long as apartheid exists. If Pretoria does not give up its criminal practices of apartheid, I do not think that a country like ours can cooperate with it.

Lesotho adheres to the principle of peaceful coexistence. It will never act as an aggressor, nor will it ever serve as a base for aggression. We have never attacked South Africa and have no intention to; therefore, the demand for a non-aggression treaty, in our opinion, has no grounds.

Q. In the Republic of South Africa, in a situation of violence and coercion, elections were staged to a new, three-chamber parliament where, apart from the whites, "coloureds" and Asians are to be represented. What is your assessment of these "reforms" carried out by the racist authorities?

A. I have no intention to interfere in other countries' internal affairs. But it is clear to any unbiased observer that the "reforms" have in no way brought South Africa closer to the solution of the problem of apartheid. The election returns confirm this.

Frankly speaking, some believe that the racist system is being "improved". But it is my opinion that nothing new is taking place, since the majority of the population there remains deprived of the genuine human rights. Having failed in their election scheme, the authorities have to seek other means to deal with the people.

In this connection I should also point out that the racist system generates the problem of refugees. To escape racist repression many flee to Lesotho. We have pledged to give asylum to these people. We feel it binding on us to provide asylum to the apartheid refugees. We in Lesotho regard this our humanitarian duty.

Q. What is Lesotho's stand on the Namibian problem?

A. We support Resolution 435 of the UN Security Council, which charted the way towards independence for Namibia. And we are indignant that Namibia is not yet free.

We reject outright any attempt to link up the process of Namibia's decolonization with any conditions. The issue of this country's independence has no relation to the Cuban internationalists assisting the People's Republic of Angola in repulsing Pretoria's attacks. It is well known that it is the Namibians themselves, not Angolans, who are fighting for the

freedom and independence of Namibia. Therefore, one feels perplexed at the attempt to make the Namibian settlement conditional on the withdrawal of the Cuban military assistance from Angola. All of this is deplorable because it obstructs Namibian independence and portends a continued occupation of Namibia. Lesotho appeals to everyone who is party to the process of Namibia's independence to make every effort to help the country become free.

Q. Could you speak on Lesotho's relations with the USSR and other socialist countries?

A. Our position is absolutely clear and unequivocal. We pursue the policy of non-alignment. Lesotho is prepared to have friendly relations with any country that wishes them. This especially concerns those who support freedom and independence in Africa. I would like to emphasize that we are aware of the efforts of the Soviet Union to promote decolonization in Africa. We highly appreciate the Soviet contribution to the cause.

Since diplomatic relations were established between Lesotho and the Soviet Union, the contacts between our countries have been steadily expanding. And we would like to see them continue to grow.

At present, many Lesothans enjoy the benefits of the Soviet system of education. Some have already graduated from Soviet universities and now work in their own country. It should be stressed that all of them are noted for their patriotism and internationalism. They acquired these qualities, along with knowledge, while studying in your country. We are very grateful to the Soviet Union for its part in training specialists for Lesotho.

Lesotho highly values and supports all peace initiatives the USSR has come out with an effort to prevent a new world war, especially a devastating nuclear war.

(Lesotho established diplomatic relations with the USSR in 1980.)

INDIAN PEOPLE ON THE MARCH

Congress Boosted by Constitution Boycott Campaign

by Georgie

The outcome of last August's elections for two of the three chambers of South Africa's new Parliament have once again emphasised the vital role which can be played by the Coloured and Indian peoples in the revolutionary alliance of the South African people struggling for national liberation. Only 18% of the Coloured and 15.5% of the Indian voters went to the polls. The boycott for which the United Democratic Front, the Indian Congress and other bodies had worked so hard was an outstanding success, effectively stripping the new constitution of any legitimacy and exposing as a fraud President Botha's attempts to restructure the apartheid state.

In this article I want to concentrate mainly on the significance of these events for the Indian community, without wishing in any way to diminish the importance of the Coloured contribution, which can perhaps be the subject of another article.

It seems to me that the Indian community as a whole has spoken, in this election, with a unity and authority it has not displayed since the days of the Congress Alliance. The political consciousness of the Indian people has been raised to a pitch not seen for many years. The new constitution has been massively rejected and the Indian people have made it abundantly clear that they refuse to be absorbed in the white laager.

This development raises several questions: why and how did this development take place? What is its historical basis? What is the way forward for the Indian people?

The *Strategy and Tactics* of the African National Congress declares that "the struggle in South Africa is taking place within the international context of the transition to socialism". It is within this context that the struggle of the Indian people must be analysed, because like other South Africans the Indian people are deeply influenced by what has been happening in the rest of the world.

The International Context

Over the last few decades the forces of progress and socialist revolution have scored a number of victories. From Cuba to Vietnam, Algeria to Angola, the forces of imperialism and reaction have been uprooted. The response of imperialism, however, has not been to accept these victories, particularly with the advent to power of Reagan and Thatcher — apartheid's strongest allies ever! With the sworn policy of halting and indeed rolling back the forces of revolution, the viciousness of imperialism has known no bounds. The criminal invasion of Grenada, the attempts to invade and destabilize Cuba and Nicaragua and the propping up of fascist dictatorships in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia bear gruesome witness to this.

Finding encouragement and support in western strategy, the racist caretakers of imperialism in Southern Africa, Botha and Malan, have through the use of naked terror and aggression sought to neutralise the forces of revolution by imposing on their neighbours 'agreements' such as the Nkomati Accord.

Within South Africa, however, this attempt to halt the revolutionary process has been dressed in the garb of the new constitutional proposals. The restructuring of the apartheid state has been forced upon the racists for two basic reasons. Firstly, to counter the heightening revolutionary fervour prevailing in the country and the major strides made by the national liberation movement, the racists hoped to destroy our revolutionary alliance by coopting the Coloured and Indian people in their fake parliament. Secondly, the restructuring of apartheid is the regime's attempt to accommodate and neutralise the pressures of the political and economic crises both international and national.

Apartheid Restructured

Despite the brutal repression, politically the people have organised themselves into a broad united front representing all levels and sections of the

oppressed masses. As for the workers, they are being organised in unprecedented numbers and the democratic trade union movement is growing in strength. Militarily, the gallant combatants of Umkonto We Sizwe have increased the frequency and sophistication of their attacks.

The escalation of the political and military struggle, the division in the ranks of the white rulers; the increasing mobilization of forces internationally against apartheid, together with the world recession, have all been ingredients in the crisis that South Africa is facing at present. Hence, the restructuring in the nature of the apartheid state machinery which the Botha regime is attempting.

According to the *Financial Mail*

"In theory, the 'new era' is to be a transition from baasskap to consensus. The sponsors of the new deal would like the world to believe that it represents a substantial broadening of the base of consent. The U.S. government, for one, justifies its policies of constructive engagement in the affairs of South Africa precisely on these grounds."

In fact, the condition of the oppressed masses has worsened considerably since the introduction of the new constitution. The number of forced removals has increased and so have efforts to deprive the African people of their South African citizenship. The new constitution is not merely an adaptation, but above all, an entrenchment of the existing apartheid system. In the final analysis, it still remains a formula for the preservation of the supremacy of the white minority.

As regards the Indian and Coloured communities, any benefits that may accrue to them through the tricameral parliaments cannot, under the new constitutional proposals, be either regulated or controlled by their respective chambers. The Indian and Coloured MPs do not have the power to alter the overall system either on their own or in alliance with opposition Whites, even if the combination constituted a majority in favour of changes. The majority white group will retain power because the white chamber is all-powerful. Even if both the Coloured and Indian MPs withdrew from the system they would not bring the government to a halt.

Despite the fact that white supremacy remains intact, the authors of the new constitution have seen fit to endow the office of the President with almost unlimited powers. According to the Van der Merwe Commission, the President has the power "to take such steps as he may deem necessary for the security of the state whenever the independence of the state is threatened or whenever the functioning of public institutions of government is interrupted".²

Through these unlimited powers, the President is able to push through any policy or make any decision irrespective of whether it has the support

of the white chamber. Thus the new constitution gives the President power to override, not merely Coloured and Indian opposition, but even white opposition, and is thus the first structural recognition of the split in the ranks of the white supremacists.

The attempt by the racist regime to impose this "new deal" on the Indian people has been met with an overwhelming rejection. For this there are two main reasons: firstly, the authors of the new constitution failed to understand that the Indian people have a proud record of resistance behind them; secondly, the deteriorating material position of the Indian people has served to spur them on to greater militancy in their struggle against the apartheid system.

The Dynamics of Resistance

The history of the resistance of the Indian people, since their importation into South Africa as indentured labourers in 1860, passed through three phases:

firstly, the defence against the erosion of basic political and economic rights; secondly, the assertion of a South African identity; and thirdly, the association with other sections of the oppressed people in the struggle for a new South Africa based on the Freedom Charter.

In the Transvaal the Indians had already by 1887 been prohibited from acquiring rights of citizenship or ownership of property. In the Cape and Natal, however, the "liberal" policies of the administration had conceded these rights to a limited extent, though their exercise was not unaccompanied by their share of racist humiliation. It was the threat of Indian disfranchisement in Natal in 1894 that gave rise to the formation of the Natal Indian Congress in May of that year under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Thus the NIC became the first political organisation of the oppressed in our country.

The imposition of the pass laws and poll taxes in 1908 and 1913 respectively provoked the first campaigns of passive resistance which was to form the basis of Gandhi's philosophy of Satyagraha. Despite the limited nature of the victories won by the Indian people, these campaigns converted what was formerly an unorganised and fearful community into a more cohesive national entity.

In keeping with the ruling ideology, that the Indian people were mere temporary sojourners, the racists made vigorous attempts to repatriate them by 1933. The response of the South African Indian Congress was to assert the South African identity of the Indian people. By this time, 80 per cent of the Indian population were born South Africans. This marked the second phase

The New Constitution

of the Indian people's struggle — a struggle which was later to find them allies with the African majority in the fight against exclusion from the political process.

The character of the Indian community was changing. In 1946 the Indians constituted 2.5% of the total population with 72.8% living in officially classified areas. This was reflected in the occupations of Indian workers. Between 1936 and 1946 there was a drop in the number of Indians earning a living off the land from 27.9% to 15.4% and a sharp increase in the number employed in industry, primarily manufacturing, from 17.8% to 27.12% of the total working population.

This massive increase in the urbanisation and proletarianisation of the Indian people due to industrialisation led to the emergence of a radical leadership in the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congress, led respectively by Communist leader Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Dr G.M. Naicker. On the part of the Indian community, it was the resistance to the Pegging and Ghetto Acts which had transformed the Congresses into mass-based organisations drawing their strength from the militancy and cohesion of the workers who constituted their main support base. In 1947 Dadoo and Naicker joined together with Dr A.B. Xuma in the famous "Doctors' Pact" cementing the unity of the ANC and the Indian Congresses in the struggle for national liberation. The Xuma-Dadoo-Naicker Pact was later to form the core of the Congress Alliance which dominated the political scene in the fifties.

It was the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in 1955 that set the pace of the last phase — the struggle for a new South Africa. However, with the massive repression of the sixties and the silencing of our leaders and organisations through bannings, detentions and exile, the racists were led to believe that the will and determination of our people had been crushed. Ironically, it was precisely when the racists thought that they could finally eliminate our revolutionary alliance by coopting the Coloured and Indian people into the apartheid laager that we saw the re-emergence of Congress strength and militancy.

The Economic Crisis

The South African economy is in a state of crisis. Inflation has been in double figures since 1973, the rand has reached a record low in relation to the US dollar, the General Sales Tax is up to 10% and the consumer price index of almost 300 was 12% higher in 1984 than the previous year! Since the bourgeoisie are never prepared to part with their huge profits they are making the burden fall squarely on the backs of the oppressed masses.

Government expenditure on basic social services has had to make way for the enormous military budget. Of the R1.143 billion 'aid' to Namibia, R450 million has been allocated towards defence. As for the SA Defence Force the amount allocated to it last year alone was R3,755 million, a 21% increase over the previous year.

To the worker this has meant an exorbitant increase in the cost of living, less real income earned and many retrenchments. Already in January 1984, the price of maize was increased by 7%, brown bread by 16.6%, canned foods by 14.75%, eggs by 3.5%, sugar by 10%, etc. etc. Further increases took place during the year and were one of the main factors causing the people's revolt towards the end of the year.

The new constitutional proposals make no provision for the repeal of the Group Areas Act, and this continues to be an area that inflicts great hardships on the Indian people. In the two areas of concentration, Durban and Lenasia, there are more than 20,000 and 4,500 families respectively on the waiting lists for housing. The few houses that are available can only be afforded by the wealthy. In Durban, where 80% of those applying for houses earn less than R 250 a month, houses are being sold to the highest bidder. In Lenasia, houses previously valued at R 5,500 are now being sold for between R13,500 and R15,000. According to Mr. Pen Kotze, the Minister for Community Development, the first priority in future will be to make land and infrastructure available to those who can afford to construct their own homes. The total amount allocated for housing decreased by R 57,680,200 in 1983. Moreover, the recent increase in interest rates on loans from an already record level of 22% to 25% with the concurrent increase in the General Sales Tax can only exacerbate the housing crisis.

According to the National Manpower Commission, while job opportunities for Indians in the non-agricultural sector between 1975 and 1981 generally fell by 23,926, in the trade and accommodation services sector alone 43,891 jobs were lost.³ Between June 1982 and June 1983, South Africa's biggest employer, manufacturing industry, which employs almost 40% of working Indians, was most severely hit by the recession. Thus during the year 4,563 Indian workers were retrenched, i.e. 4.4%.⁴ Worker militancy and anger were reflected in the dramatic increase in strikes by Indian workers, from an average of 180 workers per year between 1975 and 1980 to 1865 in 1981 (i.e. ten times as much) and 1170 workers in 1982.⁵

The August 1984 elections were the most elaborately stage-managed elections ever held in South Africa. Indeed, they were a diabolic experiment in subversion — but they failed. While it has been established that under

16% of the eligible Indian voters went to the polls, there is considerable evidence that even this figure was fraudulently achieved. In some cases, dead people were found to have voted. According to the UDF, the real poll was in fact closer to 10%.

Nevertheless, there are several important aspects arising from the election results that need to be considered. Firstly, instead of being faced with a choice of differing party political and economic policies (as would be the case in a normal election), the crucial question confronting the Indian people was whether to vote at all and thus accept the new dispensation, or, to boycott it and thus reject the new constitution as a viable mechanism through which their aspirations could be satisfied. In the event, almost 85% of the Indian people rejected the new constitution.

Secondly, from a glance at the results in detail, the political leadership offered by the Rajbansis, Poovalingams and the Reddys has obviously been rejected by the people. In their own home constituencies, Rajbansi, Poovalingam and Reddy only managed to achieve 10%, 7% and 19% of the registered voters respectively. Furthermore, the fact that those who stood for election did so only out of self-interest was underscored by the ease with which they moved from one party to the other, feeling equally at home in each of them. The majority of candidates were representatives of big business who had a long history of collaboration with apartheid.

Thirdly, the racists had banked on the fact that besides a long period of relative political inactivity by the Indian people, especially in the Transvaal; there had developed a significant group of wealthy merchants amongst whom they would find a sympathetic constituency. Once again, the racists miscalculated. This becomes particularly clear when one considers that the new constitution does not repeal those racist laws that have effectively barred the aspirant bourgeoisie from achieving their goals. In fact, it is from this very same wealthy group of merchants that the Congress, particularly in the Transvaal, has received substantial material and moral support. It is facts like these that once again powerfully vindicate the theoretical approach adopted in the *Strategy and Tactics* and *The South African Road to Freedom* with regard to the national question and its tactical implications for the national liberation struggle.

Finally, while the historico-material conditions of the Indian people explain why they rejected the new constitution, one has to look at the dynamism of the grassroots mobilization conducted and the leadership to fully understand why their rejection was so total.

"The Hour for organisation and unity has come"

The successful implementation of the new constitutional proposals posed a serious challenge to the struggle for national liberation. It threatened not only to subvert the revolutionary alliance, but furthermore, to continue the process of denationalisation of the African people and intensify the oppression and exploitation of *all* black people. The response to this challenge saw the birth of the UDF and the development of countrywide resistance to apartheid.

While the mobilization of the Coloured and Indian people against the elections was central, the campaign was non-racial in character. The basis of the opposition to the constitutional proposals was that the constitution had been imposed on South Africa without any consultations; it was undemocratic because it was not based on the principle of one person, one vote; it excluded the majority of the population from access to political power; and it maintained apartheid.

The campaign took the form of a two-pronged attack. While on the one level there was the direct mobilization of the Indian people through the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congress, on another level, every potential anti-apartheid force was mobilised through the trade unions, youth, students, women's, religious, civic and other organisations including white democrats.

The essence of the campaign was the basic grassroots mobilization of the people. It is here that the dynamism of the UDF and its affiliated bodies was displayed. The activity which provided the main thrust was meeting the people in their homes, churches, streets, sports grounds and elsewhere. The Natal Indian Congress alone covered more than 100,000 homes in Natal. Integral to this was the Million Signature Campaign against the constitution which is still continuing. The large number of activists who were recruited were thoroughly briefed and thus were in a position to relate to the people they met and explain to them the link between the grievances and hardships they were experiencing and the way the new constitution would affect them. Besides mobilizing the people against the new constitution, the purpose of the campaign was to consolidate and entrench grassroots organisations among the masses. As Virgil Bonhomme of the United Committee of Concern explained:

"Grassroots support doesn't come from public statements or meetings. Standing on platforms and shouting political slogans doesn't give people enough confidence in you."

As a result of the struggles waged, the national liberation movement has made a number of advances which are of significance. These can broadly be categorised as political and organisational;

(a) *Political*

* The low polls are indeed a victory and indicate the opposition of the large majority of Coloured and Indian people to the new constitution. Furthermore, the revolutionary alliance of the oppressed has come out of this campaign strengthened and steeled.

* The militancy and consciousness of the Coloured and Indian people have been raised to a level where they refuse to have anything to do with any of the sell-out parties or leaders.

* Since the banning of the ANC, there has been no other campaign in which the people's allegiance to it and its leadership has been so pronounced.

* The political education achieved by the propaganda during the campaign extended the people's consciousness beyond localised grievances such as GST, housing and other problems and highlighted the aggressive nature of apartheid, the illegal occupation of Namibia and the destabilisation of the frontline states.

* While political organisation in the rural areas is not yet compatible with that of the urban areas, the campaign has seen much advance in this area.

* The people's confidence in Umkhonto we Sizwe has been boosted by the fact that its cadres were able to strike with such frequency and ferocity despite claims that the Nkomati Accord would see the end of it.

(b) *Organisational*

* The united front tactics as seen in the UDF have been employed with much success. The dynamism of the campaign depended largely on the high level of organisation and coordination between the local, regional and national bodies as well as the coordination of the various sections. The ability to organise the many rallies, mobilise and direct the activists and create the organisational structure needed to conduct the campaign demonstrated that the UDF at the grassroots level represents almost every section in South Africa.

* The revival of the Transvaal Indian Congress has seen the restoration of its former status as the only authentic voice of the Indian people.

* The boycott campaign has also witnessed the revival and consolidation of the Women's Federation and youth organisations.

* In the struggle to raise the political consciousness of the masses we have witnessed the emergence of various community newspapers and journals which are beginning to enjoy wide readership.

The successes and advances scored in the campaign against the elections have not gone without the repression and reaction that has accompanied all our struggles. The state's response to the people's resistance has been vicious.

Its arsenal has included the use of naked terror, detentions and assassinations. Nevertheless, the struggle continues and the crucial question now being debated in the liberation movement is: where do we go from here?

Conclusion

Having scored a major victory in the anti-constitution campaign the time has now come for us to assess the campaign and analyse what exactly are our weaknesses and strengths. Any victory won has to be consolidated! In order to achieve this we will have to continue strengthening and entrenching our grassroots organisations among the people. Equally important is the raising of the political consciousness of the masses. The massive opposition the people have demonstrated against the new constitution stems from their rejection of apartheid rule. Thus, the task that faces us now is to ensure that, having rejected the new constitution we must refuse to allow it to govern us. According to Cedric Kekane of the Saulsville/Attridgeville Youth Organisation:

"We must be difficult to control. We must render the instruments of oppression difficult to work. We must escalate all forms of resistance."

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SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE NKOMATI ACCORD

By Z. Nkosi

Opinion about the Nkomati and Lusaka agreements is gradually hardening in the frontline states. In the dying days of 1984 Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos arrived in Maputo at the head of a high-powered delegation on a two-day visit to Mozambique. A joint communique issued at the end of talks with Mozambican President Samora Machel emphasised "a high degree of fraternity and a similarity of views on the main issues of the struggle against imperialism and its agents, the armed bandits".

Mozambique declared its support for the proposals submitted by Angola to the UN Secretary General as a basis for negotiations with South Africa. These were:

1. Completion of the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola as laid down in the Lusaka Agreement.
2. Cessation of South Africa's support for UNITA and the dismantling of UNITA's bases in Namibia.
3. Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435 laying down the procedures for Namibian independence.
4. After the establishment of UN forces in Namibia and the reduction of South African forces to 1,500 infantry, the Angolan and Cuban governments will start the gradual reduction of the Cuban internationalist contingent from Angola on the basis of a programme to be presented.

The Angolan side to the Maputo talks expressed support for "Mozambique's efforts to ensure that South Africa carries out the Nkomati Accord to the full" and for Mozambique's struggle to destroy the MNR bandits.

"In their document, the two Presidents reaffirmed "their solidarity with the liberation struggle of the peoples of Namibia and South Africa; led respectively by SWAPO and the ANC."

The two sides pledged co-operation in the struggle against imperialism; the strengthening of national independence and the building of socialism in the two countries.

In a commentary on the visit and the talks, the Maputo daily newspaper *Noticias* predicted that the Mozambican and Angolan governments would harden their positions towards South Africa as a result of the Botha regime's failure to honour its undertakings. Both governments, the paper observed, "have more than sufficient justification to complain that the Lusaka understanding and the Nkomati Accord are not being honoured".

Noticias added that the South African regime's cool response to Angola's recent proposals showed that Pretoria "is not interested, or not able, or perhaps not willing to participate in efforts to establish peace and security in Southern Africa."

Speaking a few days later at the traditional end of year reception given for leading figures in Mozambican public life, President Machel said: "The real architects of the conspiracy against Mozambique are based in certain Western European capitals" and added that they benefit from "the complicity of individuals and organisations in neighbouring countries from whom they receive the necessary logistic support and who infiltrate terrorists, saboteurs and mercenaries" — a remark clearly directed towards, and duly resented by, South Africa.

President Machel said the aim of the conspiratorial network led by imperialism was "to change the course of our history, and create conditions for the return of those who were always the sworn enemies of the Mozambican people". In 1985, the tenth year of Mozambican independence, "we must act decisively to secure peace and eliminate banditry". This was "the basic condition for economic recovery".

The Mozambican Information Agency report stated: "President Machel repeatedly stressed the socialist nature of the Mozambican revolution, and praised the assistance received from other members of the socialist community. Solidarity from other socialist countries had meant that 'at critical moments and on favourable terms', Mozambique had been able to acquire fuel and consumer goods. The President also pointed to the strengthening of Mozambique's alliance with the rest of the socialist world during the past year".

According to the same agency, on December 27, at a ceremony in Maputo for representatives of the Mozambican community living and working in South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland, South Africa was accused of systematically violating the Nkomati Accord. The ceremony, held in the Presidential palace with President Machel wearing the same full-dress uniform he wore for the signing of the Accord, was attended by about 100 Mozambican workers, mostly from the South African mines.

A representative of the Mozambican workers read a message regretting South Africa's refusal to implement the Nkomati Accord. The message noted that Mozambique had signed the agreement "sincerely, without any subterfuge" in order to establish peace in the region, but "what was previously hidden is now becoming clear". The South African government's agreement to sign the Accord was "nothing but a trick" and the regime never intended to carry out its obligations under the Accord. "South Africa never stopped supporting, training and infiltrating the bandit gangs, and it never stopped sending planes with weapons destined for the bandits inside Mozambique".

This view was supported in a speech by Frelimo Party Political Bureau member Marcelino dos Santos in an end-of-year reception in Beira. He said: "Our enemy is called imperialism, and in this part of the world its spearhead is South Africa. We are continuing to detect radio communications transmitting orders to the bandit gangs, and reports from the bandits back to their leaders". He directly accused South Africa of trying "to give political status to the bandits and criminals which it created in the first place".

President Machel himself returned to the theme in a speech at a New Year reception for the diplomatic corps held in Maputo on January 4. Although the South African government had pledged to implement the letter and spirit of the Accord, he said, "violence and terrorism are continuing to claim lives and spread destruction in Mozambique". There were clear signs that the Accord was being violated "from the territory of South Africa and of other neighbours of Mozambique".

The dean of the diplomatic corps in Maputo, Czechoslovakian Ambassador Vaclav Brelac, read a message condemning the "increasing violence used by certain forces in some countries to prevent social progress and to maintain their own domination and exploitation". He added: "We all know it is not the fault of the Mozambican government that the Nkomati Accord is not being implemented satisfactorily". The MNR bandits, he said, "are supplied from outside by those who are eager to return to the old colonial order".

President Machel was most specific when speaking to a party of French journalists in Maputo on February 6, 1985. The deterioration in the situation

in Mozambique, he said, "is because South Africa is not fulfilling the (Nkomati) Agreement. I don't know if it is unable or unwilling to".

The first national congress of the MPLA-Workers' Party was held in Luanda from January 14 to 19. In his opening speech President dos Santos said:

"It has been proved more than once that it is South Africa that is responsible for maintaining the present climate of tension in our region".

Pretoria, he said, was "still banking on eliminating the legitimate governments of frontline countries in order to put its own puppets in power . . . The serious and constructive new peace proposals presented by our government have met with an arrogant response harmful to our sovereignty on the part of South Africa, which has outdone itself in making unacceptable demands contrary to the ethics of international relations". President dos Santos noted "the premeditated inability of the South African government to comply with what was stipulated in the Nkomati Accord". At the same time South Africa was continuing to occupy part of Angolan territory despite the undertakings entered into in the Lusaka agreement.

"There are no valid reasons to justify that act of continued aggression", he said. "All the facts lead us to conclude that the South African government wished to use the hope of peace that was created merely to try to break out of its international isolation and to ensure the survival of the apartheid system". Furthermore, there was "no longer any doubt that the vast plan of aggression and destabilisation carried out against our country over these years by the racist South African regime was only possible because of the active support and connivance of certain western countries".

By contrast, said President dos Santos, "the bonds of friendship and solidarity with the parties and peoples of socialist countries have been consolidated and expanded . . . Inter-party co-operation has been implemented and inter-governmental co-operation is developing satisfactorily in the economic, technical and cultural fields". Angola would continue its efforts to use existing possibilities for the constant strengthening of the material basis of its relations with the socialist world.

"In this perspective the most correct ways are being studied of achieving not only closer bilateral co-operation with all socialist countries but also broader co-operation within the framework of Comecon".

Denying the insinuations of the western press, President dos Santos said: "Cuba continues to receive no material rewards for the internationalism it practises in Angola in such an exemplary way in the military field". He disclosed that Cuba "decided more than a year ago to cease receiving payment from the Angolan people . . . Cuba is continuing to make sacrifices,

including the lives of some of its finest sons, in helping the Angolan people and their revolution, in an exemplary way, to defend independence, the country's integrity and the gains so far achieved".

The President added that "the Soviet Union is still the main supplier of the weapons and military equipment with which our valiant combatants have been facing enemy onslaughts".

On the basis of Angola's foreign policy aimed at safeguarding the independence, prestige and interests of the People's Republic of Angola, the President said there had been "diplomatic initiatives to normalise Angola's relations with Senegal and the Peoples Republic of China, as well as to increase prestige and a correct understanding of our national realities in Western Europe, with a view to diversifying and expanding economic relations with all countries of interest on the basis of reciprocal advantage".

The second congress of the MPLA-Workers' Party is scheduled to take place towards the end of 1985.

President Nyerere's View

In an interview with the journal *New African* shortly after his election last November as chairman of the Organisation of African Unity, Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere, replying to the question "What do you think about the Nkomati Accord?", said:

"For South Africa it has been absolutely wonderful. And the Americans think it is a tremendous example of the success of . . . what is that policy called? — Ah yes! — 'Constructive engagement'! They keep on saying how wonderful it is . . .

"We think it is a humiliation. We don't want any more Nkomatis. It is the success of the South African policy of destabilising the frontline states, and it is assisted in this by the USA. And it is proper that we should view it completely frankly. It is a defeat on our part.

"We understand *why* Mozambique had to look for accommodation at Nkomati — but they haven't even got the minimum they thought they could get out of it. But we *understand* why they did it, because there was a promise that South Africa might stop supporting the MNR and Mozambique decided they needed peace to start some development in their country. But they have not even got that. From the very beginning, South Africa never meant to honour that agreement because during the very negotiations the South Africans were actually sending in more armed men. They were breaking the agreement before they had signed it. Even after the agreement they continued sending people and are still doing so". (*New African* January 1985).

BOOK REVIEWS

THE FAILURE OF THE BANTUSTANS

South Africa: 'African Rural Development, by Maziphula M. Mbongwa. (Dr Govan Mbeki Fund, University of Amsterdam, 1984.)

As is so often the case, titles conceal more than they reveal. This is certainly true of this monograph written by Masiphula Mbongwa whilst ANC Research Fellow of the Dr Govan Mbeki Fund of the University of Amsterdam.

He has produced an interesting and insightful analysis of the relation of the bantustans, and agrarian "development" within them, to the South African political economy. The context in which he sets his analysis is that of national oppression and capitalist exploitation, drawing out the fact that underlying the creation of the bantustans are political as well as economic forces.

Although the monograph is short, it touches on a wide range of issues, all of which are not possible to deal with in the space of a short review. Central to his argument is that:

"Bantustans were created to ensure absolute political control and socio-economic exploitation of African people. Their aims are to preserve and protect the continued system of white dictatorship and capital enslavement. . . . The continued pursuit by Pretoria of the process of the apartheid decolonisation — bantustan and bantustan independence — that act in itself constitutes a reminder that African self-determination, political and economic emancipation and one-man-one-vote remain as alive and unfinished issues in South Africa." (p14/15)

The failure of industrial decentralisation (a fact admitted to by P W Botha in November, 1981, when he announced a new strategy for regional economic development) and the collapse of agriculture in the bantustans,

the alleged economic "raison d'être", expose Pretoria's claim to be promoting "separate but equal development" for the sham that it is. But more importantly, Mbongwa argues, these policies have contributed significantly to the socio-economic crisis facing South Africa today, and particularly the crisis of unemployment and poverty which is affecting the African majority so severely. At the same time, Pretoria's recognition of this failure has given it the excuse to advance the political "solution" of "self-government" and "independence", by which it hopes to absolve itself of responsibility for the failures of its own creation. It is in this light that we can assess the questions of "manpower" and skill shortages, the shift to capital-intensive and automated production in both secondary industry and agriculture, the exodus of whites from the platteland, militarisation and its implications as well as the immediate resort to extreme repression in the bantustans, where Pretoria's "chiefs" have little or no room to manoeuvre.

The monograph is well written and is thought-provoking. It should stimulate further research and analysis into the many problems it raises.

T.T.

ANGOLAN WOMEN BREAK NEW GROUND

Angolan Women Building the Future: From National Liberation to Women's Emancipation; from the Organization of Angolan Women, London: Zed Books Ltd, 1984. Price £5.95

This book is essential reading for all of us in the South African liberation movement. It includes speeches and resolutions of the first congress of the Organisation of Angolan Women (OMA) as well as theses which were widely discussed in preparation for the Congress. It reflects the progressive and concrete way in which our Angolan comrades are tackling the emancipation of women, building on the gains and experiences of the national liberation struggle, overcoming the obstacles imposed by the war South Africa is waging against Angola, and integrating the struggle for the emancipation of women into the general task of national reconstruction.

OMA was set up in 1962 and played a vital role mobilising women to take part in the liberation struggle. In 1973 OMA was awarded Unesco's Nadejda Krupskaya Literacy Award, an honour usually accorded to countries, not to a women's organisation engaged in a national liberation war. By 1983, OMA

had over a million members. (Angola's population is between six and eight million). The laws of the People's Republic of Angola guarantee non-discrimination against women, but new laws relating to specific conditions of women were needed, particularly in relation to the family. Also, legal equality is not enough to make equality a social reality. OMA's national co-ordinator Ruth Neto, stated:

ii. "Our objective is to raise the economic, social and educational level of Angolan women, so that they may play an increasingly useful part in building a socialist society and in the tasks of national reconstruction."

Participation in national life is seen as the key to women's emancipation, which is part of the struggle to advance the whole people.

The discussion theses encompass women's oppression under colonialism, their role in national liberation and the current struggle for their emancipation, given the historical legacy of subordination, backwardness and obscurantism. To overcome this, eliminating illiteracy among women is seen as vital, as well as raising their level of education. Special attention was given to working women, the important issues of equality at work, support for working mothers, the specific conditions of peasant women and the question of mother-and-child care. Finally, the theses covered women and the family, the problems of young women, unmarried mothers, housewives, sex education and family planning, abortion and prostitution.

In his speech at the opening session President dos Santos noted that women "during the colonial period were those most exploited and oppressed, if we consider that they were subjected not only to colonial domination, but also to the authority of their husbands." He stressed the relationship between the solution of Angola's national problems (the imperialist war of aggression and the economic and financial crisis) and the emancipation of women. If the national problems are not solved, women's problems can't be solved and it is vital for women to contribute to solving the national problems.

Immediate Goals

Ruth Neto, in her report for OMA's National Committee, indicated the achievements of OMA before and after independence and outlined the main immediate goals of the organisation:

1. To increase membership and ensure active participation.
2. To combat illiteracy and raise the educational and scientific level of women.
3. To ensure increased active participation of women in all sectors of national life.

4. To intensify political and ideological work among women so that they understand their role in the revolution.

5. To dignify and significantly improve the living and working conditions of peasant women.

Lucio Lara, of the MPLA-Workers' Party Central Committee, pointed out that the OMA Congress had produced the result that:

"The Party and the State are now in possession of valuable elements which will make it possible to programme action to solve many of the problems facing our women ... This will help to establish more just conditions in society."

The Congress adopted a wide range of resolutions to implement the process of emancipating women. The resolution on working women stressed the need to enforce equality between men and women at work, already provided for in law. Women should in practice enjoy the same opportunities as men. Women should have access to refresher courses, further training and education at work. Facilities should be provided to minimise the domestic tasks of working mothers in urban areas. Child care facilities should be available in work places, neighbourhoods and agricultural co-operatives. Priority should be given to functional literacy, especially in rural areas. The laws should be revised so that the principle that the inherent tasks of the home should be shared by the couple is enacted.

The resolution on women and the family recommended that new legislation be drafted to ensure equality between men and women. These new guidelines should be publicised by all the country's leading bodies. There should be legal and social protection of unmarried mothers. Young women must have access via training to economic independence. Conditions should be created to ensure the right of women to freely consented motherhood. Sex education in schools and mass media should be used to educate people on contraception. Family planning should be introduced as one of the ways of reducing infant mortality. As a last resort, in an unwanted pregnancy which could harm the physical, mental or social welfare of a woman or girl, abortion should be authorised. There should be frank discussion of prostitution to make society aware of the need to eradicate it. Meetings, talks and symposia should be held for the ongoing education of adults on the new relationships in the family and society. All discriminatory measures and attitudes towards women should cease in state services.

The prestige of OMA is testimony to the calibre of the revolutionary Angolan women who have built this organisation. The achievements of this first Congress reflect the determination of the Angolan people and their government, the MPLA-Workers' Party, to work for the genuine

emancipation of women in Angola. The whole world can learn lessons from this book, which provides an invaluable insight into the relationship of women's emancipation to the national democratic revolution.

Mosadi Wa Sechaba

FAILURE OF A MISGUIDED MISSION

Confessions of an Albino Terrorist by Breyten Breytenbach, (London, Faber and Faber, 1984.)

The Afrikaans poet Breyten Breytenbach, released after serving seven years of a nine-year sentence under the Terrorism Act, writes: "It was my intention to produce a political text — if it turned out to be more 'literary' than expected it can only be because I couldn't help it." (p. 339). Given this stated intention a reviewer is more than entitled to judge the book on its political content. This I intend to do, but first I will make a few remarks about the 'literary' aspects of the book.

The bourgeois media have been fulsome in their praise of the book as a literary creation. This is an opinion that I do not share. Two distinct styles are used in the book. The long discursive passages are written in a convoluted way. It is often virtually impossible to follow lines of thought in these introspective passages, let alone to determine what is fact and what fantasy. Yet it is these verbose sections of the book that the bourgeois media have lauded. These purple passages are interspersed with very much better written descriptive sections in which the mindlessness and oppression of the South African prison system are brought out. The descriptions of Beverly Hills — the maximum security prison where condemned prisoners are kept — the cells under the Supreme Court in Pretoria and Pollsmoor, are vivid and often very moving. Yet, to my mind, these sections never achieve the immediacy and impact which is sustained throughout Indres Naidoo's *Island in Chains* or Hugh Lewin's *Bandiet*.

Throughout the book, including the descriptive passages, Breytenbach himself is very much in the forefront. The book

"took shape from the obsessive urge I experienced during the first weeks and months of my release ... to tell my story and all the other stories ... (the Book) had to become the reflection of a search for what really happened, and for the identity of the narrator." (p. 337-8)

The existential search for identity can all too easily become an obsession with self and mere self-aggrandisement. Breytenbach does not escape this pitfall.

This great (and I would suggest, from the evidence of inefficiency and lack of real political commitment that emerges from the book, unwarranted) sense of self-importance is very clear from the following passage.

"Okhela split in two — ostensibly on pro-Breyten and anti-Breyten lines. (Both factions have been in contact with me since, both claiming to have remained true.)" (p. 183).

The Okhela factions "remained true" to Breytenbach, the father figure who had handled his first trial in such an abject manner that he ended up apologising to the South African prime minister and offering, in return for his liberty, to spy on the liberation movement for BOSS. "Remaining true" does not say much for the political acumen of his fellows in Okhela. Incidentally, Breytenbach brushes off his handling of his first trial and the subsequent offer to BOSS in the most cursory and unsatisfactory manner.

The Politics of it All

Let me turn to the political content of the book. Breytenbach sees the External Mission of the ANC as being "in the grip of the dogmatists". (p. 359). When he discusses what is to be done about it, he is emphatic: "Combat dogmatism." (p. 360). The implication is clear — the External Mission of the ANC must be combatted. (I will make no comment here on the misapprehension that the ANC 'externally' is somehow different from the ANC 'internally'.)

His position on the South African Communist Party is equally unambiguous. While he claims that he is not involved in 'red-baiting' (p. 75), he produces, with no attempt at evidence to support his views, the tired old arguments that "The SACP actually has the nerve centres of the liberation movement in its control." (p. 75). His criticism of the party is twofold. Firstly that it is "in principle and practice a multi-racial, non-racist organisation." (p. 76). His criticism here is that he felt that the party's non-racial character was "papering over the real problems of cultural awareness" and thus "diminishing the effectiveness of the militants by confusing the feedback." (p. 76). Secondly he regards the SACP as dogmatic and doctrinaire. He makes no secret of the fact that an ultra-left position is at the root of his criticism. "Our criticism of the SACP was coming from the left." (p. 77).

Having rejected the SACP *in toto* and the leadership of the ANC (or at least that part of the leadership that is in exile), Breytenbach's infantile disorder

can only lead him to individualism and adventurism. His book exemplifies this. Furthermore, the structures created by the ultra-left are particularly prone to be penetrated by the enemy. Thus Schuitema, an Okhela colleague of Breytenbach's and a former secretary of the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement, admitted "to having given information to Craig Williamson, one of the South African spies abroad but, he asserted, only from 1978 on, and then only to counteract the communist domination of the liberation movement." Schuitema also admitted to Breytenbach "regular contact with and/or control by various South African security services." (p. 184).

It is particularly instructive to look at Okhela's intended role in the trade union field Okhela had

"succeeded in obtaining the promise of substantial sums of money directed to the nascent Black trade unions inside South Africa and we were going to have our contacts inside the country ... channel this money to the intended recipients. To be able to do that, though, we needed to establish a trade union office abroad, in Europe, manned by a Black and a White trade unionist from inside."

As is so often the case, Breytenbach raises more questions than he answers. What, if anything, was to be SACTU's role in this trade union initiative? Perhaps more important, what was the role of the ICFTU or the AALC? It was Breytenbach's intention, during his trip to South Africa, to recruit Steve Biko as the Black trade unionist who would go to Europe. Surely a surprising choice, for, great as were Biko's political and community skills, he was not a trade unionist.

"Biko was a powerful figure though, a natural rallying point for Black Consciousness and non-ANC forces." (p. 99).

The implication is clear: Okhela's trade union activities were to be aimed at undermining the ANC.

Origins Unclear

Okhela's relationship to the ANC never becomes clear. "Okhela was formed in support of a *faction* within the ANC." (p. 62) (His italics.) Yet he claims that Solidarité, the organisation from which Okhela grew, was formed "on behalf of the ANC." (p. 77). The Okhela Manifesto states: "We derive our legitimacy from the African National Congress who requested us to form this organisation." Breytenbach has a footnote here: "This is not true. In fact the office-bearers of the ANC with whom we were in contact could not and did not encourage us in the name of the ANC." (p. 389) It would have been of great interest if Breytenbach had cast more light on this matter.

Of the Okhela Manifesto, Breytenbach writes: "The Manifesto's analysis of the role to be played by Whites in the struggle for liberation is probably still

fairly valid." Given this lukewarm approach to the Okhela document, it is surprising that he decided to publish it in full as an appendix to the book:

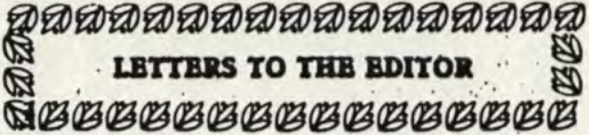
"To my mind the most irritating feature of the book is the use of names. In some instances I have used the real names of the people involved, mainly because it would have served no purpose to camouflage them. In many other cases I have modified or replaced the names — but behind every name there is a real person, and you may rest assured that the people concerned will recognise themselves." (p. 338).

What purpose can it possibly serve to hide the real identity of virtually every security policeman or prison warder? Why should the security police torturer, Spyker van Wyk, not be identified as such, instead of hiding behind the pseudonym of Nails van Byleveld? Why should Schnepfel, the parody of a man who had such great power over White political prisoners, be referred to as Schnorff? Why should Denis Goldberg, one of the comrades convicted at Rivonia, become Arthur Goldberg? Why should the UDF be referred to as the Union of Democratic Forces? This obfuscation is carried to such an extent that one almost starts to suspect that Breytenbach wants to protect those who uphold the apartheid system.

I will quote one further example of Breytenbach's complete lack of understanding of political processes. "Whatever privileges we South African political prisoners had or have are nearly exclusively due to the work of the IRCC." (International Red Cross Committee). (p. 206). I would rather say that improvements have come about for South African political prisoners primarily because of the disciplined, principled struggles of the political prisoners against the draconian authorities (not to mention the activities of the world-wide anti-apartheid movement). But then Breytenbach himself requested not be kept with the other White political prisoners — even though he does not mention this.

This book is definitely not a meaningful contribution to progressive writing about South Africa. The sections on prison conditions are worth reading, but the chief interest of the book is as an illustration of the individualistic preoccupations and destructive criticisms which come about when intellectuals are not able to discipline themselves and work within the structures of the mass movement.

Geus van de Suid



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE INTELLIGENTSIA MUST BE WON OVER TO OUR SIDE

From Comrades in Africa

Dear Editor,

We write in response to the article by Comrade Ruth Nhere (*African Communist* No 99, 4th Quarter 1984) on the "Dangers of 'Legal Marxism' in South Africa".

In agreeing with many of the points raised by the author, we must also concur that the 'ideological battlefield should not be surrendered by default' and that all manifestations of left or right opportunism must be fought without compromise. However, this ideological struggle cannot be won only by attacks on such trends and tendencies. We must recognise firstly that there is a dynamic and predominantly healthy debate in South Africa on a wide range of issues of crucial importance to our struggle — some of which is reflected in journals quoted by the author.

Secondly, by and large, the input of our liberation alliance into this debate has to date been insufficient. To some extent this can be explained by objective conditions. The SACP in particular has the responsibility of ensuring that this is corrected: by distribution of the SACP Programme and other theoretical material as well as material addressing the burning issues of the day. This material must be supportive where it is necessary to raise the level of debate and uncompromisingly criticise material which serves the interests of the enemy.

Marxism/Leninism has taught us that we must win the intelligentsia over to the side of the revolutionary forces, which in our situation means from all the population groups of South Africa. We also know however that this strata is prone to petty-bourgeois vacillation, to the desire for quick, easy and radical solutions, to the denigration of the painstaking tasks of underground

and mass work and to a rejection of the rigours and discipline required of a vanguard revolutionary movement.

In tracing the roots of petty-bourgeois revolutionism in South Africa, it is inadequate and misleading to see this as a result only of 'the special type of colonialism operating in our society' and the consequent 'composition of the intelligentsia'. The history of our struggle, in particular the activities of the PAC, the NEUM and elements from within the BCM, demonstrates that petty-bourgeois ideology can take and has taken root amongst the oppressed. To argue otherwise is to single out the White intelligentsia as the only source of ideological deviation and to denigrate the positive role played by a small but increasing number of White intellectuals. If anything, the recent period has been characterised by a far wider acceptance within White democratic circles of the theory and practice of our liberation alliance, notwithstanding the right and left deviations of a minority within these circles.

The author uses the terms academics and intellectuals as if they were swearwords commonly accepted in Marxist terminology. Failure to clearly differentiate between revolutionary intellectuals and those who serve the interests of the ruling class is to alienate revolutionary intellectuals and some misguided but well-intentioned individuals and drive them into the camp of the ultra-left who are correctly the object of Comrade Nhere's attack.

We are not informed by Comrade Nhere which writings are "so 'academic' as to appear irrelevant to political reality". When Lenin discussed the existence of only two ideologies — either working class or bourgeois — he referred to the fact that theory objectively serves the interests of either the bourgeoisie or the revolutionary movement. Ideology, whatever form it may take, is never irrelevant to the class struggle and, to assume it can be, is precisely to surrender the ideological battlefield by default.

The author correctly observes that the working class cannot acquire a socialist consciousness purely in the economic sphere but that this must be brought to it by a vanguard party.

However, in apparent contradiction to this truth, she asserts that 'anti-communism will not win them (ie: left or right wing opportunists) support among the organised working class'. Over a century of working class struggle and innumerable setbacks to the international working class movement have amply demonstrated that anti-communism is a powerful weapon, often successfully used to mislead the working class. The only guarantee against this is the capacity of the working class party to impart its ideology to the working class and its allies — to bring to them socialist consciousness and

loyalty to their party, the only party that can unswervingly and unselfishly serve their interests. This is one reason why the working class party must win to its side the revolutionary intelligentsia who have historically played and in future will play a role in this educative process albeit under the guiding influence and discipline of the party and in concert with intellectuals from the ranks of the working class.

HOW FREEDOM CAN BE WON

From Betha Sofe Dlandawonye

Dear Editor,

I was born and raised in Western Native Township next to Sophiatown. My father collected dry cleaning for a dry cleaning factory in Alberton and my mother was a nurse at a hospital in Roodepoort. My parents, like all parents, wanted to give their children an education — that was their main aim in life and therefore their main sacrifice.

I finished school and entered University in the early 1970's. I was expelled from the university because I participated in a political strike and demonstration with other students. My education came to an abrupt end.

The alternative was to look for a job. I had a brother and a sister who were still at school and as the cost of living increased it became increasingly difficult for my parents to meet the rent and other bills. If you are late with your monthly payments you are evicted from your house. Even though the education is inferior if you are black in South Africa, it was important that the two younger children should stay on at school.

I became interested in working-class and liberation politics at the climax of the 1973 Durban strike and other political battles which were being waged by our people — workers, the youth in the Black Consciousness movement and other student organisations. One battle which I will never forget is the Carltonville Anglo American miners' strike when the workers complained of their conditions and 69 workers were murdered in cold blood by the South African police. It was then that I realised the degree of suppression of a fascist state. The miners are the pillar of our economy.

Today the South African economy is in a shambles. The Chief Minister of the Ciskei, Lennox Sebe, intends to build a 25 million Rand airport in his bantustan. The infant mortality remains at 130 per 1,000 births — one of the highest in African rural areas. Hours are spent in fetching water for the family use in their dwellings and almost one-fifth of all schoolchildren show signs of malnutrition.

The homeland and apartheid policies are a financial disaster, a moral degradation and a political nightmare.

It is by linking the political and economic struggles with the armed struggle that we will bring about change in South Africa. This can be achieved through the ANC, SACTU and the South African Communist Party on the one hand, and through Umkhonto we Sizwe on the other hand!

We must attack the enemy daily!

We must resist forced removals!



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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