

BOOK Review

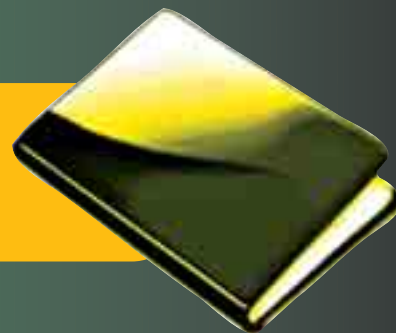


ANC: A VIEW FROM MOSCOW

BY Vladimir Shubin 1999

Cape Town: Mayibuye books.

Review by
Mzukisi Gaba, Staff Commissar



Comrade Dr Vladimir Shubin was involved from the late 1960s in political and practical support of the liberation movements in Southern Africa and was a Soviet representative at the ANC National Conference in Durban in July 1991.

From 1993 to 1995 he was a Senior research Fellow at the University of the Western Cape and is currently Deputy Director of the African Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He is also the author of Social Democracy and Southern Africa (Progress, 1989, Moscow).

This historical account of the events in South Africa following the banning of the ANC in 1960 covers a period of three decades. Essentially the interpretation of developments in the South African revolution is presented from Marxist-Leninist perspectives. In light of the Rooi gevaar (Red danger)


propagated by the apartheid regime in the heydays of the Cold War, the book describes the real nature of relations between the Soviet Union and South African Freedom Fighters.

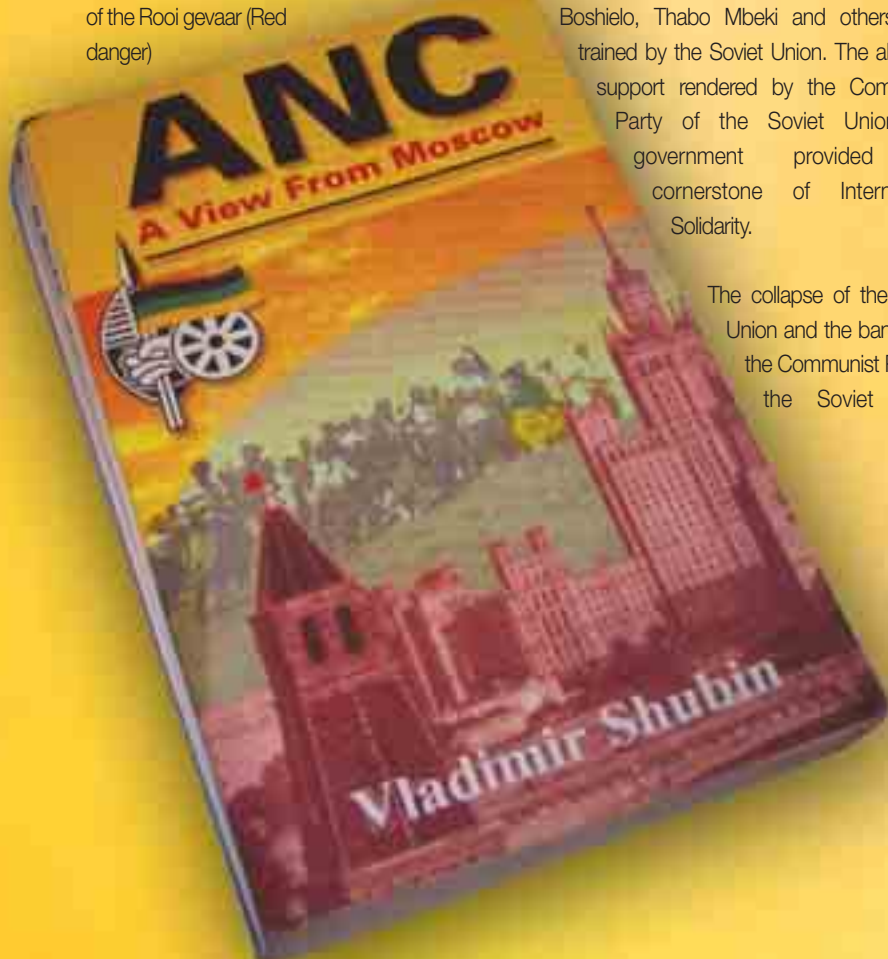
By exposing the myth of Soviet threat to Africa, the book provides reliable information about the contribution of the Soviet people in the liberation of South Africa and Southern Africa. The strength of the book derives from its rigorous research and presentation of information from primary sources and personal impressions. Dr Shubin personally met almost all the comrades who studied underground in the former Soviet Union. Information gleaned from personal interviews has enriched the content of the book and whets the appetite of the reader.

The book sheds light on how South African revolutionaries such as Moses Kotane, Flag Boshelo, Thabo Mbeki and others were trained by the Soviet Union. The all-round support rendered by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and government provided the cornerstone of International Solidarity.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the banning of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

(CPSU) brought about a hostile foreign policy towards South African freedom fighters. In June 1992 F W De Klerk made an official state visit to Russia. The visit by de Klerk tarnished the good image of Soviet solidarity support. To add insult to injury, Boris Yeltsin assured De Klerk that "Mandela would not be received as the ANC President in Moscow but would be visiting the Russian capital as an international figure, a fighter for human rights".

The attitude of the Russian authorities contributed to the postponement of Mandela's visit to Moscow. The deviation in Russian policy towards South Africa was challenged by the state Duma (parliament) as well by newly formed left organizations. By reading **ANC: A view from Moscow** one gets a different perspective of anti-imperialist struggles and challenges facing liberation movements at the time of collapse of the Soviet Union. Also significant is the impact of globalization on international relations. Dr Shubin's book is an invaluable contribution in the theory and practice of the South African revolution. For revolutionaries to stay on course a sense of historical mission is a necessity. 



TO SHARPEN OUR IDEOLOGICAL WEAPONS THE FOLLOWING READINGS ARE RECOMMENDED:

- No easy walk to Freedom , biography of Nelson Mandela
- Moses Kotane a biography by Brian Bunting
- The political lectures and diary of Jack Simons, Novo Catengue by Marion Sparg
- All my life and all my strength by Ray Alexander Simons
- Peasants revolt by Govan Mbeki
- Reconstruction and development programme by the ANC