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Step Up The Fight
For Freedom

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STATEMENUU'T ON THE R ACIST E LECTIONS

T HE CENTRAL COMMITTEE of the South African Communist

Party hails our people and especially our working class as the real victors of the
September 6 racist elections. After five years of emergency rule and unending
terror we showed that bullets, batons, whips and dogs cannot stop our irresistible
march to freedom.

While six per cent of the population put crosses on ballot papers, we have
demonstrated to the whole world that the future is in our hands and not in those of
the racist parliament. The voting campaign for the white parliament and its two
puppet talking shops was completely overshadowed and sidelined by the open
defiance and resistance of the voteless majority. The whole world saw these racist
elections for what they really were - an insult to democracy and humanity.
It is crystal clear to all that the results of the elections will not be found in the
ballot boxes but in the actions of the voteless millions who voted with their feet,
with defiance and resistance in the factories, in the community, in the schools and
universities and in the churches.

Those who will assemble in Cape Town to pass laws cannot, by any civilised
standard, be regarded as constituting a parliament. The government which will be
appointed can have no legitimacy and will have no mandate to rule. It is no
accident that the regime celebrated its return to power by mowing down scores of
peaceful black protesters in a hail of bullets.

We say to our working class, to all the oppressed and to all genuine democrats
that the future continues to be in our hands. We must know our strength and use it
with more and more vigour. Without us

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the whole economy grinds to a halt. Without our participation the whole state
apparatus can hardly function. Without our consent to be governed the whole
country becomes ungovernable.

The Spring Offensive must be pursued and must reach new heights in the seasons
which follow until we have won our freedom. If we realise our strength and our
power and use them to the full we can surely see to it that this election is the last
of its kind.

To those among the white community who have seen the writing on the wall and
who voted against a future of camouflaged apartheid, we say that you will not

find the answer within the narrow confines of white politics. There is no middle road between racism and majority rule in one democratic, united South Africa. And only when this is achieved will there be peace in our country which, in the words of the Freedom Charter, belongs to all who live in it, black and white. To our friends outside and to the whole international community we say that you should judge de Klerk and his group by their deeds and not by the sweet talk designed for international consumption. Events have shown over and over again that the only hope for a real solution lies in the direction of increased internal and external pressures.

The new white president has over and over again declared that the reform programme which he is trying to sell will never lead to majority rule in our country. This is the true purpose and meaning of his fiveyear plan which is designed to find another way to maintain white domination and privilege. And the terror which he unleashed against peaceful demonstrators is an indication of the mechanisms he intends to use to impose his type of 'reform'.

Despite the bows which de Klerk has made in the direction of negotiations, there can be little doubt that if he ever comes to a genuine negotiating table it would be the result of struggle and pressure and not of dialogue or well-meaning diplomacy alone.

The period ahead must be seen as a period of struggle and sacrifice. Let us raise our own intifada to new heights. Let us say with one voice that we will spare nothing in our quest for a united, democratic, nonracial South Africa based on one person one vote. Let us see to it that September 6 will go down in history as the last election of its kind.

Through our defiance and the historic stayaway we have baptised de Klerk in fire. The task ahead is clear - to keep the racists under relentless pressure.

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-AC uirUHA IN BLOW Tro T H N 41ATEIONdALIST PARTYv

THE NATIONALIST PARTY was dealt a crushing blow in the September 6 election, suffering heavy losses in seats and votes both to the left and right. But if there is a lesson taught by the election it is that the regime was mortally wounded not by its opponents at the hustings, the Conservative and Democratic Parties, but by the combination of pressures, national and international, harnessed over the years by the liberation movement and given the most forceful expression during the election period through the Defiance Campaign of the Mass Democratic Movement.

As a result of the election de Klerk may draw some comfort from the thought that he is now safely installed as President instead of Acting President, but he holds office in terms of a constitution whose legitimacy has been totally destroyed by the resistance of the people. The figures alone tell the story.

Under the tricameral parliament, power is vested in the white house which can outvote the other two houses combined. The white electorate for the September 6 election

totalled 3,157,225, out of a population now estimated at between 37 and 40 million. Only 66% of the white voters went to the poll, and of those who voted only 48% supported the Nationalist Party, whose power base thus rests on only 1 million whites, less than 3% of the total population of South Africa.

A 34% abstention rate among the white electorate is extraordinarily high, indicating either lack of confidence in South Africa's constitutional arrangements or outright boycott in response to the appeal of the Mass Democratic Movement. As for the Coloured and Indian houses, the overwhelming majority of the electorate once again registered their rejection of these sham bodies by responding wholeheartedly to the boycott call.

The decline of the Nationalist Party has proceeded in inverse proportion to the growth of the Mass Democratic Movement from the time of the 1976 Soweto uprising onwards. Nationalist Party strength reached its peak in 1977, when 64% of the electorate voted Nat. and the party gained 134 seats in the House of Assembly. Perhaps it is significant that it was at this time that the Cabinet appointed a committee under P.W. Botha to draw up a new constitutional plan to embrace the Coloured and Indian people, leading to the establishment of the three racial parliaments.

AN OUTRAGE

The sense of outrage generated by the ghetto parliament, specifically designed to disfranchise the African majority, has grown steadily in the intervening period, leading to increased confrontation with the state, with serious consequences for the regime both nationally and internationally. In the election which took place in 1987, the regime lost both seats and votes, and this decline has continued steadily.

	1977	1987	1989
Nationalist Party	134 seats	123 seats	93 seats
Conservative Party	-	22 seats	39 seats
Progressive F. Party	17 seats	19 seats	33 seats
(1989 Democratic Party)			
votes	64% votes	52.4% votes	48% votes
		26.4% votes	31% votes
		14.1% votes	20% votes

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The apparent gain of the Conservative party between 1987 and 1989 is illusory. Of the votes lost by the Nationalist Party it has been calculated that twice as many (11% of the 1987 total) went to the Democratic Party as to the Conservative Party (6%). Furthermore, the CP was swelled by former HNP voters, who polled less than 1% this year as compared to 3.1% in 1987.

There are those who think that Conservative Party leader Dr Treurnicht today stands in the same position as Dr Malan in the period before 1948, with the prospect of once again rallying Afrikanerdom behind him and storming the citadels of power. But this is to misread the nature of the contradiction dividing South African society today. It is not Afrikaner nationalism but the national liberation movement which is posing an irresistible demand for change. It is not Afrikanerdom but white supremacy which is under threat today, and Afrikaners, like all other sections of the white population, have to decide which side they are on. The laager no longer offers protection. With Stellenbosch academics

travelling to Dakar, Lusaka and Harare to talk to the ANC, and Stellenbosch students and teachers marching in support of the Defiance Campaign, it is clear that the laager has been irreparably breached.

MASS REJECTION

Polarisation has undoubtedly taken place, but the centre of gravity in white politics has clearly shifted to the left. And it is popular mass action which has brought the shift about. Only 2 million whites went to the polls on September 6, but twice as many people of all races demonstrated their rejection of the tricameral parliament by going on strike in response to the call of the Mass Democratic Movement. And do we need to point out that it was President Oliver Tambo who in his January 8 message at the beginning of the year issued the ANC's stirring call to defiance, a call that was endorsed by the SACP and SACTU and enthusiastically responded to by the masses of our people in all centres? Let us pay our salute to the brave people of South Africa who took to the streets to demonstrate their rejection of white supremacy and all its institutions, its parliament and police force, its propaganda and false promises. Many of them gave their lives

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as de Klerk ordered his bully boys to wade into action and restore "law and order". Yes, this same de Klerk who claimed afterwards that 75% of the voters had opted for "reform" showed himself in his true colours when he praised the police for doing their duty and defending civilised values. What sort of civilisation is it that sanctions the killing of unarmed men, women and children in cold blood, that detains, tortures and murders those who peacefully demonstrate in support of their demand for the right to vote? de Klerk says he will not negotiate with the ANC until it renounces violence, but it is he and his white supremacists who rule by force because they deny the vote to the majority of the population, and then resort to violence when their illegitimate rule is challenged. Day by day the people are raising the tempo of their challenge, steadily winning more support nationally and internationally for their cause. One of the -nost encouraging features of the recent period has been the manifestation of the high level of consciousness and organisation displayed by our working class and its leadership. The July conference of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was the best attended and most militant ever, passing resolutions on the Mass Democratic Movement, the Workers' Charter, the anti-election campaign and proposals for negotiations which clearly set out the long-term perspectives of the struggle for democracy and freedom.

Both at this congress and at the subsequent workers' summit it was inspiring to see the growing trends in the trade union movement towards the unification of the working class and the strengthening of its organisations. The mass defiance and strikes before, during and after the elections proved that the effort of the delegates was not confined to drafting resolutions but that some solid work had been done by way of organising and preparing for action. Nor was this action confined to the workers. Students, academics, the intelligentsia, people from all classes and all

sections, including a growing number of whites, identified themselves with the objectives and methods of struggle of the liberation movement. Such was the scale of anti-regime activity, such the unity in action, that, despite the emergency, banned organisations and individuals were unbanned, and the slogans and symbols of the underground were visible everywhere. What happened during

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and after the election illustrated the accuracy of the analysis contained in the Communist Party's programme adopted earlier this year *The Path To Power* which declared:

"All-round mass action, merging with organised and armed activity, led by a well-organised underground, and international pressure, are the keys to the build-up for the seizure of power. Seizure of power will be a product of escalating and progressive merging of mass political and military struggle with the likelihood of culminating in an insurrection". (*The Path To Power* p.57.)

Now more than ever, in the wake of the election, it is necessary to keep this perspective before the people, because both from the regime and from its allies abroad efforts are being intensified to bring about some sort of negotiations which will bring "peace" to South Africa. We in the liberation movement have never been opposed to negotiations which are a cover for surrender, yet that is all the regime has on offer at the moment.

No MANDATE

de Klerk can hardly claim to have secured a "mandate" for his five-year reform programme, and the miniscule size of his power base makes it unrealistic to expect any radical initiatives. Nor did he promise any during his election campaign. His five-year programme amounted to no more than verbiage, without a single concrete proposal to enable the electorate to know what he was talking about. And the real intention of the plan was revealed by Minister of Information Stoffel van der Merwe, who said in an interview that Nationalist party strategy was designed "consciously to marginalise the ANC". (*Independent*, June 30, 1989)

The weakness of de Klerk is not only that his power base is crumbling under his feet, but also that he and his cronies totally lack the will to change South Africa into the sort of united, nonracial and democratic South Africa envisaged in the Freedom Charter to which the majority of South Africans are now committed. So any sort of negotiations at this stage are unlikely to be productive, and attempts from whatever quarter to coerce the movement into premature discussions will need to be firmly rebuffed. The ANC has clearly set out its conditions for negotiations in a paper which has secured the support in quick

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succession of the front-line states, the Organisation of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement. But it is not merely brilliant diplomacy which has won the ANC international recognition and support on such a massive scale that even the

Americans and other Western governments have had to change their stance. It is above all the mass action of the people.

In its discussion paper on the issue of negotiations issued last June the ANC made it plain that

"discussion of the whole question of negotiations in no way affects, and should not affect, the overall strategic orientation of our movement and the tasks that arise from that orientation. Our strategic task is the destruction of the apartheid regime and the transfer of power to the people. This we seek to achieve through mass political action, armed struggle, the international isolation of the apartheid system and by ensuring that the ANC plays its proper role as the revolutionary vanguard of our struggling people".

Acting in the spirit of this declaration, the people of South Africa seized the initiative during the election campaign and forced the regime on to the defensive. de Klerk's five-year plan was buried and forgotten. Nobody talked about it at election meetings and it did not feature in the newspapers. All attention was focussed on the demands of the Mass Democratic Movement and the Defiance Campaign it launched to secure the implementation of those demands.

Over the last decade we have succeeded in shifting the mountain. Yes, South Africa has changed in all sorts of ways, the enemy has been forced to change tack and retreat on many fronts. He is still coming forward with new "concessions", but his bottom line has not altered. All his talk of group rights, freedom of association, a negotiated constitution and bill of rights is mere camouflage designed to retain the essence of white power and white domination. de Klerk has stated over and over again that one person one vote in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa is not on his agenda.

Well, it remains on ours. We will not for a moment suspend our struggle on every front until our bottom line has been achieved. No matter what the "concessions" and "reforms", no matter what the pressures from various sources, we will adhere to the pledge we made in 1955 at the Congress of the People that we will continue

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to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes set out in the Freedom Charter have been won. We do not scorn genuine concessions or reforms. But we will not be fobbed off. We remain convinced that "our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities; that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthrights without distinction of colour, race, sex or beier. As the founders of the United Democratic Front proclaimed so insistently in 1985, "WE WANT FREEDOM, AND WE WANT IT NOW!"

CAPITALISM vs. SOCIALISM

B OURGEOIS IDEOLOGISTS and their media have been falling over themselves in their haste to suggest that recent developments in the socialist countries prove that socialism doesn't work, that capitalism has proved its superiority as a social system, that communism as an ideology is an outdated pipe-dream. Under the circumstances it is more necessary than ever to pay

attention to ideological issues. Marxist-Leninists are called upon to give reasons for their conviction not only that socialism is the only way out of the mess in which the capitalist world finds itself, but also that socialism can only be achieved by the revolutionary reconstruction of society based on the elimination of class and national antagonisms.

In *The Path to Power*, the programme of the South African Communist Party adopted at its 7th Congress earlier this year, the first paragraph in the section devoted to "The World Revolutionary Process" begins:

"The revolutionary struggle in South Africa is part of a world revolutionary process whose main tendency is the transition from capitalism to socialism, from societies based on exploitation to a new world free of exploitation and oppression".

No matter what the setbacks and disappointments experienced in the socialist countries, the Marxists' philosophical outlook and

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interpretation of history have not altered. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles", stated the Communist Manifesto in 1848. Those class struggles still continue throughout the capitalist world, though their form has changed.

We do not deny the seriousness of the problems confronting the socialist countries, but that does not mean we must abandon Marxism-Leninism. Our analysis of political, economic and social trends in all societies still leads us to the conclusion that capitalism has been unable to solve the problems of production and distribution in such a way as to end class and national conflict. Oppressor and oppressed still stand in opposition to one another, divided by ownership of and access to the means of production. We still believe that socialism holds out the only hope of eliminating the major contradictions and sources of conflict and war in the modern world.

Because of the reform and rectification procedures now being adopted in many of the socialist countries, the question "What is socialism?" is being posed with some urgency. In our view, this is not just a matter of techniques, of balancing books and increasing productivity, though these issues are not unimportant. The essence of socialism, says the SACP Programme, is that:

"it is a humane system which promotes the free and all-round development of all individuals in society...

"Through social ownership and democratic control of the means of production, the socialist economy is characterised by a qualitatively higher level of planning and co-ordination than is possible under capitalism. Development is not haphazard and spontaneous. It is not left to chance nor to the greed of a few exploiters. It is made to serve the needs of society as a whole. In this way it is possible to ensure that the combined wealth and human energies of society are harnessed to benefit society as a whole."

By contrast, the capitalist system is based on the concept "Each one for himself and the devil take the hindmost", in the somewhat naive belief that what is good

for General Motors is good for everybody. But the achievements of capitalism cannot be judged by contemplating only the choices available to the bourgeoisie in New York, Paris, Tokyo and London. Despite undeniable advances in production capacity and techniques, the most

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developed capitalist societies are still plagued with class and ethnic divisions, and the gap between the haves and have-nots grows wider with every passing year. The bourgeoisie tries to conceal the true meaning of its failure to solve the problems of production and distribution in the advanced capitalist countries, but no amount of clever propaganda or manipulation can disguise the growing gulf between the peoples of the first and third worlds. The so-called "prosperity" of the peoples of the first world is achieved only at the expense of the peoples of the third world.

CONDITIONS OF POVERTY

The World Bank has calculated that in 1988 a total of 950 million people throughout the world were living in absolute poverty - "a condition of life so degraded by disease, illiteracy, malnutrition and squalor as to deny its victims basic human necessities". About 350 million of these impoverished people live in South Asia, another 250 million in sub-Saharan Africa and about 80 million in Latin America. "The majority of humankind is worse off now than about 10 years ago", says the World Bank report (quoted in the magazine West Africa October 17-23, 1988).

They are the victims of capitalism, imperialism and neocolonialism, not of socialism. Whatever their complaints, none of the citizens of the socialist countries lives in "a condition of life so degraded by disease, illiteracy, malnutrition and squalor as to deny its victims basic human necessities". Nor is the poverty of third world countries attributable to their relationship with the socialist countries, which have never possessed colonies or investments in the mode of the imperialists and neo-colonialists.

The "prosperity" of which the capitalist world boasts means prosperity and profitability for the investors and entrepreneurs, spectacular gains and losses for the gamblers on the stock exchange who live on the proceeds of other people's labour. The "free trade" flag which Mrs Thatcher and George Bush nail to their mast as the symbol of open competition and enterprise is everywhere transformed into monopoly whereby a handful of property owners control the destiny of millions who have nothing to sell but their labour power. Our own South Africa, where between them Anglo-American, Sanlam, S.A. Mutual and

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Rembrandt own 80% of the shares traded on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, is one of the worst examples of this. While the majority of whites live in conditions of privilege, the majority of blacks live in hell.

The condition of the world today, therefore, by no means indicates that capitalism has won the battle and that socialism has failed. The peoples of some socialist countries have become very self-critical of late, and we do not say they have not

good reason. But many of them take their own achievements too much for granted. In his speech in November 1987 on the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, Mikhail Gorbachev pointed out:

"It is essential to assess the past with a sense of historical responsibility and on the basis of historical truth. This has got to be done, first, because of the tremendous importance of those years for the destiny of our country and the destiny of socialism.

"Second, because those years are at the centre of the everlasting discussions both in our country and abroad, where, along with a search for the truth, attempts are often made to discredit socialism as a new social system and as a realistic alternative to capitalism".

In his speech Gorbachev said nothing must be done to conceal the "serious damage done to the cause of socialism and to the authority of the party" by the crimes and repressions stemming from an abuse of power. But, he added, the real achievements of the Soviet peoples under socialism must also not be forgotten. In the period since the Revolution the Soviet people withstood war, civil war and famine in the early years when military elements of 14 capitalist countries combined with the counter-revolutionaries in Russia itself in a bid to "strangle the Bolshevik baby in its cradle". They transformed the economy and built up the industrial strength which enabled them to survive the challenge of Hitlerite aggression. Arising from the ruins of World War 2 they reconstructed their homeland and developed Soviet strength to the point where their enemies were forced to realise that socialism was militarily indestructible. They put the first man and woman into space.

Under Soviet power the conditions of the Soviet people have been advanced. Whatever the faults and crimes on which the CPSU itself is concentrating attention in terms of perestroika and

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glasnost, nobody can deny that feudalism and class oppression have been eliminated, that private profit and exploitation have been replaced by social ownership of land and the means of production, that socialism has been given a firm base.

INTERNATIONALISM

Above all, the October revolution breathed new life into the concept of proletarian internationalism, which had been obscured by the frenzy and slaughter of the First World War. The establishment of the first workers' state not only freed from colonialism the various nations of the Tsarist empire but also signalled to colonially oppressed peoples everywhere that the era of national liberation had opened.

The historical significance of the Soviet Union is that it established a firm base and dependable rear for all peoples fighting for freedom, justice and peace. Despite all bourgeois propaganda to the contrary, and despite all the revelations and changes of emphasis in the sphere of foreign policy that have accompanied the campaigns of perestroika and glasnost, that is as true today as it was in 1917.

Nor let us forget the achievements of the other socialist countries who have shared the burden of anti-imperialist struggle and social transformation in the face of violent counter-revolution spearheaded by the United States and other western countries. Nothing can efface from the memory of humankind the patriotism and spectacular courage of the Vietnamese people who rescued their country from the French and American invaders. And what of the magnificent victories of the Cuban people in the face of US aggression and sanctions, and the splendid triumph scored, in the name of internationalism, on the battlefields of Angola, opening the way to Namibian independence and undermining the stability of the apartheid regime in South Africa itself?. What of the unremitting labours of the German Democratic Republic and other socialist countries in the sphere of solidarity with liberation movements and newly independent countries? In our view, the achievements of the socialist countries, for all their shortcomings, give grounds for confidence that the socialist perspective is realistic and realisable. They have reinforced our

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conviction that the world must and can be transformed from a stamping ground for entrepreneurs and monopolists into an arena of collaboration and co-operation for the satisfaction of social needs, so that the free development of each can be the condition for the free development of all. The moral superiority of the socialist ethic remains a constant challenge to capitalism.

THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

In particular it should be remembered that it is from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries that most meaningful initiatives in the fight for world peace today emanate. It is from President Gorbachev that concrete proposals have been made for demilitarising international relations, and at the same time the concept of moving from the economy of armaments to an economy of disarmament has been advanced. In his address to the United Nations last December (1988) Gorbachev proposed that the capitalist and socialist countries should get together, under the auspices of the United Nations, in a "joint effort to put an end to an era of wars, confrontation and regional conflicts, to aggressions against nature, to the terror of hunger and poverty as well as to political terrorism".

In our view these proposals do not imply that the fight for peace and the fight for socialism and national liberation are in any way contradictory. On the contrary, it is only through the extension of socialism and democracy worldwide that the sources of national and class conflict will be eliminated. Yes, we still live in the era of transition from capitalism to communism, and it is still the duty of communists everywhere to do whatever is in their power to bring this transition about.

Clearly nothing must be ventured which brings closer the danger of nuclear conflict and the termination of the human race. On the other hand, everything we do must be set in the context of our overall perspective of the need to organise and fight for the achievement of socialism and democracy on the basis of MarxismLeninism and proletarian internationalism.

To realise this objective the SACP has called for the strengthening of relations between Communist Parties internationally so that they can achieve their maximum effectiveness. There should be more uniting communists than dividing them. The era of

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capitalism, imperialism, racism and reaction, of domination, repression, aggression and war is drawing to a close; the era of socialism and democracy, of planning for the future, is unfolding before our eyes. Let communists join hands to speed the change.

THE CASE OF S.P. BUNTING

THE 7TH CONGRESS of the South African Communist Party held earlier this year instructed its Political Bureau to "re-examine the cases of S.P. Bunting and others expelled from the CPSA in the early 1930s as representatives of an alleged 'right wing danger' with a view to the annulment of the expulsion orders issued against them".

In the case of S.P. Bunting, the Political Bureau has issued the following statement:

Sidney Percival Bunting, 1873 - 1936 Hero of the South African Revolution

This tribute to the memory and achievements of a great hero of the liberation movement is long overdue. It is indeed more than high time for the Party and its allies to restore SPB to the role of honour where he rightly belongs.

He was unjustly expelled from the Party, together with other leading militants, in 1931 during the great 'purge' carried out by international communists of alleged 'right-wing deviationists'.

The reasons given for his expulsion were flimsy to the point of being ridiculous. He was accused of appealing for leniency when defending political prisoners in court, and of speaking from the same platform as members of the ANC and ICU. What a travesty of justice it was to condemn him for having the courage and foresight to initiate what would in time become the settled policy of the entire mass democratic movement!

A founding member of the Party, he edited its paper The International, was elected chairman in 1924, and turned the party away from its traditional concentration on white working-class politics towards the country's first non-racial party with a mainly black leadership.

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Although he had doubts about certain aspects of the 'Black Republic' policy adopted by the 6th Congress of the Comintern in 1928, it was left to him to explain and win support for the policy on his return to South Africa from Moscow. He represented the Party in the Tembuland constituency during the 1929 general election on the platform of majority African rule, and met with great hostility from white lumpen hooligans, police and officials. He and Gana Makabeni, his election agent, had to stand trial in more than a dozen prosecutions at the height of the campaign.

Two years later a misguided clique of Party members who had gained control of the Central Committee had him expelled, an act of betrayal from which he never recovered. Umsebenzi (the weekly Party paper at that time) acknowledged that under his leadership the Party began to organise African workers in the struggle against racism and imperialist oppression.

THREE MEMBERS REINSTATED

IN 1937 THREE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS were arrested in the Soviet Union and charged with 'counter-revolutionary' activity. They were expelled from the Communist Party of South Africa by the Communist International (Comintern) and sentenced to undergo imprisonment in labour camps.

Two of them, the brothers M. and P. Richter, later appeared in court on the separate charge of preparing a jail mutiny and organising sabotage. Convicted on March 1, 1938, they were sentenced to death and executed, probably on the same day. The third, Lazar Bach, died in a labour camp in north-east Siberia on March 10, 1941, reportedly of natural causes.

The sentences on all three have since been annulled by the Soviet judicial authorities. At its 7th Congress recently, the South African Communist Party adopted the following resolution:

"In the light of information received from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the effect that P. Richter and M. Richter, executed by the Soviet authorities on 1 March, 1938, and Lazar Bach, who died in a Soviet labour camp of 'natural causes' on 10

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March, 1941, had been expelled from the Communist Party and convicted on the basis of false evidence extracted from them by the Soviet security authorities, this 7th Congress of the SACP decides that the three comrades should be posthumously reinstated as members of the Party".

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WILLIE KALK, one of the pioneers of the South African Communist Party and a leading figure in the history of the trade union movement, died in Johannesburg on August 27 at the age of 89.

The son of social-democrat parents who emigrated to South Africa from Germany, Willie Kalk was born in 1900. Trained as a cabinet maker, he became a Communist at an early age and with E.R. Roux played a prominent part in building the Young Communist League in the early 1920s. Graduating to the CP itself, Kalk and Roux were amongst the main supporters of S.P. Bunting in turning the Party towards the African masses. Introducing a report on "Native Affairs" at the 1924 congress of the Communist Party, Kalk said:

"The Communist Party must recognise the necessity of supporting every form of native movement which tends to undermine or weaken capitalism and imperialism, and must fight for race equality of the natives on the economic and political field. The Communist Party must use every instrument which will

induce the trade unions to admit native workers. Failing this, it must organise the natives into unions of their own, and apply United Front tactics".

Kalk himself did just that, playing a big part in the move to organise African industrial unions which was sponsored by the Communist Party after the collapse of the I.C.U. He was a member of the Party's trade union committee with Solly Sachs, B. Weinbrenn and T.W. Thibedi which got a number of new unions off the ground. When he himself returned from the Lenin School in Moscow in 1930, he was given the task of organising the leather workers, and was secretary of the Leather Workers' Union until forced to resign from the post in 1953 by Justice Minister C.R Swart

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using his despotic powers under the Suppression of Communism Act. Kalk also had to resign from the NEC and Transvaal local committee of the S.A. Trades and Labour Council.

Kalk was a member of the Party's Executive Committee during the 1930s until the leadership was transferred to Cape Town in 1939. Together with Issy and Julia Wolfson and Julius Baker he was a member of the committee which set up the People's Bookshop in Johannesburg in the late 1930s, for many years a vital centre for the circulation of left-wing literature in the region.

Willie Kalk was a lifelong supporter of progressive causes and a friend of the Soviet Union. Although banned, he retained his connection with the trade unions, visiting their offices and offering advice and assistance. He was detained without trial during the 1960 state of emergency which followed the Sharpeville shooting. In 1987 he helped the NUM during the great mine strike.

IDRIS COX, a leading member of the Communist Party of Great Britain for many decades, died in Wales on June 25 at the age of 89. A true professional revolutionary, Idris Cox promoted the cause of the working class and the international Communist movement in many capacities - as national organiser, editor for a short period of the Daily Worker, and secretary of the party's International Department for 18 years from 1951. He was a staunch supporter of national liberation movements in many countries, including South Africa, and knew personally and worked with many leaders of the ANC and SACP.

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The True Face of
FW. de Klerk
by T. Halloran

For some time now our Party and our movement have pointed to the burgeoning crisis within the apartheid system. But a chain of events which began to unfold in January this year provokes questions as to whether we have fully grasped the depth of that crisis and the extent to which it has traumatised and made impotent those who occupy the commanding heights in the system we seek to destroy.

T HOSE EVENTS INCLUDED A POWER STRUGGLE within the Nationalist

Party between its pragmatist and Verwoerdian factions over the party leadership, a position which the latter grouping managed to secure for F.W. de Klerk by the narrowest of margins. This was at once followed by a struggle by the Nationalist Party itself to remove its own "Great Crocodile", P.W. Botha, from the State Presidency. This tussle culminated in Botha's disgruntled resignation and public denunciation of members of his own Cabinet.

Next came the September 6 elections in which the Nationalists suffered their biggest losses at the polls since they came to power in 1948. The Government lost 30 seats, of which 17 went to the Conservatives and 12 to the Democratic Party. These circumstances amount to far more than a "leadership crisis". They are better described as a crisis of leadership, showing irrefutably that the architects and administrators of apartheid have lost all sense of political direction.

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Such crises do not originate in the personality traits of individual political actors, although the latter will often reflect the former. We learn nothing about the real nature of the malaise currently afflicting the apartheid state apparatus by noting that Botha has a bald head, a choleric temper and no university degree, or that his successor, de Klerk, too, has a bald head, plays left-handed golf and holds a degree in law. If the recent historic events have taught South Africa anything, it must surely be that the era of personapolitics, in which policies could be seen as the by-product of the personal styles of men like Smuts, Verwoerd and Vorster, is irrevocably over. The racists are beginning to realise that a period in which socio-political realities must be faced squarely has already opened.

That the Government's ranks are divided is, of course, no revelation. The report of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group on Southern Africa, for instance, stated clearly in 1986 that their visit to South Africa had left them with the impression of a divided Government. But the recent leadership tussle made it clear that the divisions have deepened since then and are, perhaps, only being contained by a fearful sense of a need to hang together in the face of the threats posed by the far-right, on the one hand, and (more concretely) by the ANC, the UDF and their allies on the other.

A prime cause of the current schism has been dissatisfaction with the new constitutional arrangements and, in particular, the way in which they have been used to bypass the Nationalist caucus and to concentrate power in the hands of the State President and the security services. The situation had been exacerbated by the state of emergency which has turned the country into an oligarchy in which the police and military have virtually unfettered power. de Klerk's evident frustration at this state of affairs, combined with his status as Transvaal leader, made him the natural rallying point for the majority in the caucus. It is significant that Magnus Malan, Minister of Defence, was not a candidate in any of the ballots for the leadership of the Nationalist Party.

de Klerk is now in a far weaker and more compromised position than Botha ever was in presiding over a power-structure which is beginning to fall apart. Although he was the favoured candidate of the rightist wing of his party, the narrow margin by which his victory was achieved (a mere 8 votes out of a total of 130) ensures

that he will have to be sensitive, not only to the suggestions of the "pragmatists" in his own ranks, but also to the signals being sent him from Mining-House Finance's latest political creation, the newly-formed Democratic Party.

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These necessities will not sit easily with de Klerk's own "group"orientated ideology which retains tinges of Verwoerdian theory. However, the likelihoods are that he will have to live with this contradiction, since there is even greater enmity towards him from the ranks of the Conservative official opposition than was the case with Botha. This circumstance is an upshot of the fact that it was de Klerk who inherited the Transvaal leadership after Andries Treurnicht's defection from the Government and the formation of the Conservative Party in 1982. This promotion put de Klerk in the position of a Rightist forced to do battle with Rightists in the province where Conservative support reached its zenith. He is, thus, seen as a traitor to his own convictions by the Treurnichites, and came close to losing his own Vereeniging seat to one in the 1987 election.

It, therefore, seems unlikely that, with de Klerk at the helm, the Government will ever again be able to reach one of those cosy, unwritten "gentlemen's agreements" which so often characterised its relations with the old United Party and later (to some extent) with the Progressive Federal Party. The new helmsman's first task will be to try to construct such an understanding with such factions and groupings within the "whites-only" parliament, exclusive of the Conservatives, as can be enticed into the arrangement. He will have to pay a price in the form of policy concessions to achieve this understanding, but without it, parliament, as opposed to the presidency, will be unable to function effectively as a decision-maker.

How will de Klerk face up to the difficulties confronting him? Certainly he is not lacking in a certain kind of political training and background. The son of a Nationalist Senator and brother of W.A. de Klerk - the journalist and Calvinist intellectual who coined the terms *verligte* and *verkrampste* in the 1960s to distinguish Afrikaner political attitudes - he has been bred in the atmosphere of Afrikaner politics. Trained in law at the University of Potchefstroom, he is not an intellectual in the sense that his brother or the Minister of Bantu Education, Gerrit Viljoen, may be said to fit that description. He is, nonetheless, a more intelligent and reflective man than Botha and has a reputation for urbanity and affability which his predecessor never enjoyed.

These qualities are of course not at all inconsistent with ideological inflexibility. In fact de Klerk has shown no disposition to deviate from his own conception of the party line in any of the six Cabinet portfolios he has held. On the contrary, as Minister of National Education, he was responsible for legislation slashing state subsidies to universities which failed to curb political activity on their campuses. Although the Supreme Court rejected

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the law, de Klerk went ahead with the cuts, pleading a shortage of Government funds.

The capacity for ruthlessness that such action evidences is one factor in de Klerk's make-up which made him a focal leadership figure for the traditionalist Right within his party. Another is his Calvinist rectitude. He appears to have been untouched by the financial scandals currently sweeping the country and which have done much to discredit many high figures in the Nationalist Party. Further, de Klerk's distant, even abrasive relationship with Malan and the military place him at a remove from a source of power which a majority in the ruling party have begun to fear and mistrust.

de Klerk's Calvinism is sure to be a pivotal influence on his political thinking and decision-taking in the period ahead. In this regard, it is useful to recall that his alma mater, Potchefstroom University, has always served as a kind of intellectual centre for Calvinists generally and for the Doppe Kerk, smallest of the three Afrikaans Reformed Churches, in particular. It was here, in the 1960s that a group of academics and journalists, among them de Klerk's brother, Willem, began a process of critical examination of apartheid dogma in the light of their Christian beliefs. Their journal, *Woord en Daad*, carried cautiously worded but often telling criticisms of the system and became an irritant to its orthodox adherents during the era of Vorster's premiership.

Willem de Klerk has moved a fair way since those days. He became, along with Frederick Van Zyl Slabbert, an adviser to the Democratic Party - and his advice will carry weight, not least because he understands the mould of his brother's thinking and the options likely to attract him. Conversely, "F.W." can be expected to have a fair notion of the sort of advice his brother has offered the Democrats, especially on their contacts with the ANC and on what positions they should finally adopt on the issue of "group" rights. Some of the elements are, therefore, in place for the construction of an unspoken understanding stretching across the white parliament but excluding the Conservatives.

Can the scenario be realistically extended? Will the leaders of at least a sizeable section of white opinion muster up enough courage, imagination and statecraft to formulate constitutional proposals which match the demands of the vast mass of their compatriots for the total abolition of apartheid and the creation in its place of a unitary non-racial state in which the people govern through a universal franchise?

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Probably not. But what is undeniable is that the influence of ANC and UDF thinking has begun to percolate into the white assembly as a result of the contacts the Democrats and their advisers have had with those organisations. There is now a sizeable and influential body of opinion in de Klerk's own party who desire a speedy end to the state of emergency. But it is equally clear that de Klerk himself and those who supported his candidacy will be inclined to resist such pressures and will be disinclined to ignore the racist mouthings and threats from the forces to the right of the Government.

The Fmtas of Life

Overriding these considerations are a set of demographic and economic facts of life which must engage de Klerk's attention if he is serious about negotiating a

new constitutional dispensation. They are facts conveyed by the statistics cited in a recent article by Hermann Giliomee, Professor of Political Studies at the University of Cape Town and a participant in the historic 1987 Dakar conference. In an argument favouring a "compromise" aimed at accommodating the concept of "dual identities" in South Africa, Giliomee points out that Whites will constitute only 10 per cent of the population in 2010 and only 13 per cent of its urban residents; and according to Trust Bank's managing director, Chris van Wyk, South Africa's losses of foreign reserves due to sanctions will total R30 billion (about £7 billion) by next year. (The Independent, 5.4.1989)

Far from indicating that a future South Africa must be based on the notion of "group rights", these statistics point to the imperative need for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa on the lines set out in the Freedom Charter and the ANC's constitutional guidelines. Time and the pressures of struggle will determine whether de Klerk can be made to recognise this fact.

However, it is not the personal response of any individual leadership figure which will determine the white establishment's strategy in the present critical phase. The only reliable guide in this respect is the class make-up of that establishment and the dialectical interaction between its various components. To read these class realities right is to see them in the context of the socio-economic formation which ultimately determines them. From this perspective the white class-alliance is seen to be nested in a special colonialtype structure which the leaders of that alliance, the white bourgeoisie, will try to sustain in some or other form for just so long (and for only so long) as they believe it serves the interests of capitalism.

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Against this background, two features stand out in sharp relief. Firstly, the party de Klerk now leads is no longer the party of the Afrikaner working class, which makes up the bulk of the white proletariat..White workers have deserted it in droves to swell the ranks of the Conservative Party and other rightist groupings. The Nationalist Party has become predominantly a force which acts in the interests of a sector of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie, whose long and even medium-term interests cannot be separated from those of the banks and the mining houses. Secondly, the country's economy is now in dire straits. Even the former governor of the Reserve Bank, Gerhard de Kock, in a statement announcing his retirement, was compelled to warn that the economy was going through a "difficult period" and that economic circumstances could change "dramatically". (The Star 29.6.1989)

Premature for Reform

With her credit lines under threat, debt repayments to foreign creditors estimated by the Reserve Bank at \$1.3 billion this year and peaking at \$1.9 billion next year, the dearth of long-term foreign investment, inflation running at 18% and mortgage rates at 20%, South Africa has become a "third world" economy - and one which the rest of that "world" cordially hates. Even assuming that her foreign credit lines remain intact, it is not at all clear that South Africa can meet her foreign debt commitments over the next three years. Recent press reports indicate

that R25 billion has fled the country over the past few years, adding to the drain on the reserves brought about by the falling price of gold.

The confluence of these two factors - the bourgeoisification of an important sector of Afrikanerdom and its institutions, on the one hand, and the emergence of a threat to its instruments of production, on the other - has produced a powerful tendency within the bourgeoisie as a whole to devise a united political initiative to save their assets. Such an initiative could very well incorporate the dismantling of apartheid's remaining political instruments.

But to devise a strategy is one thing and to implement it in practice is another. In order to unite theory and practice, de Klerk and his cohorts have to be sure of at least a modicum of compliance from the other classes and class-fractions in the alliance they lead - and it is just this certainty which, in their present state of deepening crisis, they conspicuously lack.

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The African

Communist:

30 Years of

Victory

by Mervyn Bennun

In the very first issue of The African Communist in October 1959, the Editorial (under the title "The New Africa capitalist or Socialist?") laid out the duties of a Communist in Africa against the background of the role of imperialism.

COMMUNISTS, SAYS THE EDITORIAL, must do more than study Marxism and conditions in their own countries. In Africa, they have also other duties, if they are not merely parloursocialists. They have to take an active part in the struggles of their people, as oppressed people, for national liberation.."

National liberation, the editorial continued, is a task for the whole nation, not just for the working class. "Therefore the Communists, everywhere on our Continent, will work to build a united front for liberation, of all classes, workers, peasants, intellectuals and businessmen." The leading part will be played by the working class - organised economically and politically, with trade unions and their own party.

In a note at the end of the first issue, The African Communist defined its own role against this background:

"to defend and spread the inspiring and liberating ideas of Communism in our great Continent, and to apply the brilliant scientific method of Marxism to the solution of its problems:'

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There is a challenge in this. From the outset it was known that the imperialist enemy would fight back with all its powers, for there is a grim reminder to the reader that the periodical was being produced in conditions of great difficulty and danger. Has the challenge been met?

In that first edition in 1959, there was an article by "Toussaint" on "Marxism - The Science of Change". In it, he developed a theme from Friedrich Engels' Ludwig Feuerbach:

'That which is willed happens but rarely. In the majority of instances the various desired ends cross and conflict with one another... The ends of the actions are intended, but the results which actually flow from these actions are not intended, or ultimately have consequences quite other than those intended.'

"Toussaint" notes in that article how the hopes and intentions of the imperial conquerors of Africa, active during Engels' own day, would in a mere seventy years go hopelessly awry. He comments, 'Following its nose blindly, without understanding, imperialism succeeded only in creating a Frankenstein monster for itself in Africa. In place of the intended destruction of the independence of the peoples, it has developed modern nations capable of controlling independent modern states.

One development which the imperialists do not relish is the manner in which socialist ideas have taken root, and "Toussaint" draws specific attention to this.

A Miracle

In 1985 - twenty-five years later and still contributing to The African Communist - "Toussaint" wrote that its survival was "something of a miracle". Perhaps it was, when one considers what has happened since 1959; but then we would have to conclude that survival for thirty years was a still greater miracle than survival for a mere twenty-five. But we all know what "Toussaint" meant - he was expressing relief and admiration at what had been achieved against such terrible odds. All that the enemy could throw against the SACP has failed to crush the spirit that brought the journal into existence and sustained it.

Periodicals do not themselves have courage; it is the people behind them who do, and "Toussaint"'s miracle is due to the determination of many people

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that The African Communist should flourish. Despite the hopes and intentions of the enemy, socialism has become deeply - immovably - rooted in the hearts and dreams of the masses of the people of South Africa; it is the clearest possible demonstration of the truth of Engels' words quoted above. The challenge spelled out in the first issue has been met.

It has not been easy. A survey of the first thirty years of The African Communist is a survey of the last thirty years of unrelenting struggle against a relentless enemy to create a new life in Africa. The African Communist was born in a country at war, and has had to survive in a continent which has yet to know peace. From the third issue on, its fly-sheet stated that it was

'Published quarterly in the interest of African solidarity, and as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought throughout our Continent, by the South African Communist Party.'

The Party has never wavered in its purpose. The range and depth of material in The African Communist is the evidence. Again I say - the challenge has been met. On the tenth anniversary, we read that the first issue was 'a small cyclostyled brochure of 28 pages, written and produced in South Africa under conditions of illegality.'² Ten years later, it was a substantial printed journal, with a glossy

multi-coloured cover, graphics, and over 100 pages altogether a more formidable publication. Sadly, conditions at home had become too difficult and it was published from an address in London, though distributed within South Africa. In the 20th anniversary issue more details are given.' We learn that the second and third issues were also prepared in South Africa but were printed in Britain and smuggled back to be distributed. As a result of the disruption caused by the Rivonia arrests in 1963 and the overall deterioration in conditions the painful decision was taken to move responsibility for the The African Communist to an external editorial board. The full story is told - by 'Toussaint', no less! - in the 100th issue,⁴ together with an account of the earliest days of the reconstituted SACP and its earliest problems.

While The African Communist has inevitably concentrated on the affairs of Southern Africa, it has never ignored the continent as a whole. Articles have appeared about Algeria, Angola, Basutoland, Bechuanaland (and Botswana), Benin, Biafra, Burkino Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Federation, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Congo Kinshasa, Dahomey... the list ends with Tanganyika and Tanzania, Togo,

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Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Republic, Upper Volta, Western Sahara, Zaire, Zambia, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe. And, of course, events across the world effect our own continent - America, Britain, the USSR, and European states amongst others are there, for the history of Africa is part of the history of the world.

Ouor New w Index

In celebration of the 30th anniversary of The African Communist, Inkululeko Publications ordered the compilation of an Index covering all the material published by the journal from 1959 to 1988, and I was one of those who worked on this project. The task of preparing the Contents and Index (which will be published later this year) was at times a deeply moving one. So many thoughts went through my mind, and recapturing them all is impossible.

There are altogether 1,536 separate "Contents" entries in the Index articles on political affairs, book reviews (411 of them), poems, films and letters. The figure is, however, deceptive; many of these entries cover separate essays on various topics - the Editorial Notes, for example, and the regular feature "Africa Notes and Comment". This is reflected by the fact that there are 3,820 entries in the "Index".

Images of Struggle

Has The African Communist accomplished what it set out to do? Let us examine a random sample of items.

The African Communist as the voice of the Communist Party has always been clear on the relationship between the Party and the African National Congress. For example, it recorded the speeches at the 60th Anniversary meeting of the Party.' Moses Mabhida, General Secretary of the Party, said:

'Our Party's relationship with the ANC is based on mutual trust, reciprocity, comradeship in battle and a common strategy for national liberation. Our unity of

aims and methods of struggle are a rare instance of positive alignment between the forces of class struggle and national liberation.

And Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC, replied:

'Today the ANC and SACP have common objectives in the eradication of the oppressive and exploitative system that prevails in our country: the seizure of power and the exercise of the right of self-determination by all the people of South Africa. We share a strategic perspective of

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the task that lies ahead. Our organisations have been able to agree on fundamental strategies, whilst retaining our separate identities. For though we are united in struggle... we are not the same. Our history has shown that we are a powerful force because our organisations are mutually reinforcing:

The enemy, incidentally, pays its own crooked tribute to The African Communist. In an effort to prove its claim that the ANC is a violence-loving, "terrorist" organisation, the Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa for 1988-89 refers⁶ to an article by M.K. Mtungwa in the same issue of The African Communistas the one which reports the above speeches. This article marks the 20th Anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe. However, the manner in which the Yearbook quotes from it shows contempt for the truth and for accuracy. The Yearbook says Mtungwa and the ANC love violence. But read what Mtungwa actually wrote:

'A question which is often raised is that since violence is often linked with revolution (in some people's minds at any rate) the ANC must have been a "moderate" organisation prior to 1961. Nothing could be more erroneous.

'It is the oppressor who seeks to implant in people's minds the image of "Revolution and Bloodshed". Many revolutions have in fact been carried out with a minimum loss of life (e.g. the overthrow of fascism in Portugal). The eruption of violence and slaughter is generally caused by the attempts of the counter-revolution to gain power. The ruling classes seek to project the image of "Revolution and

Bloodshed" in order to make the masses frightened of change.

And he adds:

'It was essential to make full use of all legal channels as long as these remained. This was a tactical necessity in order to build up organisational strength and raise the fighting mood of the people.

Furthermore, as has been pointed out, the masses always prefer to make use of peaceful forms of struggle where these exist. As the challenge to white rule became more powerful so the government resorted to more violent repression.

So much for the ANC's "love of terrorism which this article is supposed to prove! By attempting to misuse The African Communist as it does, the regime both confesses and confirms its own guilt.

It is impossible to write about our struggle in South Africa without describing, on the one hand, the bitter, painful experiences of our people and, on the other their dreams and hopes for a better future.

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Opening at random an issue of TheAfrican Communist, I came across the words of Raymond Suttner, making a speech from the dock when sentenced to 7 and a half years imprisonment:

'I have furthered the aims of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. This was carefully considered. I want to tell the court why I acted in this way and still consider it correct.

'From my earliest encounters with black people, I have been aware of the contrast between my own living circumstances and theirs. I felt, from the beginning, that it could not be right that some people, merely because they were black, should have to live with less than they needed...

The occasional articles on "Why I joined the Communist Party."10 provide brief autobiographical flashes of the lives of people immersed in our struggle. Here is what Arnold Adams wrote:11

'One day my mother took me to the circus. It was an incredibly exciting prospect, seeing the animals in their cages as we made our way to the big top, the coloured flags, the balloons, the gay, noisy music beating on eardrums. But once inside the vast tent I had a peculiar experience.

I discovered that I had no idea what most of the performers in the ring were doing because they had their backs to me all the time. When I asked my mother why this was so, she had to explain to me that we were in the seats for "Non-Europeans" and that the White people were given the best view of the performances.

'I never went to a circus again in South Africa. The next time I ever attended a circus performance was when I was a man of forty-three years and went to see a show in Moscow. I could see everything the performers did, and I recalled a little sadly a small boy in South Africa who had seen only the backs of the clowns:

Over the years TheAfrican Communisthas demonstrated what socialism means for our country and people. Drawing on the long experience of the Party and the national liberation movement, and from many different angles, writer after writer shows how the struggle is developing and maturing towards victory. On the subject of trade unions in South Africa, an article by L.N. Mahlalela2 begins, "The growth of the democratic trade unions in the last ten years has accompanied the accelerated resistance to national oppression. The urban working class have at last pressed back the boundaries of state and employer repression and joined the trade union movement in their

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thousands. They totalled 713,134 in 1975, 974,970 in 1980 and

1,545,824 in 1983, an increase of 58% in less than three years.

In one paragraph, the article brings the statistics to life by relating them to the class struggle, and by relating this in turn to the national liberation struggle - at the heart of everything that is happening in South Africa. Socialism and the freedom of the workers from racist oppression are linked in a flash; the statistics suddenly present a picture of real human beings workers, men and women whose sole wealth is their strength and skill locked in battle against the racist enemy and claiming their most elementary rights as human beings. The working class, the writer shows us, are the driving force behind the national liberation struggle: for while racism exists the South African working class can never be free.

In another article Phasha Mwandla writes on "The Triple Oppression of Women in South Africa"³:

"The majority of African women feel their oppression as mothers, citizens and workers. They know that the racist system of apartheid determines and shapes their role in the family, the community and in society as a whole and deprives them, as mothers, citizens and workers, of their basic human rights".

Within the space of a few pages the writer sets out the special, grim significance of at once being black and a woman, and bearing the heaviest burdens of exploitation. The writer concludes:

'If we follow the road of our sisters in Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, Nicaragua and many other countries, the triple oppression of South African women can also be ended. We need to dismantle the institutions of national and racial oppression and class exploitation.

The emancipation of women will come with the liberation of the working class, and that process will take a long time.:

Let us end this brief survey of The African Communist on this note of hope, courage and confidence.

The African Communist set out to give an account of the present on the basis of a scientific understanding of the past, in order to point to a better future for our country, our continent, and the world. For thirty years every page of The African Communist has been about the men and women who have so readily contributed to the fight for peace, freedom, and socialism. Without their love, hope, and courage all dreams for the future would have been in vain.

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WHYr I READ "Tr AFURnEC*IA

It Has Given Me
Hope During The
WorstTimes

by Mthimkhulu Grootboom

The end of the 1950s coincided with a tense situation in South Africa. There was the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. This was followed by a State of Emergency, then the banning of the ANC. The peasants' revolts in Pondoland, Zeerust, Natal and elsewhere were signs of a changing mood of the people.

THE BLACK COMMUNITY was so angered and agitated that everybody was talking about weapons. Even wedding songs such as Iphi ndlela? (which road to take?) became increasingly politicised.

Many trials were taking place and the sabotage activities of Umkhonto we Sizwe which was formed in 1961 became not only the talk of the day, but also the new element in liberation politics in South Africa. Even those who were losing sight of the direction which the struggle was taking gained a new vision of the future course. Nelson Mandela, who had gone underground to direct the struggle, symbolised the new mood of resistance until he was arrested on August 5, 1962.

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It was during these exciting and complicated times that the ANC instructed us to leave the country - either for military training or for studies. We found ourselves in Francistown, Botswana, then still the British protectorate of Bechuanaland. That was in 1963. In Bechuanaland we went to a "refugee camp" - a disused building we called "White House" because the whitewash distinguished it from the surrounding mud huts. We fetched firewood, collected water from a nearby stream, cooked with it, washed our few belongings and discussed politics. We sang freedom songs and related stories about home, including police harassment and our narrow escape. The history and politics of the ANC and trade unions featured prominently in our discussions. We did not have much literature except some few old copies of Peking Review and Moscow News. We had no library, no reference material.

Then one day it happened. We found scattered on the floor some copies of The African Communist - the early ones with black covers. This happened at the time

when we were furiously denouncing "African socialism" which was then a topical issue in Africa. Without even reading The African Communist we attacked it severely, identifying it with "African socialism" we were internationalists we thought. Thanks to explanations given by some ANC veterans in our midst we began reading The African Communist. A new discussion started: the history and role of the Communist Party in the liberation struggle. This discussion was always confused by some illinformed comments and remarks on the Sino-Soviet dispute. Even the ANC veterans who guided these discussions could not have control since they lacked factual information.

Meit Our Leaders

We proceeded to Dar es Salaam. The excitement of being in an independent African country where some of us, for the first time, met our national leaders such as uncle J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, O.R. Tambo, Duma Nokwe etc., was indescribable. Joe Slovo and others explained to us some of the complicated concepts such as dialectical and historical materialism. We were grappling with these concepts; we did not understand them.

We left Africa. Now in freedom and far from "confusion" we read The African Communist. If there is anything which shook me like an earthquake in those days it was the programme of the Communist Party - The Road to South African Freedom. For the first time I found my history re-written. My forefathers were depicted as heroes - not thieves or bloodthirsty villains and heathens. I must admit that the theory of colonialism of a special type

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interested me most, although it took me time before I understood it. I later met the people who were actually involved in the production of the journal. My discussions with them led me to take the inevitable step - to contribute some articles to the journal. I cannot remember how many times I have discussed articles in The African Communist with my comrades. These discussions were unstructured, sometimes heated, but useful, and in the ultimate analysis fruitful.

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If I were asked to answer the question why I read The African Communist five times, perhaps I would give five different answers, but the essence would be the same: The African Communist has taught me things I could not get anywhere else; it has given me strength throughout the long years of exile; it has inspired me during the worst of times in our liberation struggle and has given me hope that victory is certain. At a time when confusion reigns supreme in the Western press and amongst some doubting Thomases the responsibility of The African Communist is increasing. Its role in explaining that it is the apartheid regime that is on the defensive and not the liberation movement is complemented by the developments in Southern Africa.

Besides being a journal of record - an indispensable source of information on the struggle for national independence and working class emancipation on our continent and internationally, The African Communist

- by its very existence - expresses the need for a working class voice to be expressed and heard. This is the workers' right which they have earned in the long

and bitter struggles they have waged and led since the birth of the South African working class at the end of the last century.

FRATERNAL MR. LAOITU TO THU 7TH CowOINULL

The World Greets the
South African
Communist Party

The 7th Congress of the South African Communist Party was greeted by national liberation movements, trade unions, Communist and Workers' parties and prominent individuals throughout the world.

AFRICAN NATIONAL COMRADES From President O.R. Tambo
I AM HONOURED TODAY, on behalf of the leadership of the African National Congress, inside and outside of our country, on behalf of its entire membership, and in particular, the heroic cadres-in-arms of the people's Army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, and our militant youth wherever they may be, as well as on my own behalf, to convey our revolutionary greetings to the historic 7th Congress of the South African Communist Party and to you personally comrade General Secretary Joe Slovo.

The South African Communist Party has a proud record of firmness and resolution in struggle. Its history is replete with sterling examples of commitment to the cause of the oppressed and exploited and to the building of a just socio-economic system in our country. The spirit of selflessness and dedication that has coloured its performance in a world distorted by extremes of slanders against communism is a hallmark of its calibre.

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Those of us who have traversed the arduous path of struggle for many difficult years recall with great admiration the calm and vision of many departed stalwarts of the Party, who even when condemned bell, book and candle, refused to forsake their past and to shirk their responsibilities. We are speaking here of the leaders of rare stature like Albert Nzula, JB Marks, Malume Moses Kotane, Bram Fischer, Moses Mabhida.

We continue to be inspired by the fond memories we share of the gallant MK combatants who were also members of the Party such as the late Oubadie, Lucas Njongwe and others. With such a heritage behind it, the Party must deservedly stand tall.

Your Congress, the 7th in the history of the South African Communist Party, is an event of great moment not only as being another beacon on the relentless road to a future South Africa, but also in terms of its timing. Taking place this year, which the ANC declared the year of Mass Action for People's Power, the Congress constitutes an indispensable factor and a sure mainstay in its execution of our tasks for advance towards the goal of people's power.

The indefatigable spirit of our working people is heightening with each passing day, bearing the masses into great transports of elation and expectation. Victory for the people is no longer a remote desire but an unfolding reality.

International IF I D y

There is a forward movement in our region. But the Pretoria regime remains true to its unreliable character. April 1st 1989, far from being the day the United Nations has waited for since SWAPQ launched the armed struggle in 1966, may yet prove to have been international fools' day. But even if the Pretoria regime should honour the letter and spirit of Resolution 435 in every detail, which is inconceivable, its strategy remains orientated to the survival of the apartheid system of domination and exploitation.

Central to this strategy is the regime's determination to get out of its isolation and move out to the outer world, to the Frontline States, Africa and beyond, a move designed and calculated to soften international attitudes towards the regime and its criminal apartheid system and thus put our struggle into isolation.

The thrust of Margaret Thatcher's current offensive in South Africa and the region is to discourage international pressures to liberate South Africa. The New York Accords which had propelled her into action have

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given rise to the general belief that if the South African regime can negotiate an end to the conflict in Angola and Namibia, it should be ready and willing to negotiate an end to the conflict in South Africa. There is therefore a new climate of hope.

Our friends will see in this climate the possibility of a compromise solution. Our enemies will see in it the opportunity of denying our people the victory they deserve. Both will press for negotiations. The regime will encourage them without any intention to engage in serious and genuine negotiations.

What all this means is that our people, our movement, and especially our alliance can expect to be subjected to immense and unprecedented pressure

- pressure that could put severe strain on our cohesion unless we react correctly.

From our point of view, when the historic moment for negotiations comes in our situation as it probably will, we shall welcome negotiations. In a proper case they shorten rather than extend the route to victory.

But we dare not allow our cause to be distorted and our objectives deflected by the assumption that the conditions which compel the Pretoria regime to negotiate, sign and honour the New York Accords also exist in South Africa today, or that they will in the immediate future.

There can be no doubt, however, that correctly channelled and directed by us, these pressures, precisely because of their immensity, can bring our victory nearer. We therefore need to rally together and turn this development against the enemy and towards the attainment of our revolutionary goals. We need to rally together in defence of our struggle and our ideals. But, as always, the best form of defence is the offensive. It is always in the attack that victory is to be found.

CIm~ Rnks~c

As never before, we need to move, arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder, with all our allies, friends and supporters. Within our own movement we need to close ranks now as never before and wage intensive struggle with reinforced vigour, including the intensification of our armed struggle. For it is our own struggle that will give clarity and direction to the international support, and it is our own struggle, more

than any other force, that will defeat the enemy and bring about a new order in our country and region.

And we have reached a victorious phase in the struggle of the peoples of Southern Africa. The defeat of the bellicose South African army in

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Angola has turned the tide irreversibly against the Pretoria fascists. FAPLA, the Cuban internationalist forces and SWAPO have done Africa very proud indeed. To paraphrase Comrade Fidel Castro - after Cuito Cuanavale the history of Africa will have to be written anew.

We are happy to reiterate this truth with all the hope that the military victory, which was complemented by international political and economic, as well as by internal pressures within our country and Namibia, will produce durable peace for the People's Republic of Angola and spell the imminent demise of the UNITA bandits.

Comrades, our liberation alliance has a duty to take full advantage of the crisis facing the ruling clique in our country. We must transform the divisions among the enemy into yawning dongas and fill those dongas with the rudiments of united popular power so as to begin to give meaning to our aspiration to win a non-racial democracy in a united South Africa. We all have a duty to our country and people for a future of hope where everyone of us will live in peace, progress and prosperity.

Our message to this 7th Congress, therefore is: let us consolidate and strengthen the alliance and advance in concert.

Let us remain vigilant and watch out for those forces who never leave the boardrooms where they studiously plot our own undoing. Our victories are many and significant, but now, more than ever before, we need to defeat them in order to secure our offensive and ensure our advance to the victory of our revolution.

We wish your 7th Congress every success.

ALL POWER!!

MAATLA!!

SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

From General Secretary John Nkadimeng

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS sends its warmest

revolutionary greetings to the SACP on this historical occasion of your 7th Congress.

SACTU and SACP, united together in our liberation and revolutionary alliance, have deep historical and ongoing bonds. We are both charged with complementary, vanguard tasks in regard to the millions-strong South African working class, the leading class force in our liberation struggle.

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SACTU is the vanguard trade union force, working to strengthen and develop the progressive trade union movement within our country, and to deepen international anti-apartheid trade union solidarity.

The SACP is the political vanguard of our working-class, representing the all-round interests of the proletariat, both in the immediate national liberation struggle, and in the longer term struggle for socialism as a stage towards communism.

Looking back over the past decade, considering our common struggle and our complementary tasks, SACTU and the SACP have reason for considerable pride. Working class organisation has re-emerged, more powerful than ever before in recent years. In particular, the over 1 million strong COSATU is an enormous achievement.

But it is not only on the trade union front that the working class has reemerged powerfully. Within the broader mass democratic movement, it is workers who are more and more taking on their role as the leading class force. This is being achieved not just through sheer force of numbers, but by virtue of their organisational experience and increasing political confidence.

Of course there are many important tasks ahead that will require careful planning, and close co-operation between our two organisations. It would be wrong, for instance, to imagine that the growing and rightful presence of our working class in the forefront of struggle is occurring evenly and everywhere. There are still sectors of our struggle in which our commitment to workingclass leadership has not been fully achieved.

We also need to ensure that, as organisations with complementary vanguard tasks, we are really able to fulfil these roles, working closely with the impressive leadership that has emerged in the frontline of struggle within our country.

Rich Poterrell

This Congress is occurring in a period that is rich with revolutionary potential. The apartheid regime is caught within a chronic, all-round crisis. Although the regime may still limp on in crisis for some time, we are undoubtedly witnessing its final years.

Rich in potential, the immediate period is also one that is full of challenges. The imperialist powers are working over-time, often with considerable tactical skill, to bring about a resolution to the South African and southern African situation favourable to the long-term survival of capitalist exploitation in our sub-continent.

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Within the southern African region the defeat of the apartheid war machine in southern Angola, and the resulting Namibian independence process mark a new milestone in the liberation of our continent. As organisations upholding the principles of proletarian internationalism, the developing Namibian situation presents us with a very important task. We need to deepen the unity between Namibian workers and South African workers. And we need to ensure that the achievement of Namibian independence, an event so fiercely resisted by Pretoria, echoes through the ranks of our own working class.

In South Africa, after the most recent high-point of semi-insurrectionary mass struggle in 1984-6, the regime has gone on the offensive. For the moment it has suppressed, but failed to reverse, our revolutionary advances. The inevitable, changing pace of mass action requires a rock-steady vanguard leadership to

ensure that a relative lull is not turned into demoralisation and retreat. We need to remind ourselves of Lenin's observation:

"..the revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act... but with periods of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with periods of more or less complete calm." (What Is To Be Done?, Selected Works, vol. 1, p.230).

As part of its attempt at suppressing our struggle, the apartheid regime has recently introduced the Labour Relations Amendment Act. This is a most serious threat to the entire progressive trade union movement in our country.

It is not the mass trade union movement and SACTU alone, but all the revolutionary and progressive forces who have a duty to unite in their efforts to ensure that this vicious Act is made unworkable. Bosses who use its reactionary clauses must be targetted for an all-round offensive - let workers hit such bosses with industrial action, let the townships strike out with consumer boycotts, let the international community ensure their maximum isolation, and let Umkhonto we Sizwe, our People's Army, make them feel the full weight of our wrath.

Despite nearly 40 years in the underground, the prestige and popularity of the South African Communist Party is now greater than at any time in its history. But prestige and popularity also confer revolutionary duties.

You can be certain that the programmatic, strategic and tactical positions that emerge publicly from this 7th Congress will be closely studied by our friends and enemies alike. But above all, and more importantly, the impact

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of this Congress will surely echo powerfully among the working masses of our country.

Let the 7th Congress of the SACP sharpen the spear and strengthen the shield of our national liberation struggle.

Let the 7th Congress be a springboard to the speediest achievement of our national democratic revolution.

Long live our Revolutionary Alliance!

An Injury to One - Is an Injury to All!

COrMa inKRSS OF SOUTHLH* AFRICA T'IrRADE

UNicNS (COSATLU)

From General Secretary Jay Naidoo

E SALUTE THE OUTSTANDING contribution the Party has made to both working-class theory and the actual task of building and consolidating working-class organisation.

The labour movement which today has emerged as an important weapon of working-class struggle has been inspired by the contribution made by leading party comrades such as J.B. Marks, Moses Mabhida and Harry Gwala, amongst others.

You meet at an exciting time - a time in which the racist regime is clearly floundering under the weight of united mass resistance. The regime's growing inability to give a coherent lead to its traditional social base is clear for all to see. The whole country is engulfed in an ever-deepening political and economic crisis.

Even its erstwhile imperialist allies, who have underpinned it in the past, are finding it increasingly difficult to justify it any longer. The crisis is irreversible. Our historic duty remains to strengthen mass organisation on the ground so as to develop the capacity to surge forward. In doing so, the democratic movement has to forge a programme that overcomes our subjective weaknesses and takes along with it as wide a range of forces for change as is possible into a future in which they have an objective interest.

We are confident that your deliberations and conclusions will add to the momentum which brings us closer to our strategic objective of total liberation.

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ScUTII WEaT AFpIoCA 1PIOPLI's Om0n AISATION

From President Sam Nujoma

ON BEHALF OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF SWAPO, I would like to convey to you and through you to all the leaders and ardent participants to the Congress warm and militant salutations from the rank and file of our Movement on that splendid occasion. We wish to express our full solidarity and support with you, comrades-in-arms, as people with whom we are fighting against the common enemy.

We are convinced that decisions and resolutions to be taken by the 7th Congress will have some political influence on the development of events in South Africa in particular and our region in general.

We wish you renewed strength, excellent health and many more successes in the just struggle for the establishment of a democratic and non-racial South Africa and the complete eradication of apartheid.

PAW r VIETE RAMEs

From Govan Mbeki

ABOUT A FORTNIGHT AGO I received the Draft Programme. I wish to say I was overjoyed to read, after a quarter of a century, a document of its nature.

I wish to convey my very warm greetings to all comrades at the Congress and elsewhere. I would like to assure them of the great spirit and determination of the comrades I left behind on Robben Island and at the other places where our fighters are continuing the struggle under other conditions than the ones we're experiencing.

I am sending these greetings not only from me but also on their behalf. Long live the 7th Congress!

From Jack Simons

OUR PARTY IS DEEPLY ROOTED in the minds and hearts of the oppressed. They continue to show their confidence in many ways, defying the racist state's harsh penalties, and keeping faith in us, even though the Party, outlawed and tabooed, has spent more

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than half its lifespan in the murky political underground or hardship of exile, preparing and planning for the homeward journey.

Our close ties with the working people and rural masses date from the beginning of the century. Socialists and militant trade unionists, drawn to South Africa by the mining of diamonds and gold, the beginnings of an industrial revolution, and the Anglo Boer war, prepared the ground. Individually and together, they planted the seed from which the great trade unions of today have emerged. There is a direct continuity between their pioneering efforts and the mainstream of the revolution for People's Power.

The Party's association with the African National Congress is truly unique, the only one of its kind in Africa or, for that matter, in any other continent. I'm referring, of course, to the Party's willing acceptance of the ANC as the undisputed leader of the revolution for the overthrow of despotic racism, the destruction of apartheid, and the creation of a people's state founded on the principles of social justice, equality of rights and opportunities, universal franchise, and participation by all citizens in the decision-making and administration at every level of government.

Sixty years of patient, plodding work under severe repression have borne fruit.

The slogan of 1928 has become the keynote of the entire mass democratic movement in all its parts: the grand alliance of the ANC, SACTU, and the SACP, together with the United Democratic Front, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, their affiliates, and a host of radical groups representing churches, women, youth and students, banded together for the creation of a new order.

Long live the South African Revolution!

Long live the Revolutionary Working Class!

Long live the South African Communist Party and its Allies!

A TRIAL!

From an internal candidate member of the CC of the SACP (at present on trial)

WE WANT TO CONVEY our militant and revolutionary greetings to the indaba and to wish it all the success in its important and difficult task. We will await the outcome of the indaba with keen interest. We refuse to be grounded and be cut off from the mainstream of our struggle.

We are preparing ourselves for the impending battles which will be starting in the Supreme Court. Yours in struggle.

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Tma INaFERNIATItONAL COwMMujrTV

Messages were also sent by Communist and Workers' parties from every continent, listed by region and alphabetical order as follows:

Africa

Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria, Congolese Party of Labour, Egyptian Communist Party, Workers' Party of Ethiopia, Communist Party of Lesotho, Frelimo Party of Mozambique, Socialist Working People's Party of Nigeria, Communist Party of the Sudan.

Bulgarian Communist Party, Communist Party of China, Communist Party of Cuba, Czechoslovak Communist Party, Socialist Unity Party of Germany, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, Polish United Workers' Party, Romanian Communist Party, Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Communist Party of Austria, Communist Party of Belgium, Communist Party of Finland, French Communist Party, German Communist Party, Communist Party of Great Britain, Communist Party of Greece, Communist Party of Ireland, Communist Party of the Netherlands, Communist Party of Portugal, Communist Party of Spain (PCE), Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain (PCPE), Left Party - Communists (VPK) of Sweden, Swiss Party of Labour, Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin.

Central and South America Communist Party of Argentina, Communist Party of Colombia, Communist Party of El Salvador, People's Progressive Party of Guyana.

North America

Communist Party of Canada, Communist Party of the U.S.A.

Far East

Japanese Communist Party, Socialist Unity Party of New Zealand, Philippine Communist Party.

Middle East

Progressive Party of Working People (Akel) of Cyprus, Iraqi Communist Party, Communist Party of Israel, Jordanian Communist Party, Syrian Communist Party.

Caribbean

Communist Party of Guadeloupe, Workers' Party of Jamaica, Martinique

Communist Party.

An edited version of all the messages sent to the 7th Congress has been published in booklet form and is obtainable on application to Inkululeko Publications, P.O. Box 902, London N19 3YY. Price £1/\$2.

7th CONGRESS OF THE SACP

Impressions of

An Underground

Worker

by Boetie

After a period of activity in the underground at home, I found that the 6th SACP Congress was like nothing I had ever experienced before.

IN PARTY WORK at home, we never met more than 2 or 3 other comrades at a time. Our meetings seldom lasted more than 45 minutes, and we spoke in hushed tones.

Seeing a huge SACP banner proclaiming the Congress slogan "For a democratic victory and advance to Socialism" was quite a shock. I had never seen an authentic Party banner before. Not only that, here was a gathering of South African communists, proudly wearing their Party badges, singing, toying and spending long hours in intense discussion.

I felt honoured and privileged to be able to walk among the giants of the South African working class movement, like Comrades Dan Tloome, Joe Slovo and many others who must remain nameless. Giants though they may be, these comrades always took time to discuss issues with those of us who must be counted as the young generation. They always sought our views, and gave us a sense of responsibility for the future of our Party.

UNDERGROUND WORKER 0 51

Comrades came to the Congress from every front of struggle - the underground, the military, diplomacy and mass organisations.

Mesmage from Home

The comrades from home set the Congress alight. They gave us a great sense of urgency, and reminded us that we cannot speak of victory unless we are able to base the leadership of our alliance inside the country. It was these comrades who were daily risking their lives to make this possible.

Throughout the Congress, we had a vision of the kind of society we are fighting for, not only in our minds, but all around us. The love and support of our fellow communists was a lesson to us all, and an inspiration. Singing 'The Internationale' in English and Zulu reminded us that our struggle does not end at the Limpopo! Non-racialism was introduced to South Africa by our Party, which is still one of the few forums in which all South Africans can meet as equals. While this was true in the underground at home, for security reasons we could not develop the social bonds that I experienced at the Congress.

The Allmame

In all our discussions, theoretical and strategic, there was a strong sense of the importance of our alliance with the ANC. Comrade O.R.'s message was the most warmly received of all. Despite imperialist manoeuvres, our alliance is stronger than ever. Nonetheless, Congress decided that its public profile as an alliance should be strengthened.

The discipline of the delegates was impressive. In their conduct generally, and in discussions, the comrades were serious and determined. There was no defensiveness or dogmatism. These were comrades representing the vanguard of our working class, and I felt proud to be among them.

The report of the General Secretary gave credit where credit was due, but the emphasis was on self-criticism and ironing out weaknesses in our work. Great strides have been made in the all-important work of rebuilding at home. Problems in this work were tackled head-on, and our challenges looked at frankly and honestly.

Building the Party in the African working class is the order of the day. Congress agreed that special emphasis must be placed on bringing women into our Party. This is a question to which we are devoting a lot of attention at home. Women are half of the working people. Comrades, our Party must reflect this!

52 0 UNDERGROUND WORKER

The Congress was given the historic task of formulating a programme to replace The Road to South African Freedom. The 1962 Programme had inspired and guided whole generations of South African revolutionaries, and a new programme therefore needed serious discussion.

27 years of struggle have affirmed the correctness of the basic formulations of The Road to South African Freedom: that capitalism in South Africa exists under conditions of a special type of colonialism, and that the road to socialism in our country is therefore through the national democratic revolution. It is the correct

grasp of these realities that has taken our revolutionary alliance to within sight of victory.

The Armed Struggle

Endorsing these formulations, the Congress turned its attention to the path to power of the national democratic revolution. This was a discussion such as I had never heard anywhere in our movement. It was an honest assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our approach to the armed struggle, and its relationship with other forms of political struggle.

Congress called for a reassessment of the emphasis in the military work of the Alliance. Our special type of colonialism, with its large industrial centres where 6 million workers are concentrated, makes our path to power an insurrectional one. This was the major conclusion of the 6th Congress, and it should be discussed and hopefully begin to shape the work of all the detachments of our struggle.

Naturally, the Congress had to deal with the question of negotiations when discussing the path to power. As mature revolutionaries we must recognise that circumstances may arise in which negotiations become inevitable, but we must ensure that the negotiation process allows our democratic goals to be advanced. Negotiations, however, are not the objective of our struggle. Our objective remains the seizure of power by the national democratic revolution, and our work must be guided by that beacon, along an insurrectional path. Negotiations are a tactical question which arises along the way.

All delegates left the Congress clearer on our tasks. We returned to our posts to follow the path to power. The Congress gave me the privilege of seeing the real life and strength of our Party as a whole, and the real quality of our cadres in every sphere of work.

The home front was our focus throughout the Congress. We all realised that the path to power we had mapped out demanded that we return there soon, carry on the fight until complete democratic victory has been achieved.

ON THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
EXECUTION OF MINER, CMAI
MCAIA, LET US PAY HOMAGE TO

SLAVES OF THE
NOA AND

Three Heroes of
the South African

Revolution

by W. Skoda

IN THE POETRY OF AZIM HIKMET, THE GREAT TURKISH POET, patriot and communist who was himself a victim of state terrorism and on several occasions jailed for his convictions, wrote scathingly of the enemy agents within the ranks of the progressive movement:

"Enter a house where there is a plague, but do not take one step across a threshold where there is an agent provocateur. And if your hand accidentally touches his, wash it seven times. And I will tear up my only holiday shirt and give it to you for a towel".

Humankind in its quest for more freedom often produces revolutions of volcanic dimensions. These are characterised by the struggle between conflicting interests; by vicious cruelty and even greater bravery; by the ugliness and mobility of the

soul; by desperation on the one hand to maintain the status quo and on the other to revitalise and change it. And in this human cauldron there is the inevitable surfacing of the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made.

54 - THREE HEROES

In the case of Eastern Cape activists, Vuyisile Mini, Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Mkaba, the liberation struggle had produced three working-class heroes who were moulded, bred and sustained by the high principles and political demeanour of their movement. All three had been sentenced to death in March 1961 for the alleged murder of an informer. After their appeals had been rejected early in October of the same year, each of them was approached by the Special Branch representatives of the Government in their death cells. In exchange for information about the whereabouts of the cadres of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and in the case of Mini, information about Wilton Mkwayi, their lives would be spared even at that late hour.

They all rejected the offer with disdain. Mr Joel Joffe, their lawyer at the time recalled that a policeman in his presence sneeringly said to the condemned men: "I suppose as you take your last steps to the scaffold, you will say 'Amandla! Ngawethu!' (Power to the People)." They answered: "Yes we wil". And they did. Mr Joffe added that all three men were not concerned about themselves so much as about the welfare of their families and particularly the education of their children. They were obviously very relieved when given the assurance that this would be undertaken by the International Defence and Aid Fund.

Working-Class Origin

The three men had come from typically working-class families who were either shanty-town dwellers or "bywoners" on farms owned by whites in the Eastern Cape Province. They received a minimum of formal education and because of the terrible conditions on the farms where they were virtual slaves, they were forced to migrate to the towns to work as unskilled labourers to supplement the family budgets.

The industrial revolution in Europe, which later led to the "Scramble for Africa" and all its great raw material and mineral resources, attracted many of the capitalist predators to the easy pickings which were available in South Africa.

And one of the centres which attracted most attention was Port Elizabeth.

It was a deep-water port and land in the region was relatively cheap to acquire. It was serviced internally by railway lines leading to all the main centres of South Africa. Trade was encouraged by the imperialist pawns Botha and Smuts - who had been set up and given the reins of government by the British in 1910. The increasing flow of overseas trade brought in a great

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deal of revenue. The shipping lanes of the world were the main means of intercontinental transport before the advent of the turbo air jet. Port Elizabeth increasingly became one of the most important industrial areas and ports of call for overseas investors as well as for their local white partners.

In response to the cosy plot hatched by the Boer and British capitalists to hand over everything to the whites, the Africans set up their own organisation in 1912 to oppose these blatant injustices. The ANC was born. It was into this bustling and increasing atmosphere of industrial expansion and Cunard-dominated shipping lines that the three families migrated. The reservoir for cheap labour was New Brighton, a typical black ghetto of dilapidated houses, tenements and tin shanties.

Early Life

Vuyisile Mini was born in 1920 at Mhlahlane, a small village near Tsomo in the Transkei. Very early in his life the family moved to Korsten in Port Elizabeth. At the age of 17 after passing his sixth standard, he set out to look for work but got caught up instead in a bus-strike against increased fares. A little while later the whole family became involved in the forced removal of Africans from Korsten itself. These incidents and the difficulty his father was experiencing in retaining jobs made a great impact upon the mind of the young man. This, together with the fact that he was forced by law at the early age of 16 to register "as a pass-carrying native", made him realise that very little of the apparent wealth generated by the busy industrial port filtered down to the black workers. Affluence was for the whites; poverty and misery for the blacks.

Later on Mimi settled down to family life with Felili whom he met and married in New Brighton. They had five children - three daughters and two sons. For most of the time while his children were young, Vuyisile worked as a labourer while his wife looked after the home. But he became more and more involved in the political life of his people. He was strong, well-built, gregarious and extrovert. He found it easy to make friends and his deep infectious laughter and beautiful bass singing voice attracted a great deal of attention. He began seriously to apply himself to solving the stifling oppression around him and at the same time expanding his interest in music.

The period from 1949, when the ANC Youth League began to make such an impact on the direction and leadership of the ANC, right through to 1961, when Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed, was arguably the most significant in the history of the liberatory struggle in South Africa. The older, more docile

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and more conservative elements in the leadership were replaced by men such as Lutuli, Tambo, Mandela, Sisulu and Mbeki. The whole political tone changed radically and a great upsurge of activity brought together all elements of the racial spectrum into a mighty alliance headed by the ANC. This alliance called the "Congress Alliance", consisted of the ANC, the Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, the Congress of Democrats (COD) representing white progressives, and SACTU representing the non-racial trade union movement.

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Locally, Mini gravitated quite naturally into the leadership together with such men and women as Govan Mbeki, Gladstone Tehume, Raymond Mahlaba, Wilton Mkwai, A.P. Mati, Florence Baard, Stella Damons, Alven Bennie, Caleb Mayekiso and others. They contributed a really formidable body of men and

women not afraid to call the shots and who directed affairs far beyond the boundaries of New Brighton and Port Elizabeth itself.

Mini threw himself whole-heartedly into the struggle. In 1951 he joined the ANC and became one of the main volunteers organising the campaign against unjust laws. In 1952, at the start of the Defiance Campaign, Mini led a group of men over the 'whites only' section of the railway bridge at Port Elizabeth and was sentenced to three months imprisonment. As a result of this he lost his job as a packer in a battery factory. But by this time, he had become integrated as a full-time official of the ANC and as a trade union organiser. Intensive classes, both political and trade union, were organised by many of the older comrades who by 1955 had been banned from organisations and meetings but who nevertheless carried on this valuable underground work. Mini was a keen pupil who, amongst others, took over the leading roles vacated by their teachers because of the draconian banning orders forced upon them.

He worked hard at getting unorganised workers to join the General Workers' Union, was appointed regional secretary of the Metal Workers and played an outstanding role together with Alven Bennie in organising the stevedores into the Dock Workers' Union. In 1957, the stevedores of Port, Elizabeth struck work. To counter this strike, the government brought in convict labour. The campaign against this scab labour organised by SACTU and the ANC was so intense that the International Transport Workers' Federation threatened to call on workers throughout the world to black all South African goods. The companies panicked and as a result the convict

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labour was hastily withdrawn from the harbour. But when the workers were awarded an increase of fifteen pence a day (!) the Minister of Labour obstructed this and as a result no increases were permitted.

Various other strikes ended the same way and it became clear that the trade unions would require greater political backing in order to overcome the government's dictatorial actions.

Arrested for Treason Mini had been elected secretary of the Cape Region of the ANC on his release from prison. He combined his work as a trade union organiser with his political responsibilities. During this period he was also recruited into the underground Communist Party. It came as no surprise when in 1956 he was amongst the 156 people arrested in the famous Treason Trial arising from his work for the Congress of the People which adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955. He was released in 1958 and immediately took up his political work on his return to Port Elizabeth.

When the ANC was banned and the State of Emergency was declared in 1960, thousands of people were arrested all over South Africa and interned for up to five and a half months. A comrade of Mini's, who later served with him on the MK High Command in the Eastern Cape, says that one of the great memories all the internees had of this period was the magnificent singing of Mini who led them all in song, day and night, and thus made their lives much more tolerable.

When the emergency was lifted, Mini was appointed the secretary of SACTU in the Eastern Cape. His busy life-style continued and he became deeply involved in the negotiations for organising the underground work of the ANC and the decision to resort to armed struggle. He was amongst a group of comrades from all parts of South Africa who clandestinely arrived in Johannesburg to attend political lectures at a "Party School" in 1961. This was after the underground Communist Party had made its existence known during the 1960 emergency. He made a second visit to Johannesburg in the same year to be briefed on the impending actions to be taken when MK was launched on December 16, 1961. Mini as Political Commissar, Khayinga as the Commander and Mkaba in charge of logistics, together with several other comrades, were elected to the High Command of MK in the Eastern Cape. They went to work with such a will that Port Elizabeth maintained its reputation as one of the most militant and well-organised centres in South Africa.

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By this time Mini had become convinced that only through the internationalist perspectives which he had gained as a Communist would the battle between oppressed and oppressor, so starkly evident in South Africa, be resolved. He accepted the necessity for arms to supplement the main weapon of politics. And in Mini's case it meant the weapon of song as well. Soon he was using his magnificent bass voice and his great love of all music classical and folk - as an additional and very special weapon in his armoury.

His compositions, which remain as a great gift to the liberatory struggle, were militant, nostalgic and defiant. They touched the hearts of those facing the storm inside the country and stiffened the resolve of those outside yearning to return to their homeland. Three of them which have become familiar to the whole of the movement and will remain so even after our liberation from apartheid are:

1. "Verwoerd pasopa Naants indod emnyama" (Look out Verwoerd, here are the black people).
2. "Thath umthwalao Buti Sigoduke balindile comama noo bab'ekhaya" (Take up your things brother and let's go, they are waiting, our mothers and fathers, at home).
3. "Mayihambe le vangeli Mayigqil ilizwe lonke" (Let this gospel spread and be known throughout the world).

The third was composed during the Defiance Campaign and Mini would joke about it by saying that it was "the gospel of Congress" which he had spread through the various non-Congress choirs of which he was a member, one of them with white members. His vision went far beyond the confines of Port Elizabeth or even South Africa when he composed this song nearly forty years ago.

He was equally adept and stirringly dramatic in his reciting of the great Xhosa poems which had been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Even those who did not understand the language were emotionally moved by Mini's magnificent renditions at these recitals.

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Affairs were really coming to the boil in the aftermath of the state of emergency and the outlawing of the ANC and other organisations. Banning orders were issued throughout South Africa like confetti. New Age newspaper, which was banned during the state of emergency, was allowed to resume publication but continued to be one of the main targets. Many of its staff were amongst those whom the government aimed to render harmless. There were hints already that the government was set upon declaring South Africa a republic.

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On the other hand there were stirrings amongst the members of the Congress Alliance about the need to intensify armed resistance to the brutality and callousness of the racist authorities. Further calls were made for the stiffening of the boycott of South African goods by overseas countries. Internally the Congress demands for a national convention of all the people, black and white, to come together to settle their differences in an amicable and peaceful manner were summarily rejected by the regime. It was made brutally clear by Verwoerd that there was no place for the blacks except a submissive and inferior position as servants of the white minority.

Mandela, who had become temporarily unbanned, made a dramatic appearance at the All-in African Conference in Maritzburg and had called on the people to unite and organise for a national three-day stay-away strike at the time of the all-white referendum for a Republic on May 31, 1961.

Mandela himself announced that he was going underground to organise this resistance against the regime and hinted that the patience of the African people in particular was being dangerously stretched. Later that year, on December 16, 1961, Umkhonto we Sizwe began the campaign of armed resistance by sabotaging government installations throughout the country and these attacks were intensified over the following months.

There followed a great number of raids on the houses and offices of all leading members and activists known to the police in order to intimidate them and to discover the source of M.K. activities in the various areas where sabotage had taken place. Vorster sent his special branch to gain knowledge of "counter insurgency techniques" to countries like Algeria where the notorious French O.A.S. had operated for years against the people's movement there. Torture chambers and other refined and cruel techniques against individuals and their organisations were being prepared.

The government announced the introduction of the Sabotage Act which gave them the power to detain any individual in isolation for renewable periods of 90 days. The whereabouts of the detainees would not be revealed, nor would the detainee have any access to a lawyer or anyone else. Those arrested under this Act would simply "disappear". Political thuggery became the order of the day. Reports began to spread throughout the country that torture, murder and suicides were taking place behind the concrete walls of the many prisons where detainees were held.

Mini was amongst the first in Port Elizabeth to be taken into custody. It was while he was languishing in isolation that he was brought to trial and joined with

Khayinga and Mkaba. They were charged with 17 offences under the Sabotage Act in addition to one for the murder of an informer.

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Successive apartheid governments have claimed over the years, mainly for the benefit of their overseas supporters, that their courts of justice are democratic and that all accused are afforded the normal facilities and due processes of the law. But every African appearing in a court of law in South Africa is sharply aware of the loaded injustice foisted upon him by a totally white structure imposing so-called justice based on laws in the making of which he has not been allowed to contribute in any way whatsoever. No African expects real justice under apartheid.

The court before which they appeared placed restrictions on their chosen defence lawyer who could therefore not represent them. It was truly a starchamber court of law as far as the accused, their families and supporters were concerned.

Several points have to be borne in mind in connection with this case:

1. Mini and his two comrades regarded themselves as being at war with the apartheid regime. This war had been openly declared by their organisation, Umkhonto we Sizwe.
2. Umkhonto we Sizwe had never, in the course of attacks on government installations, deliberately caused the deaths of innocent persons.
3. When an informer was discovered who was about to divulge the whereabouts of arms caches and reveal the names of some comrades, the safety and the lives of such members were at risk.
4. The accused were not directly involved in the actual assassination of the informer. Three other men were hanged for the alleged murder.
5. All the accused, but especially Mini who was the Political Commissar, knew from their study of Cuba, Vietnam, Algeria and other revolutions, that the activity of spies had to be countered as soon as possible to safeguard the morale and safety of one's own troops and of the movement itself.
6. All those concerned in the case, witnesses as well as the accused, were kept in solitary confinement and all sorts of bribes, intimidation, threats and torture were used on the majority of the detainees.

The accused were convicted in March 1964 and sentenced to death. Their case went on appeal but this was rejected later in the year in October 1964. Protests against the death sentences came pouring in from all over the world. Many governments, organisations and churches as well as ordinary men and women in the street were outraged by the threatened execution of the three activists.

Prominent amongst those who made representations were President Nasser of Egypt and U. Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations. Most African governments condemned the verdict as judicial murder perpetrated by a vicious racist government.

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Replying to a Johannesburg Star editorial describing the accused's offence as "a plain case of murder", Canon Collins of Christian Aid wrote a letter to the paper:

where all democratic rights and non-violent means of protest are denied to them, men and women who suffer under such conditions of tyranny will tend to see sabotage, which leads to death, not as murder, but as an act of war..

"By what right then do privileged whites in South Africa now castigate the victims of an unjust legislation and intolerant behaviour for any decision they may make to abandon for the time being the way of negotiation and peaceful protest? The Government has deliberately closed the way of negotiation; and it meets any mm peaceful protest with brutal force. 19

Lasmt Dys In Prison

Meanwhile the Rivonia trial had ended on June 12, 1964, with all except one of the accused being sentenced to life imprisonment. Denis Goldberg, one of the accused, had actually received four different sentences of life imprisonment. In line with apartheid's requirements, he had been separated from his black comrades and started serving his sentence at Pretoria Central Prison. There he found three other white prisoners sentenced for sabotage. One of them was Ben Turok, former Secretary of the Congress of Democrats. Apartheid does not permit the mixing of races even in prison - or on death row. But the authorities were unable to prevent the last moments of the lives of Mini, Khayinga and Mkaba being recorded.

The white section was within earshot of the condemned cells and they always knew when an execution was due. This was usually heralded by the breaking of the usual law of silence in prison and the singing of hymns all round the cells of those who were due to die. It was the rule of the prison that the sheriff had to give the victim 24 hours notice before the execution.

The mixture of freedom songs and hymns signified instantly to the four white prisoners that their own comrades were involved. And they all soon recognised the deep laughter and rich bass in song as the voice of comrade Mini. Memories of those days remain forever in the minds of those who endured it all. It amazed them that Mini in particular should be so blatantly defying the well known rule of silence. In an article for Sechaba, the organ of the ANC, Turok wrote:

The last evening was devastatingly sad as the heroic occupants of the cells communicated to the prison in gentle melancholy song that their end was near. It was late at night when the singing ceased, and the prison fell into uneasy silence. I was already awake when the singing began again in the early morning. Once

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again the excruciatingly beautiful music floated through the barred windows, echoing round the brick exercise yard, losing itself in the vast prison yards.

"And then unexpectedly, the voice of Vuyisile Mini came roaring down the hushed passages. Evidently standing on a stool, his unmistakable bass voice was enunciating his final message in Xhosa to the world he was leaving. In a voice charged with emotion but stubbornly defiant, he spoke of the struggle waged by the African National Congress (ANC) and of his absolute conviction of the victory to come. And then it was Khayinga's turn, followed by Mkaba as they too defied all prison rules to shout their valedictions.

"Soon after, I heard the door of their cell being opened. Murmuring voices reached my straining ears, and then the three martyrs broke into a final poignant

melody which seemed to fill the whole prison with sound and then gradually mm faded away into the distant depths of the condemned section. op

The songs Mini sang were mainly liberation songs of the movement, many of which he himself had composed. Goldberg recollects that, interspersed with these was the beautiful rendering of the "Red Flag" and the "Internationale", the sound of which moved him to tears. The anguish of it all was shattering, the bravery and defiance of the never-to-be-forgotten comrades inspiring beyond belief.

SACTIJ Call

The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in their proposals for observation of the 25th anniversary of the execution of Vuyisile Mini on November 6, 1989, have made the following appeal:

- * organise mass rallies, demonstrations and workshops around the same theme of Anti-Repression or Save the Patriots Campaign on November 6.
- * demand the unconditional release of all those in detention under the notorious racist security laws, especially those serving long sentences and those on death row. Campaign vigorously to publicise the plight of our patriots on death row.
- * undertake to mark November 6 annually as a day of solidarity with workers and trade unionists against repression.
- * name halls, buildings etc after Vuyisile Mini.
- * intensify the campaign for people's sanctions by mobilising the international trade union movement, especially dock and transport workers, to refuse to handle South African goods.
- * produce leaflets, stickers, posters and any publicity material possible to further publicise this day and focus on patriots on death row.

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" ensure that articles in all the democratic press focus on this issue. " all Movement-printed material should focus on death row and the execution of Mini. Let us make November 6, 1989 a day on which we rededicate ourselves to avenge those who have been murdered by the racist police!

Postscript: One of comrade Khayinga's sons was killed during the police and army raids on "Soweto" in New Brighton during the disturbances there in 1985-86. Mary, the daughter of comrade Mini, was assassinated by the apartheid murder squads in a raid on Maseru in Lesotho in 1985. Both had been strong and militant opponents of the racist regime.

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NOTES & COMMENT

by Jabulani Mkhathshwa

MOZAWiBIQUE. FIFTIE

CONiWaRESS OF FRELIImO PARTY

T WAS PERHAPS THE PREPARATIONS for last July's Frelimo Congress more than the Congress itself which demonstrated the extent of mass participation in determining the fate of Mozambique, its people and their revolution. Pre-Congress discussions took place at grassroots level throughout the country. Party members, as well as the general population, participated in the discussion of the

seven draft theses which formed the basis from which elected Congress delegates were to approve guidelines for Mozambique's political, economic and social development for the coming five years.

First the Party cells and committees discussed the theses, then the discussions went through to district conferences, where delegates were elected to attend provincial Party conferences which were held in Manica, Tete, Gaza, Sofala, Cabo Delgado, Maputo and other provinces. Conferences were also set up for the police, security and armed forces.

It was in the Manica province in 1977 that the MNR (then under the control of the Rhodesian secret services) began its war of destabilisation of Mozambique. It was, however, also there that the first pre-Congress provincial Party conference took place. A report from Comrade Rafael Maguni, Governor and First Secretary of the Party in Manica, said that

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despite the banditry of the South African-backed MNR, there were 614 party branches in the province. Despite the war, it had been possible to hold pre-Congress meetings in 542 of these branches. Of the nine districts in the province, in only two was it altogether impossible to discuss the Congress documents because of bandit activity. The report revealed that over the past six years, 78 party branches, with a total membership of 1,480, had ceased to function due to the war.

Living Conditions

During the discussions that followed, delegates complained about the living conditions of the Mozambican armed forces, and pointed out that their military performance corresponded to their pathetic logistical position. How was it, delegates asked, that food, uniforms and the wages for the troops did not reach them? How could soldiers be expected to fight under such conditions? One delegate insisted that some people were making money out of the war by siphoning off supplies meant for the troops and selling them on the black market. "Let us learn from Harare", he said, referring to the "Willowgate" scandal in Zimbabwe, in which highly placed people purchased cars at a fixed, official price, and then resold them at a vast profit.

In Tete province, the impact of the bandit war was felt particularly in the health institutions: out of the 124 health units, the bandits had destroyed 21 and forced the closure of 43. Whereas there were 977 hospital beds available in 1985, in 1989 the number had been reduced to just 60, for a province with a total population of around a million.

In Gaza province, 44 schools had been destroyed and eight teachers killed. However, the report said, the picture of Mozambique could not be painted only in dark colours. Despite the war, there had been significant increases in agricultural production. 44,099 tonnes of rice were produced in the 1987-88 period, which was an increase of 44% over the 1986-87 year, and there was also an increase of 22% in maize production.

In the southernmost province of Maputo (which excludes Maputo city, since it is regarded as a province in its own right), the bandits had forced the closure of 48

health units between 1984 and 1988, 32 of them in 1988 alone. The report also noted that the MNR had destroyed 151 schools, looted 125 private shops and consumer cooperatives, destroyed 384 kilometres of telephone wires, 58 wells and boreholes, 10 bridges and 33 tractors. At the height of this bandit activity the province experienced severe drought which rendered 428,000 people dependent wholly or partially on emergency assistance. And as though to take advantage of Mozambique's misfortunes,

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the apartheid regime in South Africa deported 19,980 Mozambicans at the border post of Ressano Garcia.

Opening of the Congress

Opening the Congress on July 24, President Joaquim Chissano said that the discussion of the draft theses by Mozambicans all over the country took place in an atmosphere of "great openness, enthusiasm and responsibility", characterised by "genuine democracy and firm commitment to the people's interest and desires". Among the prominent foreign delegates who spoke at the Congress were Tanzania's former President, Julius Nyerere, who spoke in his capacity as Chairperson of Chama Cha Mapinduzi; President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia; Mahfud Ali Baybar, Prime Minister of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic; Botswana's Deputy President, Peter Mmusi; Zimbabwean Minister of Justice, Emmerson Munangagwa; Joe Slovo, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party; Alfred Nzo, Secretary General of the African National Congress, and others.

Report of the Central Committee

The report of the Frelimo Central Committee to the Congress raised the possibility of admitting property owners (Mozambican businessmen, shopkeepers and the like) to membership of the Party. It argued that the private sector had an important role to play in increasing production and improving the provision of services to the community, and emphasised the need "to link all citizens together in the same united and productive effort and to join individual and collective contributions in a broad patriotic movement in all spheres".

The report, however, suggested that the Party should consider admitting property owners as long as they were "citizens of exemplary conduct, respected by the community". It should be recalled that since the foundation of Frelimo as a party in 1977, nobody who owned means of production had been allowed to join, in order to guarantee that the party defended the interests of the country's workers and peasants.

Referring to membership for religious believers and religious leaders, the Central Committee report suggested that "they should be admitted on the same general principles as anyone else. "Our goal is to build socialism and we do not doubt that there are religious believers, even religious leaders, who agree with the goal of building socialism".

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Turning to the economic situation, the Central Committee report defended the Economic Recovery Programme, under implementation in Mozambique since 1987 with the support of the IMF and the World Bank, as "a correct and necessary choice to confront the situation in the country". The Central Committee thus recommended continuing Mozambique's relationship with the IMF and World Bank, "but always bearing in mind the need for independent and harmonious development of our society".

Between 1982 and 1986, due to South Africa's war of destabilisation, the gross domestic product and per capita income slumped and the country's foreign indebtedness rose from 750 million US dollars to 3.2 billion US dollars. Total losses to the economy from 1980 up to 1988 were estimated at 15 billion US dollars. However, there were also some positive economic developments. Since 1986, said the report, there had been a significant 30 per cent increase in exports. Agricultural production grew by 6.9 per cent in 1987 and by 5.7 per cent in 1988. The production of cashew nuts, one of Mozambique's main exports, was around 44,000 tonnes in 1988, which was 2.4 times as much as the 1983 figure. Industrial production was 12 per cent higher in 1988 than in 1986, but still only 70 per cent of what was produced in 1983.

Changes were also proposed by the Central Committee in the education programme. Legislation was proposed to legitimise private education in Mozambique for the first time since 1975. The Central Committee report argued that this change was justified by the fact that the national education system only covered about 40 per cent of children aged between 7 and 11, and there was no prospect of attaining a higher percentage over the next decade. Much of the educational crisis was due to the war waged by the MNR, who had destroyed or forced the closure of 45 per cent of Mozambique's entire primary school network. Some provinces, such as Tete and Zambezia, had been deprived of 80 per cent of their schools.

PfFrmwmo Pamrty Prog rmmmeo A new draft Programme of the Frelimo Party was proposed by the Central Committee, defining Frelimo as "the vanguard party of the Mozambican people". This formulation replaces the one in the 1983 Programme which defined Frelimo as "the vanguard of the worker-peasant alliance". The draft programme, which was ultimately adopted, stated that Frelimo was "a vanguard, but at the same time a party which seeks to express the will and the feelings of all the people... the highest form of revolutionary organisation of the workers and the leading force in Mozambican society".

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The 1983 Programme had spoken of the "leading role of the working class", a concept which is absent from the new Programme. Also, all references to Marxism-Leninism have gone. Instead, the new Programme speaks of the values of "justice" and "equality". It states that Frelimo's experience since its foundation in 1962 had shown that the national unity the country needed must rest "on the rejection of the social injustice of the exploitation of man." The new Programme therefore reaffirms Frelimo's commitment to socialism:

"In socialism we express our desire for a true and profound social transformation, based on a scientific analysis of reality, on defining the social base of the revolution and on the need to guarantee that the interests of the broad masses of the people prevail".

The new Programme also retains the party's leading role in the state, but it no longer defines the state as "a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants", the formulation used in the 1983 Programme.

In foreign policy, the new Programme no longer explicitly refers to the concept of a "world anti-imperialist front" and no longer privileges the "international working class movement" in Frelimo's foreign relations. It states that Frelimo "applies an independent foreign policy based on the defence of national interests, founded on real goals, and in the first place on the elimination of destabilisation, the eradication of terrorism and the reconstruction of the Mozambican nation".

Conclusion of the Congress

The Frelimo Party's Fifth Congress ended on 30 July with the unanimous reelection of Joaquim Chissano as President. More than 700 delegates from all ten provinces and from the capital, Maputo, elected 160 members of its Central Committee, 39 more than the number elected in 1983. The Political Bureau was also enlarged to total 12 members.

At the end of the all-night session on 30 July, the last day of the Congress, a resolution was adopted stating that the Mozambican people wanted "a peace that does not constitute a prize for terrorism". Proposing the resolution, Francisco Madeira called for a "dignified peace". Behind the MNR bandit actions, said the resolution, lie the designs of those who make use of banditry in order "to force us to renounce our struggle for a society without discrimination, a society of equals". On July 31 a mass rally was organised in Maputo to mark the end of the Congress. Speaking to an animated crowd, President Chissano said "we

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want peace, but only the peace that brings dignity, the peace that strengthens and consolidates our independence, the peace that eliminates discrimination". He said that the desire for peace did not imply that "our people feel themselves defeated" by the MNR bandits.

Despite everything, President Chissano said, the Congress had decided that efforts to speak to the MNR should be continued:

"but it is clear that we are speaking to people who have broken the laws, and who are therefore criminals..., we are speaking of people whose hands are drenched with blood. We want to wash away that blood, to save them, so that they can return home, return to the family".

The Congress had given instructions "to continue all possible efforts on peaceful ways to convince our brothers in the bush to abandon violence and join the mass of the people so that we may build a prosperous and developed Mozambique".

ETHIOPIA. A Coup ATTEMPT THAT MISFIRE

IN MAY THIS YEAR, a coup was attempted by some generals of the Ethiopian Revolutionary army while the head of state, President Mengistu Haile Mariam,

was on an official visit to the German Democratic Republic. The plotters included Major General Mered Nigusse, Chief of Staff; Maj. Gen. Ameha Desta, Commander of the Air Force; Maj. Gen. Demese Bulto, Commander of the 2nd Army, stationed in Eritrea with headquarters in Asmara; Brigadier General Worku Cherenet, Political Commissar of the 2nd Army; Brig. Gen. Tadesse Tesema, Operations Officer of the 2nd Army, and others. The rebelling army formation held Asmara for nearly 48 hours before it was overpowered by troops loyal to the Ethiopian revolution.

In his radio and television speech informing the Ethiopian people of these counter-revolutionary events, President Mengistu said that altogether 24 generals and 176 senior officials were being held by the security police. He said the plotters were driven by a combination of interests, among them sheer personal ambition and lust for power as well as sentimental attachments to the Eritrean separatists. The intention of the rebellious generals to join with the Eritrean separatists was to split the nation and undermine territorial integrity, he said.

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The plotters, however, made serious miscalculations and strategic mistakes. More than anything else, they underestimated the loyalty and bravery of the Ethiopian Revolutionary Army, the Second Division of which rallied to the defence of the country and the new popular constitution.

If the grievance of the counter-revolutionary coup plotters was centred on the problem of Eritrea, it should be pointed out that this issue has not been ignored or shelved by the Ethiopian government. In fact, it has been addressed more than any other political question since the popular revolution in February 1974.

The adoption of the new constitution was an effort to guarantee the country's unity, sovereignty and the equality of all nationalities and communities who were kept by the overthrown Haile Selassie at different levels of development. In this context, one of the Ethiopian revolution's goals has been to try to solve the Eritrean problem in a democratic, popular way, and to facilitate lasting peace. Speaking during the Eighth Regular Plenum of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia last year, President Mengistu dwelt at length on the situation in the northern part of Ethiopia where a terror campaign was being mounted, leading to the wanton destruction of life and property and threatening the unity and territorial integrity of the country. He reiterated the Ethiopian people's willingness to discuss peace with whoever felt aggrieved on the question of Eritrea so that acts of destruction and bloodshed would cease.

Recently Ethiopian government representatives held a round of talks in Khartoum, Sudan, with the more conciliatory Eritrean People's Front, one of the three forces which, in addition to fighting among themselves, are bent on separating the northern province from the rest of the country.

The other groups, however, have been unyielding in their negative attitude. They have declared war against the Ethiopian government's genuine efforts to improve the living standard of the working people of Ethiopia and to extricate them from the backwardness inherited from the past feudal order. Some of these groups were

carrying out acts of terrorism against the civilian population, even attacking vehicles transporting relief supplies and flying United Nations flags. The Eritrean problem is something that the revolutionary government inherited from the feudal regime. Under Emperor Haile Selassie, the provinces were neglected in favour of the areas around the throne. Such a

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development was bound to create conflict. In pre-revolutionary days, the Eritrean parties which were aiming to sever the region from the rest of Ethiopia were fighting the reactionary feudal regime under the banner of anti-imperialism. At that time they were supported by progressive forces in the world. When the revolution that overthrew feudalism occurred, it was hoped that these groups would rally behind the popular revolution.

That is why, right from its inception, the Ethiopian revolution devised strategies to seek an effective solution to the problem of Eritrea by preparing the ground for peace talks with the leaders of these groups. However, these efforts did not receive any satisfactory response. Further efforts were made to stop unnecessary bloodshed by proposing the idea of regional autonomy for the province of Eritrea. Again no satisfactory response was received.

What I thaseMin?

In the face of these realities, it may be asked: What is the root cause of the Eritrean problem? What is the ultimate objective of the terror campaign that is waged against the Ethiopian revolution?

One explanation is that the popular Ethiopian revolution from its very inception became the target of conspiracies and hostile schemes perpetrated by imperialism and reaction due to the strategic location of the country. Eritrea is a province adjoining the Red Sea, which has historically been the country's link with the outside world - the region through which Ethiopia's foreign trade is conducted. The Red Sea is an area that is within the global strategies of almost all the major imperialist powers, for it leads to the Persian Gulf and through the Suez Canal. This is the main route for the oil tankers that grease western industries.

Equally, Eritrea is strategic for Ethiopia's own economic development in order to reverse the backwardness inherited from the past. To sabotage the Ethiopian revolution, therefore, the imperialist conspirators resolved to isolate it and cut Ethiopia off from the world by raising the problem of Eritrea from a domestic regional issue to one of international dimensions, hence the insistence of the separatists on independence.

In their effort to regain their lost influence in the region, to reverse the gains of the Ethiopian revolution and undermine national unity, the imperialist countries train and arm counter-revolutionary and separatist forces and co-ordinate their activities. They resort to baseless propaganda campaigns, psychological warfare and distortions of the genuine efforts of the Ethiopian government. The recent coup attempt should therefore be analysed against this background.

Yet the counter-revolutionary strategy is bound to fail because the Ethiopian revolution has become part of the people's lives and outlook. The Ethiopian people have been armed both materially and politically. They defend that which they know and appreciate. They are the makers of this revolution. They know the hardship and oppression of the past, of the Haile Selassie era, and they would never support the efforts of a clique of adventurous and counter-revolutionary generals who want to take them back to those days. The gains of the Ethiopian revolution can be demonstrated and not merely claimed, despite the setbacks caused by natural disasters and the cyclic droughts every fifteen to twenty years. In the extremely complex and trying struggle waged against the remnants of the feudal order, large economic and financial institutions, rural and urban lands as well as extra houses have come under popular control. Besides the measures that have been taken to eradicate illiteracy, significant efforts have been exerted to involve the working people in the process of allround development efforts by mobilising them through mass organisations. The endeavour that was made to found a vanguard political organisation has borne fruit in the establishment of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is known for a number of unique national characteristics. These include, among other things, the coexistence of different communities united by the rich cultural heritage left to them by the evolution of early civilisation. Religious heterogeneity has also contributed to the long history of independence. The preservation of this heritage and of national unity and territorial integrity is the task of the revolution.

The competence of the Ethiopians for this task has been determined historically. Their bravery comes from an old cultural tradition, from the forefathers of the present generation who refused to be colonised and who valiantly confronted and repulsed all foreign intruders who tried to exploit the country's strategic location in the Horn of Africa and along the Red Sea.

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MADAGASCAR SPLIT eI THE PARv

IN COMMON WITH OTHER THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES, Madagascar is reeling under the crushing burden of external debt, unequal terms of trade, the crippling conditions imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and incessant covert interference from imperialist and neo-colonialist forces. The price of coffee, Madagascar's main export, has fallen catastrophically, and real per capita income has dropped by some 20% since 1980. People of modest means, and the middle class, have been particularly hard hit by the crisis.

A statement analysing the situation, issued by the Political Bureau of the Madagascar Independence Congress Party (AKFM/KDRSM), points to the confusion and contradictions evident in the political life of the country in consequence of the worsening economic situation. Division has arisen not only among the parties and organisations forming the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution (FNDR) but also within the individual parties. According to the AKFM/KDRSM, political forces in Magagascar fall into two broad but distinct

categories: those favourable to socialism on the one hand and those favourable to capitalism on the other.

The Presidential elections held in March this year brought the divisions into clearer focus. The Party for Proletarian Power (MFM/MFT), the Vonjy fray Tesy Mivaky (VITM - the successor to the old Social Democratic Party) and the Monima Socialist Party (VS/MONIMA) joined forces with groups outside the FNDR to set up a campaign committee called the Democratic Alliance. The Alliance declared that the time had come to 'bury' the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution, that the socialist choice was responsible for the misfortunes of the people, and that President Ratsiraka was too hesitant in applying the economic measures demanded by the IMF. The Alliance declared itself opposed to socialism and for complete liberalisation of the economy.

The Revolutionary Vanguard Party (AREMA), the Union of Madagascan Christian Democrats (UDECMA) and the AKFM joined forces in support of President Ratsiraka. They acknowledged that there were weaknesses and deficiencies in the management of the country which would have to be put right, but they insisted that the country's economic crisis was due, above all, to the unjust international economic system. They asserted that in spite of all the difficulties, President Ratsiraka had spared no

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effort in trying to save the fundamental gains of the socialist choice made in 1975, a choice made to find a remedy for the degrading conditions under which the majority lived. The socialist option should not be abandoned even if measures contrary to that option had to be taken because of current objective circumstances. In the event, Didier Ratsiraka was re-elected by an absolute majority: 2,891,333 votes (62.71%) as against a combined total of 1,719,291 cast for his three opponents. His nearest rival, Rakotonirina Manandafy, garnered 891,161 votes.

Irregularities Alleged

The opposition, claiming widespread irregularities, challenged the results and demanded the replacement of President Ratsiraka and his government by a provisional government composed solely of representatives of the armed forces and the churches, charged with the task of organising and supervising fresh elections. Violence erupted at a number of demonstrations organised by the Democratic Alliance, including demonstrations at a number of high schools and at the University. The campaign of disruption, however, fizzled out in the face of public indifference.

The split within the AKFM/KDRSM came to a head in the run-up to the presidential elections, at a meeting of the Central Committee called to decide whether the Party should put up a candidate of its own or support the candidature of President Ratsiraka. At the end of a two-day debate, the Central Committee decided by 134 to 9 to join with AREMA and UDECMA in support of Ratsiraka. Richard Andriamanjato, the president of the Party, thereupon resigned his post, but he undertook to campaign in favour of Ratsiraka, to remain a member of the central committee, to refrain from creating trouble inside the party and not to form another party. According to a statement by the Political Bureau of the

AKFM/KDRSM, Andriamanjato failed to honour his undertakings with respect to the presidential elections: he prolonged a trip abroad, defended his own position at area meetings of the Party instead of supporting the central committee decision, and officially refused to participate in the final mass rally called on the eve of the elections. His next of kin, also a member of the party, campaigned openly and publicly for abstention.

Shortly after the Presidential elections ended, Andriamanjato resigned from the AKFM/KDRSM and called a public meeting to announce the formation of a new party - the 'AKFM-Renouveau'. Two out of 17 of the full

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members of the Political Bureau, and three out of 11 candidate members followed his lead, but of the 170 full members of the Central Committee, only 16 in all resigned.

Anti-Communist The campaign for the legislative elections held on 28 May was marked by virulent anti-communism, with the AKFM/KDRSM being singled out for particular attack by conservative and reactionary forces. AKFM-Renouveau joined in the attack on the AKFM/KDRSM, claiming that their own new party was not a party of the left, but a party of the centre left, a party of "scientific socialism" as opposed to one based on Marxism-Leninism.

In spite of the trauma of the split and the difficult and complex situation, the AKFM/KDRSM fielded candidates in 52 "Fivondrana". A total of 256,000 votes were cast for the Party (21,550 in the capital), and the party gained two seats in the national legislature.

The AKFM/KDRSM has surmounted worse trials in the 30 years of its existence and confidently claims that it is still very much alive and determined to continue the struggle for its objective - the triumph of the ideals of peace, justice, national independence and social progress.

The equality of peoples goes together with the equality of people, irrespective of their nationality. This is the supreme principle of humanism in a human civilisation.

President Mikhail Gorbachev

speaking on inter-ethnic relations, July 1, 1989

60th BIRTHDAY OF AM

D K m a A RA* DA

"No Night So Long"

by Essop Pahad

"There is no night so long that it does not end with dawn" (Ngugi)

In June 1964, eleven months after the Rivonia arrests, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Denis Goldberg, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni were sentenced to life imprisonment. Of the accused Lionel Bernstein was found not guilty. Over the past few years Denis Goldberg and Govan Mbeki have been released.

IN PRISON THESE OUTSTANDING REVOLUTIONARIES have grown in stature, matured politically and become international figures. They remain deeply committed to the ideals for which they have fought throughout their lives. The

youngest amongst them is Ahmed Mohamed Kathrada who was a mere 34 when given the life sentence. On August 21, 1989 he marked his 60th birthday in Pollsmoor prison.

Kathy, as he is popularly known, has been involved in the struggle since he was at primary school. He was born in Schweizer Reneke, a small town in the Western Transvaal. His father had a shop in premises adjacent to the local Dutch Reformed Church. A highly learned man in Islam, he brought his children up to understand that people were equal regardless of colour.

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Since there was no school for Indians in Schweizer Reneke Kathrada's first teacher was the principal of the local African school, David Mtshali. In his childhood Kathy was shocked that, after the ringing of the 9 o'clock curfew bell, Africans had to have a special pass to be on the streets.

Kathrada had to go to Johannesburg to complete his schooling. When he was 10 years old he witnessed some of the preparations made by the Nationalist group of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) to launch a passive resistance campaign in 1939. Fifty years later he still has vivid memories of young volunteers preparing for their expected imprisonment by sleeping on the floor.

Inspired My Dmdoo At that time he was deeply moved by the funeral procession of Dadabhai Govindjee. Dadabhai was killed on June 4, 1939, by gangsters who were hired by some conservative leaders of the TIC to disrupt a meeting called by the progressive forces in the Indian community. Yusuf Dadoo, who played a vital role in creating, building and strengthening the Indian radical movement, was the head of that funeral procession. That was the first time Kathy had set eyes on Dadoo who was beginning to be very popular among the Indian people.

Thereafter Kathy developed a close political and personal relationship with Dadoo from whom he learned a great deal.

From the late thirties Yusuf Dadoo, Naransammy Naidoo, Maulvi Cachalia, J. Nanabhai, G.H.I. Pahad and other progressives fought hard to instil a spirit of militant resistance amongst the Indian people of the Transvaal. At that time the TIC was in the hands of "moderates" and conservatives who refused to countenance acts of resistance against racism and rejected co-operation with the rest of the national liberation movement.

In 1941 the nationalist group of the TIC organised a small-scale passive resistance campaign in Johannesburg. This took the form of setting up fruit stalls in violation of the law which severely restricted the areas in which Indians could trade and/or reside. Although only 12 years old, Kathy, together with some of his friends, helped out by manning the stalls after school hours. By then he was also helping with the distributing of leaflets, selling the progressive weekly *The Guardian*, putting up posters and participating in the public activities of the Non-European United Front.

From that time Kathy's life was consumed by the political struggle. The early struggle waged by the progressive forces in the Transvaal and Natal to transform the Indian Congress reached its high point in 1946 when the Passive Resistance campaign was launched in protest against the

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Government's Ghetto Act directed against the Indian people. Kathy was then in his final year at high school. He gave up his studies to work full-time in the offices of the Passive Resistance Council. He worked very closely with I.C. Meer and J.N. Singh who had temporarily abandoned their university studies to work full-time in the campaign. Under the guidance of I.C. Meer, editor of the Passive Resister, Kathy was encouraged to write and to learn the technical aspects of running a newspaper.

In December 1946 he courted imprisonment as a resister. Since he was only 17 he claimed to be older, as the courts were refusing to imprison juveniles. The leader of that batch of resisters was N. Thandray who had, a few years earlier, taught him at school.

The Passive Resistance Campaign marked a watershed in the political life of the Indian people. Under the leadership of Drs. Y. Dadoo and G.M. Naicker the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses became an organic part of the wider national liberation movement and established a close cooperation with the ANC which later developed into a formal alliance.

In 1946 Kathy was among those who formed the Transvaal Indian Youth Volunteer Corps which later changed its name to the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress (TIYC). Under the leadership of Kathrada the TIYC developed into a dynamic organisation. Activists and leaders of the TIYC were in the forefront of every major campaign in the 50s. Any task, however menial or difficult, would be fulfilled promptly and enthusiastically. The TIYC helped to nurture and develop a whole generation of Indian youth in revolutionary politics.

After the Durban riots of 1949, when a trivial market incident led to bands of Africans attacking Indian shops and homes, Kathrada made at least two trips to Durban with leaders such as Maulvi Cachalia in a bid to restore peaceful relations. These events made Kathy even more determined to make his contribution to ensure that the Indians were in the front line of struggle side by side with their fellow oppressed. It convinced him that the white racists would continue to sow division and disunity within the ranks of the oppressed, and the only answer was and still is unity in thought and unity in deeds of all those opposed to national oppression and racial tyranny.

The Fiftie

Kathy and his comrades in the TIYC and TIC were actively involved in preparing the May 1, 1950 Freedom Day strike and the June 26, 1950 national strike in protest against the Suppression of Communism Bill. For about ten days before the May 1, 1950 strike, a group of youth congressites

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would gather at Kathy's flat at 3 a.m. By 4 a.m. they were out in various areas distributing leaflets. Almost daily they were arrested, held for a few hours and released without being charged. In this way Kathy and other TIYC leaders and activists made their acquaintance with police stations in the African townships as well as the white and Indian areas.

The Defiance Campaign of 1952 gave an immense impetus to the process of turning the ANC into a mass organisation. Kathy was one of the 20 persons who were convicted and given a suspended sentence for organising that campaign, although he himself did not defy. His co-accused included Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Moses Kotane.

Kathy was closely involved in preparations for the historic Congress of the People at which the Freedom Charter was adopted. Whilst active in this campaign and other activities he was banned in October 1954. The banning order prohibited him from attending gatherings for two years and also from participating in the activities of 39 specified organisations. But this did not prevent him from making his contribution. Like other banned persons he was prevented from attending the COP and had to follow the proceedings from premises adjoining the square.

At that time Kathy was also involved in the struggle against the imposition of the Bantu Education Act and the forced removals of blacks from Sophiatown. In the latter battles he was arrested on several occasions. In 1955 the TIC established its own school, the Central Indian High School (CIHS) in protest against the removal of the Booyens Indian High School to Lenasia, Lenasia was the designated Group Area for Indians and the school building was no more than a prefabricated structure. Kathy was appointed secretary of the CIHS Parents' Association and helped to recruit teachers for the school. Some of South Africa's finest revolutionaries taught at that school. They included Molly Fischer, Michael Harmel, Duma Nokwe, Alfred Hutchinson, Dan Tloome, Disa Putini and N. Thandray.

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On December 5, 1956 140 leading Congressites were arrested on charges of High Treason. Kathy was not in that group. Immediately the movement set up the "Stand by our Leaders" Committee to see to the welfare of the families of those arrested and to organise solidarity meetings. Kathy was involved in forming that committee and because his banning order had expired and the committee was not on the list of 39 prescribed organisations he functioned openly and addressed public meetings. But a few days later he and 14 others were arrested and also charged with high treason. Among TIYC leaders who

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were charged were Paul Joseph, Moosa Moolla, Sulaiman Esakjee and Farid Adams.

During the State of Emergency in 1960 the judges refused to postpone the treason trial. In protest the accused asked their defence counsel to withdraw. Thus each accused had to conduct his/her own defence. In his preparations Kathy was greatly assisted by his co-accused Nelson Mandela and Duma Nokwe. He learnt something of how difficult it is to prepare a defence, to call and lead witnesses and to endeavour to pre-empt the questions of the prosecution. Kathy was among the final group of 30 who were found not guilty in March, 1961.

In spite of the limitations imposed on the accused by the Treason Trial, Kathy continued with his political activities. He regularly attended meetings of the TIC,

TIYC, the illegal SACP and other committees. On the TIYC executive he was a tower of strength.

Throughout the decade of the 50s and first years of the 60s his flat, 13 Kholvad House in Market Street, Ferreirastown, was a hive of activity. To it came many of the luminaries of the revolutionary struggle. It had 3 rooms which he shared with different people at different times. To the people in the area it was known as the Congress flat. And it was to this small flat that he was house arrested in October 1962. He was the second person after Helen Joseph to be so severely restricted. From 6p.m. to 7a.m. he was not allowed even to set foot in the corridor outside his front door. Confined to this small flat he had to rearrange his political and social life.

Mandela was a frequent visitor to flat 13. After O.R. Tambo had been asked to go abroad and the Mandela-Tambo legal firm closed down, Mandela carried out many of his legal duties from Kathy's flat. Despite occasional differences in the early years, their friendship and comradeship grew. They shared many common political positions, were honest with each other and appreciated one another's human and political qualities. Kathy's defiance of banning orders, indefatigable energy, honesty in work and discussions, bravery in the face of adversity, warm pleasant personality and readiness to make the supreme sacrifice impressed Mandela.

MaInMdelm Qoes Un.Mderg .rounud In 1961 Nelson Mandela went underground to help organise the 3-day national strike called in protest against the inauguration of Verwoerd's republic on May 31. A special committee was set up to service Mandela. Kathy was a member of that committee. Its tasks ranged from finding

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Mandela safe accommodation, safe transport, security for meetings with individuals and committees, to contact with the press and his family.

A few weeks before the strike it was decided that the strike committee - of which Kathy was a member - should also go underground. He disguised himself as a Moslem priest, with a false beard, fez and long coat. On the appointed day of going underground, he picked up Maulvi Cachalia, a fellow member of the committee, at 6.30a.m. Whilst driving to their destination they halted at a main road. Just then two security policemen, on their way to work, spotted them and arrested them. Obviously the disguise was not good enough. Kathy was then charged with contravening his banning order by going to visit his family in Schweizer Reneke the previous December, and was given a 3 months suspended sentence.

After the 1961 3-day strike a considerable amount of Kathy's time was spent helping Mandela carry out his duties in the underground. On August 5, 1962 Nelson Mandela was arrested on charges of inciting the May 28-31 strike and leaving the country without a passport. As soon as the tragic news broke a Free Mandela campaign was launched and propaganda material in the form of leaflets, posters and badges was produced. Whilst attending Mandela's trial Kathy was served with new banning orders.

IPA arxlimm- Len im I nismn Already in his youth Kathy was attracted by the science of Marxism-Leninism. In the early forties he joined the Young Communist League and was active in it until it was dissolved. During that period he served on the Johannesburg District Committee of the YCL. He later joined the Communist Party of South Africa and was placed in the Fordsburg group. He was a keen reader of progressive literature and through study classes and his own initiative developed a knowledge and understanding of the theory of Marxism-Leninism. Influenced by Kathy and other members of the SACP, the TIYC held regular classes on different aspects of Marxist-Leninist theory, mobilised the Indian youth against colonialism and imperialism, imparted knowledge about the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and organised the screening of progressive films such as Battleship Potemkin and Ballad of a Soldier. Many young Indian activists of that period were influenced by these activities and some of them are now in the ranks of the SACP.

Kathy served on its Johannesburg District Committee and during his evidence in the Rivonia Trial proudly proclaimed his membership of the

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illegal SACP. In her book *The World that was Ours* Hilda Bernstein records "At the end, Yutar asks Kathy if he is a member of the Communist Party. He replies that he is.

'Whose aim and object is to secure freedom for what you call the oppressed people of this country?'

'For what are the oppressed people in this country.'

'To which doctrine you subscribe?'

'I do, fully and unequivocally.'

'Are you determined to see the fulfilment of the policy, the aims and objects of the Communist Party?'

'I still am.'

'Which involves the overthrow of the Government of South Africa by violence and force if necessary?'

'When and if necessary.'" (pp 209-210)

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Kathy is both a patriot and an internationalist. His admiration, support and solidarity for the socialist countries, progressive and revolutionary forces in the colonised world and for the working class movement in the industrialised countries form an essential part of his political philosophy.

He was selected to attend the First Youth Festival in Prague in 1947. The night before his departure he was seriously injured by a hit-and-run motor cyclist. The offending machine was one that was used exclusively by the police. He missed the festival and spent the next 14 months in plaster. Since that injury he suffers from a permanent disability in one leg.

His desire to attend a Youth Festival was fulfilled when he attended the 3rd Youth Festival held in Berlin, GDR, in 1951. He led the South African delegation. It was for him a wonderful experience. Later he visited Poland. The horrific consequences of racism and fascism were chillingly brought home to him when

he visited Auschwitz concentration camp. From that trip he brought back to South Africa a handful of human bones which he had picked up from the street alongside the incinerators. Some years later during a raid by the security police, he was asked about the bones. After Kathy explained their origin one of the security policemen responded, "Dit was seker net Jode, n?" (They were certainly only Jews, not so?) The callousness and inhumanity of that remark shocked Kathy even though, as a victim of racism and fascism in South Africa, he already had some acquaintance with the reactionary attitudes of the oppressors.

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It was decided that Kathy should work for 3 years at the headquarters of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) in Budapest. But the lure of the struggle, especially the events preceding the Defiance Campaign of 1952, proved too strong. He organised the TIYC to request his return and WFDY reluctantly agreed. Although he was not present at the World Youth Congress in 1953, he was elected on to the Executive Committee of the WFDY. To his great regret he was unable to attend a single meeting of that committee.

The Rivonia Trial

Towards the end of 1951 Kathy became involved in the activities of Umkhonto we Sizwe and became a member of the regional committee. But some months later he withdrew from all activities of Umkhonto. There was therefore no truth in the Rivonia Trial indictment which claimed that he was a member of the National High Command. Indeed at that time he was not even an ordinary member of Umkhonto.

Just before the Rivonia arrests the movement suggested that he leave the country, but he refused. It was then decided that he go underground immediately. He was given a few hours to wind up his affairs. That same afternoon he landed at Rivonia. He was disguised to pass as Portuguese and moved to a hiding place in Mountain View. From this hiding place he went to a meeting in Rivonia which did not finish. It was decided to continue the meeting the following week. Kathy was unhappy about returning, more especially about the transport arrangements. But he was prevailed upon to return as it was to be the last meeting at Rivonia. It was, for Kathy and those arrested with him - except Rusty Bernstein who was acquitted - the last meeting they were to have before they went to prison.

In describing the entry of the Rivonia trialists into the dock for the first time, Hilda Bernstein writes:

"Of all of them, Kathrada seems the least changed as though nothing can shake his secure inner self." (p 108).

In giving evidence at the Rivonia Trial Kathy was witty, quick and aggressive. Barely concealing his contempt for the prosecutor, Percy Yutar, he refused to name any person or organisation, or to say whether or not he was a member of Umkhonto, even if it meant that he was prejudicing his own chances of acquittal. Together with his co-accused, Kathy had agreed that none of them would incriminate any person or organisation. They also agreed that no appeal

would be made against any sentence, including the death penalty. Thus Kathy refused to appeal against his life sentence even though the case against him was weak and there was a good chance that he would obtain an acquittal or a reduced sentence.

He completed his B.A. within three years, thus becoming the first prisoner on Robben Island to obtain a degree. Later he obtained a B. Bibliography degree. Until 1981 the prison authorities refused to allow prisoners to pursue post-graduate studies. Since then he has completed B.A. (Hons) in History as well as B.A. (Hons) in African Politics.

For 25 years Kathy has been corresponding with friends, comrades and family inside and outside South Africa. His letters are a joy to read - never a sentiment misplaced, never over-bearing, never self-pitying and always expressing concern about the health and wellbeing of others. The humanity which comes across with such poignancy in Kathy's letters is exemplified in a letter he wrote to the Fischer family after the death of Bram Fischer. He wrote:

'Innumerable are the incidents and events that spring to mind relating to Molly (Fischer) and Bram since I first met them, say back in 1944. I was fifteen... It was an age when one sought and attached oneself to one's own brand of heroes. Already looming large in my horizon was Yusuf Dadoo. He was soon joined, among others, by Bram and Molly. They made a big impression on my little mind and my childish heart responded with a love that only children know how to give... This was the beginning of a personal relationship which grew with the passage of years. And with it grew my love and respect and admiration. How I looked forward to being with them again after this incarceration is over. But alas, death has snatched them both away. It has caused me deep hurt and left a huge void in my life.

"Yet I dare not allow myself to give way to despair, dejection or disillusionment. That would be disobedient to the wishes of Bram and Molly. Sorrow I cannot help, but mingled with it is the overpowering feeling of richness, pride and gratitude at having been privileged to be so closely associated with them. If I could but emulate to the slightest degree their exemplary lives, their goodness, warmth, love of humanity, their generosity, their confidence and tireless contribution towards the attainment of our common ideals, I shall have paid my tribute to two of the most wonderful m* people I have known.

It is revolutionaries like Kathrada who light up the tragic South African political landscape. For him, as for all the political prisoners and detainees and the oppressed masses, the dawn of freedom is approaching.

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WE ARE AN EXTENDED FAMILY

An abbreviated record of the dialogue held in London between Joe Slovo, General Secretary, South African Communist Party and Ken Gill, General Secretary, MSE Reprinted from the World Marxist Review No. 5, May 1989.

A hundred years ago, in July 1889, the Paris Congress of the Second International designated May 1 as the Day of Working People's International Solidarity, to be celebrated annually.

International solidarity has been given a new dimension in today's interdependent world. How to raise the effectiveness of solidarity actions by workers and progressives, and what opportunities does cooperation among Communists, Labourites, Social Democrats and other working class and liberation movement trends open for this?

This question was the theme of a WMR-sponsored dialogue in London between Joe Slovo, a well-known leader of the communist and national liberation movement of South Africa, and Ken Gill, a former TUC Chairman (1985-1986) and the current leader of Manufacturing, Science, Finance (MSF), one of the largest unions in Britain. Below is an abbreviated record of the dialogue.

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Joe Slovo: Today we often hear talk of an "interdependent world". As I see it, "interdependence" means above all, mutual dependence for the sake of survival. This is of course primarily dictated by the consequences of a nuclear holocaust. No one can dispute that such an event would respect neither class nor system. The earlier Leninist concept that "it is impossible to escape imperialist war" requires qualification in the light of changing realities. The new concept that the tendency towards war inherent in imperialism can be inhibited is grounded in the existence of a number of objective factors which were completely absent or only partially present in Lenin's time. Among these factors is the substantial risk that a world conflagration would destroy capitalism as well, a factor which is, in no small measure, linked with the relative parity of military strength between the capitalist and socialist communities.

The way I choose to understand Mikhail Gorbachev's proposition that there are human values which take priority over class values is that the assertion of certain values is in the mutual interests of otherwise contending classes. But the values remain class-related. For example, abolish parity, and it is more than doubtful that imperialism would feel constrained by considerations of human values.

Ken Gill: The world is interdependent and growing more so in the sense that communication and travel are so much swifter, that environmental pollution arising mainly from rapid industrialisation is now threatening the world's ecology system, and that the world debt problem is in a vicious downward spiral, extending poverty, depressing demand and undermining the world's financial and banking arrangements.

All these factors have greatly accelerated in importance over the last two decades. Unless major industrial powers cooperate, these problems cannot be solved. Here, the role of the UN and its specialised agencies becomes enormously important.

But none of this, of course, prevents the people from engaging in political struggle, neither does it hold back effective international solidarity. On the contrary, it should create a more favourable political balance of forces for the progressive movements worldwide. JS: And in making use of that balance, we should have our goals clear. I think it is theoretically doubtful to pose the problem of interdependence in a way which suggests a subordination of the class struggle to the struggle for peace, or vice versa. The way the two struggles relate depends

upon specific conditions at specific moments of time. In some national liberation struggles

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a precondition for the achievement of peace might well be a phase of armed revolutionary pressure. Namibia was a living example of this. In our case, too, premature talk of a settlement with Pretoria undoubtedly helps to divert pressures which are the only hope of eventually bringing about a peaceful transformation. In other words, there is in many places a symbolic link between the struggle for freedom and the struggle for peace. In its extreme form, the attempt to subordinate the struggle for liberation to the struggle for peace will objectively have the effect of subordinating the interests of the developing, unliberated world to those of the developed, liberated world. It could lead to the toleration and freezing of the status quo instead of advancing both those noble objectives through effective solidarity. KG: The objective reality today is that the two largest powers confront each other and that their nuclear warheads can obliterate all life on Earth. How then can the vital need to safeguard peace be reconciled with the struggle for social and national liberation? Undoubtedly, the fresh and more dynamic approach brought by Mikhail Gorbachev into international relations can benefit not only arms control and disarmament but also other objectives sought by the forces of progress and liberation.

Indeed, in spite of extensive international support with arms and diplomacy over the years, it has not proved possible for the mass popular movement to bring about decisive victories over the forces of oppression and aggression. In these circumstances, and given the new resolve to seek political solutions to regional problems, it can be advantageous for progressive forces to seek negotiated settlements instead of putting the major emphasis on protracted armed struggle. But there remain, of course, circumstances in which armed struggle is the best, or only way forward.

Take the south of Africa, for example. Recent developments are very encouraging and there is no question that Cuban troops have played an important role. The ANC enjoys enormous and increasing political following and prestige and this will be decisive in overthrowing the apartheid regime. But I think that the prestige and approach of Mikhail Gorbachev, and Moscow's determination to find solutions to long-standing regional problems, has helped unlock the Namibian situation in favour of the fighting forces of national liberation and democracy.

JS: But not all conflicts are ripe for political settlement. There are conflicts and conflicts: in the case of disputes between states, the conditions of our contemporary world make it imperative always to seek a political solution. But in some conflicts the main content is basically an internal struggle in

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which external forces become involved on the side of revolution or counterrevolution. The undifferentiated formula that we must seek a political settlement for every internal struggle can become a slogan which has the effect of preventing or holding back the ultimate peaceful resolution of an internal struggle.

Linked with this is the concept of "national reconciliation". For example, if Angola's MPLA formed a national government with Savimbi's UNITA, it would reduce tensions in the region. But it would also diminish the prospects of the Angolan people and their friends creating conditions for a future socialist Angola. The universalised concept of national reconciliation tends wrongly to denude conflict of its class and social base. The social issues affecting the people of a country, which are the real foundation of the conflict, should not be pushed into the background. The philosophy of national reconciliation as a global concept retreats from a key and correct Marxist postulate on the primacy of class and social struggle as the motive force of history.

Of course, where a conflict (whatever the original cause) demands a negotiated, even compromise, agreement, there is no question of a "fight to the death". Such a settlement may be judged to be correct by the internal forces for a number of reasons, both internal and international. It may even be that the internal forces may defuse or postpone an internal conflict if there is the risk of a global holocaust. But the struggle to assert the right of free choice, the struggle for self-determination and real independence cannot be contained or restricted; it will be carried on resolutely, and it calls for international solidarity.

The concept of "just" and "unjust" wars, I think, remains valid, certainly in the case of internal conflicts. In other words, it remains the moral duty of Socialists and democrats to support a just war, and it is immoral for imperialism to support the side of reaction because they would be supporting an unjust war.

KG: I think, Joe, that you have explicitly substantiated the need to distinguish between class-related conflicts and those which can be avoided through sensible state policies. Class struggle is part of life in capitalist countries, whatever subjective desires there may be to think otherwise or to seek international agreements to dampen it down.

The important thing is to prevent concepts of the interdependence of the world being presented as an excuse for urging social peace. Many wonder today whether the Soviet Union has abandoned international solidarity and will use its influence to promote national reconciliation, rather than support

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movements for national and social liberation. The West hopes very much that the USSR will renounce support for the revolutionary movement.

It makes me sad to read papers by some theorists who almost confirm such hopes by urging peaceful settlements whatever the price. Interdependence seems to make them panic at any risk that a conflagration can be started by just one spark. But I do not think that such discourses, which devalue international solidarity, necessarily reflect the approach of party leaderships in socialist countries.

Today it is ever more important to involve international organisations in resolving local conflicts. This will make it easier to prevent "flashpoints" creating a danger of a world war. At the same time, care should be taken that such organisations are not used to suppress people's struggle for internal social change.

FacEinig Up to Objective Reality JS: I agree that the current improvement in East-West relations actually helps to create objective conditions for the

strengthening of solidarity between progressive and anti-imperialist forces. We will readily support peaceful coexistence, the de-ideologisation of state relations, and disarmament to provide resources for feeding the world's hungry. The success of the Soviet Union's peace offensive has given new hope to humanity.

But there are misgivings about the way some of the correct objectives as articulated by Mikhail Gorbachev are theorised by others.

For example, there is an underplaying of the inherent tendency of imperialism to prevent any new socialist advances and, if possible, to roll back the frontiers of socialism. Ex-President Reagan, in his final address to the nation, boasted that his eight years of presidency would be remembered as years in which not a single inch of the world's territory had gone communist.

Here is another example. We all vigorously pursue a new international economic order. But we should not indulge the illusion, as one of the participants in a WMR-sponsored international discussion does, that imperialism can become a party to the establishment of an "equitable economic order" or to the elimination of "unjust economic relations". Nor can the belief be well-grounded that the release of resources as a result of disarmament could be diverted by the imperialist world "to meet the immediate and long-term needs of the human race."¹

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Other authors argue that "anti-colonial struggles are a thing of the past".² The whole concept of neocolonialism is thus virtually dismissed, along with the objective possibility of mobilising the underdeveloped world in the struggle against imperialism.

Nor can we endorse the view, expounded in many articles on new thinking, that rivalry between the two systems can no longer be viewed as the leading tendency of the modern age. Of course, such rivalry must not express itself in violent confrontation. But it surely remains the leading tendency of the modern age. If not, what is left of the contest between the two systems for the allegiance of humankind? And that contest will have to be resolved, not by force of arms but through ideological struggle and peaceful competition.

Some of the contributors to the discussion on new thinking come dangerously close to prescribing the abandonment or the toning down of conflict in internal class struggles in the interests of maintaining "the equilibrium in the international arena",³ and even urge that "the international boat not be rocked". But undoubtedly, every social struggle and national liberation struggle will upset the equilibrium and be a source of irritation between those who support and those who oppose the transformations sought.

Regrettably, these and related aspects are promoted as part of new thinking. We need to question some of them, even at the risk of being accused of "old thinking". All this underlines the urgency of Mikhail Gorbachev's remarks to the meeting of cultural and scientific workers on January 6, 1989, that "the dialectical interaction between universal human values and class interests has not been given adequate attention...!".⁴ I could not agree more.

KG: I wouldn't say, Joe, that the examples you have just cited are those of new thinking. We in good old England are used to attempts to disguise thread-bare pro-capitalist recipes for class collaboration as something new. It is important to remember that imperialism has retained its class ambitions. Even today, 20 years after the defeat of the US forces in Vietnam, it would like to divide and suppress the liberation movement and continues to exert enormous pressure on the progressive forces the world over. And the failure of the imperialist powers to respect the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan shows that imperialism still seeks to dominate the world.

But even if we take Reagan's word for it that socialism made no advances during his presidency, neither was imperialism successful. And its positions were even weakened in some areas. I think that in attaching priority to the

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policy of peaceful coexistence, Moscow is aware of all that. It is the correct, communist orientation. The class struggle may very well grow if a stronger peace is achieved.

JS: I think we must be wary of possible misinterpretations of the thesis that as peace becomes entrenched, we can expect an intensification of the class struggle. Transplanted to the internal Soviet situation, this thesis gave Stalinism some of its rationalisations. I would say that with the entrenchment of peace and popular pressures forcing imperialism to inhibit some of its worst excesses, the prospects for the working-class movement of winning class demands become greater than they are in the situation of tension and confrontation, where the imperialists are able to project the so-called menace to national existence as an excuse for undemocratic, repressive and even fascist-like methods of suppressing the progressive forces.

KG: Quite right. It is an historical fact that many class demands and solidarity actions have been buried by the threat of an external enemy. I would say, moreover, that cold war mentality was behind the split in the European working-class movement, which remains a major weakness.

A few words on the 1985 miners' strike in Britain. There were many remarkable manifestations of solidarity throughout Britain and across the world. The strike did not succeed for several reasons, and one of them was the divisions among workers and their organisations, which prevented the level of support that the dispute deserved. Hopefully, as we make new advances towards peace, one of the major dividing factors in the working-class movement, both national and international, will tend to disappear.

Solidarity Must Not Lie Behind JS: Capital is becoming more and more interdependent, operating internationally and cutting across and often ignoring national interests. It is, of course, completely correct to de-ideologise state relations, but this does not mean a de-ideologisation of international relations, as Mikhail Gorbachev has noted.⁵ We must meet the challenge of capital by stepping up solidarity at both bilateral and worldwide levels. Undoubtedly, the process of perestroika has contributed enormously to the removal of some major obstacles in the way of finding a wider basis for interaction between different

currents of the working class, communist and democratic movements in the interests of world peace and social progress.

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The days of Marxism by edict from a single source are gone. Gone too is the dividing line between the "pure" and the "impure" in left politics. The concept of unanimity and consensus as a basis for cooperation has also faded. Perestroika has provided the impetus to elaborate a new internationalism which reflects the new realities facing Communists.

But again, there is a need to guard against the danger of throwing out the baby with the dirty bathwater. Some fundamental questions cry out to be addressed more directly than they have been. For example, the healthy emphasis on more pluralism makes workers, progressives and democrats wonder what is left of what used to be regarded as the international communist movement. Does it indeed exist? Does the need to relate to broader forces spell the end of proletarian internationalism, a phrase which has almost been phased out from the vocabulary of discussion on new thinking?

Both these notions, the international communist movement and proletarian internationalism, need to be deliberately situated in the new realities. They may well need qualification in the light of these realities. But we should not merely stumble into sidelining them. An international exchange of views among communist and workers' parties on these questions is vital. Social Democracy continues to organise regular exchanges. In Africa, for example, Social Democrats call a conference every three or four months. But there are no public meetings of Marxist-Leninist parties on the continent. There has been no meeting of what used to be known as the international communist movement for over 20 years. Let me express the unfashionable thought that such an exchange today is more necessary than ever.

KG: I think that is underlined by the way in which capitalism is developing throughout the world, and by the growing might and influence of transnationals. The threat of these monopoly capitalist organisations, very often controlling states, must make us realise how important international solidarity is. The urgent need to safeguard peace is another factor necessitating international solidarity. A new level of understanding has to be reached as to what the priorities and objectives are, and not at the level of closed leadership groups but through an open discussion amongst all the progressive forces.

As for perestroika initiated by the CPSU, the same sort of approach can be applied, surely, to many of the communist parties in the world and to their relations. Since the view is again almost universally accepted that we have to organise on an international level, I would call that a priority when it comes

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to Marxist parties - that they need to improve their international relations to meet together more often on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

Certainly, the re-examination of many old concepts in the spirit of new thinking creates the impression that the working-class movement is changing its principal direction. But it is objective realities that are changing.

It may seem that the very ideological basis of everything that went before is being destroyed. But glasnost allows a wider discussion of what should be retained and what revised, which is as it should be. Yet in any case, confidence in our class objectives and in our theory needs international reinforcement.

JS: This perhaps brings us to the question of a general solidarity on a world scale, and not just one-directional but two-directional, between the forces in the underdeveloped world, the democratic forces in the industrialised countries, the working-class movement and the socialist community.

Indeed, all the remarkable improvements in the international climate would hardly have happened without the popular pressure from the peace forces throughout the world. And the possibility to cut back spending on weapons and armies also contributes to the progress of socialism by helping it make fuller use of its potential.

The solidarity of the popular masses, if you'll allow me to use an old phrase, remains essential both to safeguarding peace and to the renewal of socialism. And the democratic and working-class forces have a continuing duty to advance the process even further to remove the remaining obstacles of the cold war period.

We have to put an end to the concept of coexistence as a form of the class struggle, not only from our side but from the other side.

Without going back to the unthinking and rather uncritical endorsement of all events, all practices and all policies of the socialist world, the progressive forces, including the working class in the West, freedom fighters and democratic movements, must continue to defend socialist gains everywhere. We should not allow some of the rather murky areas of our past to make us too defensive because, I am sure, socialism is the only system which at the end of the day will create a world of permanent peace, real democracy and social justice.

All the progressive forces mentioned above, diverse as they are, belong to a kind of extended family, without, of course, a hierarchy of authority or blind support for each other's political actions, but with a commitment to common ideals and a desire to realise them.

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Solidarity is not just a one-way process, with socialist countries giving assistance to other struggles, but also the responsibility for the fate of world socialism that we as Communists and Marxists should always carry.

There Are Difficulties, but No Pessimism

KG: I am convinced that the three aims that we are discussing - peace, liberation struggle and class struggle - are closely interrelated. Each process is strengthened by other peoples' victories and weakened by setbacks. What we have is a genuine international interdependence of the worldwide progressive movement.

Obviously, we could all benefit from a new international economic order, technology transfers to underdeveloped countries, and the abolition of

neocolonialist oppression. And the peace forces must work together for a world of peace and justice.

The point that Joe was making about the distortions in socialism: they were brought about partly by emphasis on self-preservation and protection, by the enormous concentration on defence. Of course defence spending in capitalist countries also distorts economies and political consciousness.

Millions of workers in the West understand capitalism better than some of the academics in socialist countries. Solidarity is so much more difficult with the prospect of unemployment and poverty hanging over your head. Take defence industry workers in capitalist countries - how are they to react to the disarmament process when they have no assurances of alternative jobs with decent wages? In these circumstances, it becomes that much more difficult to build a mass movement for peace and disarmament. But difficult is not impossible. With the right policies and correct leaderships, it is possible to link disarmament to new jobs, through product diversification and conversion.

I will give you another example of how difficult it can be to mobilise workers in the capitalist world for effective solidarity actions. Transnational corporations operate across national borders, shifting investment and production from country to country at will. The unions defend the interests of primarily their own members in their own countries, and it has proved very difficult as yet to get effective international trade union organisation or action. And it should be said that there are all too few examples of workers effectively challenging the global strategies of the transnationals. Again, the threat of unemployment and poverty allows these companies to play off one group of workers against other national groups of workers. Again, strong

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leadership and political will can overcome these difficulties and this is an urgent priority for European trade unions. JS: The underdeveloped world has no fewer difficulties than capitalist Europe. It is hostage to imperialism, to neocolonialism and to the IMF, for the simple reason that the socialist world has not succeeded so far in generating sufficient resources to make a kind of input which would help develop Third World countries in a way favoured by the progressive forces.

At the same time, socialism has done a great deal for the liberation processes, not in the sense of direct intervention but by its solidarity and by its political, and direct material support.

In a broader context, I think we must always dialectically separate the static from the things that are in movement, the actual from the potential. And we should not adopt a defeatist attitude because of the shortcomings of socialism or the weaknesses of the working-class movement. I have absolutely no doubts that when socialism recaptures this potential, which it is trying to do through perestroika, of creating a really new life for people with all the expectations that we have been talking about for 70 years, the whole strength of the working-class movement in the rest of the world and the freedom forces will be influenced beyond recognition. KG: I absolutely agree. The main thing is, I think, not to give in to pessimism. We must carry on the struggle and develop solidarity. In this

sense I would challenge the old premise of bourgeois ideology, which now seems to be shared by some other forces, that one should always judge the practicality of a given objective by whether victory is assured or guaranteed. We would achieve very little if this approach guided our actions. The objective reality of the Vietnamese people when they started their struggle appeared to be defeat - but they embarked on their struggle against the US Goliath, and they won.

JS: And who would have thought that in the US, where the working-class movement as we understand it was weakened, strong public forces would rise and force the Administration to stop the "dirty war". There can be no struggle without confidence in victory, and no victory without struggle. The Russian revolutions offer another historical example: the defeat in 1905/1907 did not break the will of the working-class movement, and there came victories in February and October 1917. KG: Returning to an event nearer to our time, the British miners' strike. The press and the establishment in Britain were terrified because it looked at one time as if the miners were going to win. So many arguments were put forward on "unrealistic goals", "objective economic processes" and "wrong tactics".

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In short, if the working-class movement had listened to "our theorists", struggle would already have disappeared. But the working people cannot abandon their struggle to improve their lot and cannot always choose the ground on which to fight.

JS: There have been many setbacks and retreats of the working class in May Day history. But taking the overall trend, we have every right to say with pride that the world has changed, that relations of exploitation no longer dominate unchallenged, and that the working people with their struggle and combative international solidarity have been the makers of that new world.

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A Formidable Fighter:

Caesarina Kona Makoere

An interview with the author of "No Child's Play" conducted by Essop Pahad.

EP: Comrade Caesarina, let me begin by asking you to tell us something about what it was like to be the daughter of a policeman whilst being involved in the political struggle at home from a very young age. Very often people tend to make assumptions about children, automatically identifying their politics with those of their parents. Did this happen to you? CM: Being an activist and a policeman's daughter certainly led to problems at the beginning. Some of our comrades had the impression that a policeman's child must be a policeman or woman also. So one had to prove oneself. One had to show by one's actions a sincerity and a determination to participate fully in the liberation of our people.

In fact, when looking at policemen and their families, it is important to look at the historical context of each case. For instance, you will remember that at one stage the ANC encouraged black people to join the police force. This was during the '40s and '50s. Before I was born, my father was already a policeman. There was no way I could say, "Now I am active in the struggle so you must leave the police"! When I was arrested in 1976 he had been a policeman for more than 27 years and was just about to retire on pension. There was no point in being bitter and asking how my father could betray me and so on. I had to face reality: he was forced to look for me, he was told that he would forfeit all his benefits, he was threatened with imprisonment. And this man had only a year to go till retirement. What must he do? He was a trapped man. If it were not for the political situation in our country, definitely I should not have been arrested by my own father and his colleagues.

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EP: I wonder what you feel about other black policemen? Naturally, it is part of our strategy to work within the enemy forces where appropriate. We have a large number of black policemen in South Africa. Would you regard them as being completely, for all time, on the other side of the fence? Or do you think there are real possibilities that we can win over significant sections to the side of the democratic movement, because even as black policemen they suffer from the consequences of apartheid rule? CM: I fully believe it is the correct strategy to try to win over black policemen and infiltrate our own people amongst them. There was an incident in Soshanguve where the local police were actually involved in fighting on the side of the local people against the SADF. This illustrates that often the ties to the community go deeper than those of the job. People belong to a community, and there is no way they can remain unaffected by events in that community. Of course I don't deny that some black policemen like Hlubi and

Selebe have irrevocably taken the side of the enemy. But it is one of the results of the intensification of our struggle that a significant proportion of the police feel the weight of their own oppression and could come over to our side. I remember in 1983, when we had the one million signature campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, we had a lot of signatures from policemen. These people really made it clear that they support our struggle. They say that unemployment and so on force them to join. Now I know that many of us will not buy that story, but I feel that a policeman demonstrates his true position only through his behaviour to the people. For example, that Selepe was a real sadist towards his own people. And there was another in Mamelodi called Sinkie who was very proud of being in the police, always boasting about how he'd shoot to kill. There are many such notorious policemen, but it would be stupid to put them all into this category. I remember the call from our President that the black police should turn their guns on their 'masters'. Now, how can this be achieved if we don't have our own people right inside the police force educating them? It will require a lot of work, a lot of political education, to bring enough police to this level. These things don't just happen from nowhere. EP: I should like to move on now to ask you about your own political development as a young activist. In your book "No Child's Play" you describe how you got involved in the struggle following the uprisings around June 16 1976 and the massacre of our people in Soweto. Can you give us some idea of the way in which you, as a young woman, yourself still relatively inexperienced as a political activist, organised yourself and other young people to join in the struggle? You seem to have developed ways of working

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underground or semi-underground without any special training. CM: I don't think we were particularly advanced at that time. It was more a case of necessity being the mother of invention. We were afraid to say openly where we would be sleeping on any given night, so we told as few people as possible and moved around a lot. I don't think we were really aware of using underground methods of work, but keeping one's plans and movements to oneself, establishing safe-houses for meetings and so on just grew out of the situation of being constantly in danger of arrest. For example, when I was arrested, apart from my family, only two of the people I had recruited knew where I was. So if it were not for my father, I would not have been arrested.

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EP: Since you were on the security police's wanted list, how were you and your comrades able to go to so many schools to organise the school students to participate in demonstrations?

CM: In fact there was a committee in Mamelodi on which each of the high schools had a representative. Each representative was given tasks to perform, and each was responsible for ensuring the participation of their own particular school. We set up this committee after we realised that certain high schools were not so actively involved as others. Then it was the task of this particular students' committee to find out why the students were reluctant and to change this. That is

basically the way we used to operate. EP: So any decisions to strike or demonstrate were arrived at in a democratic manner by representatives of all the schools in a committee, not just taken by one or two individuals?

CM: That's right. Except when circumstances demanded an immediate response and broader consultation would have been impossible. For example at my school in Mamelodi, we had no option because the white teachers closed the school after they had collaborated with the police. So the representatives of our school took a decision on the spot to appeal to all other students in Mamelodi for solidarity under the slogan "Close one, Close all!" EP: Now, Comrade Caesarina, could you tell us at what point in this process you came into contact with the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe? Because you were sentenced to five years' imprisonment for recruiting for MK? CM: In fact it was the experience of being shot at by the police in our school yard with no way of defending ourselves, nothing except stones, that motivated us and made me realise that armed struggle was the only way forward. By that time there was a lot of talk in the townships about MK although it was not universal like it is now. So one was eager to join the ANC

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and go for military training and come back and fight in MK. It didn't matter where we went, so long as we could return to fight the apartheid regime which was really vicious, just killing people indiscriminately, sometimes at random.

EP: So would you say that at that time the opinion among young activists was already very clear: armed struggle had to be central to any strategy designed to eliminate the apartheid regime? CM: Yes, among the young that was seen as the only solution. EP: Would you say that this would apply equally today? CM: I think even more so today. You see, today it's not only in the urban areas where people are talking in terms of armed struggle. Even in the rural areas we find ANC and MK cadres right inside the country. The way our cadres are accepted shows how advanced our people are throughout the whole country. For example, our people no longer have to struggle to find accommodation. People are prepared to accommodate cadres irrespective of the consequences. People right inside the country approve of MK activities and give us a lot of encouragement to keep on fighting. EP: So from your own experience, it is clear that the armed struggle is not only accepted as a viable strategy but is also one in which broad sections of our people are prepared to become involved?

The Armed Struggle WICOIDENS CM: Yes, I'll give you an example of how people are accepting armed struggle. As you enter Mamelodi there is a SADF camp. I remember women from our women's group saying, "It's high time we go and join MK and come back to fight these people". And I'm not talking about women in their thirties. I'm talking about women in their fifties, in their sixties. They're not just people who talk about armed struggle lightly, they are workers, they are Christians, they are mothers who have brought up their kids, who have seen their kids being killed, who have seen their kids being harassed. There is a general feeling among many, many of our people that armed struggle is the solution to our problems.

EP: To move on to your prison experiences: anyone who has read your book could be in no doubt that you are a redoubtable fighter. Whenever you felt the warders were treating you with disrespect, you took instant action and ensured that they felt the force of your anger and understood that you would never accept such treatment. You went on hunger strike so many times that I lost count. Throughout your time in prison you managed consistently to

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inspire those around you by the strength of your example. It is a remarkable story of a very powerful resistance. What sustained you during this time? CM: I think that when I was sentenced to five years, I told myself that five years is a very long time. Counted in days the number is too big to have any real meaning. I told myself that the solution was to make them suffer, to make them serve the sentence with me. The only way to do this was to be difficult, to make apartheid unworkable, to be ungovernable oneself. It was necessary to continue fighting apartheid inside prison. For instance, there is a lot of racial discrimination inside South African prisons and it is necessary to let them see that you refuse to be discriminated against. Hunger strikes were just one form of resistance. We had nine. It was essential to bring the battle against all apartheid laws right inside the prison system. EP: You were with others. Did you ever worry that your actions might actually lead to a worsening of conditions for other prisoners? CM: No, it never occurred to me that the situation might deteriorate because nothing can be worse than being locked up in prison. If one wanted to be out or just okay, one wouldn't have participated in the struggle in the first place. One could have stayed at home and been an obedient citizen all along. But why should one suddenly allow oneself to feel threatened and become obedient in prison? The answer was, "No way!" For instance, when I wrote the exam in 1978...

EP: What exam was that?

CM: My final matric. At that time I was refusing to wear their clothes. They said, "Caesarina, go and put on your clothes, otherwise you can't write the exam". I said, "Okay, if you need the clothes to write the exam, then take the clothes there to write the exam." And I refused to put on their clothes and I went in a nightdress or a petticoat and vest to the examination room, because I was very firm with my demands. Saying "No" to their clothes was a part of my struggle and I had to continue the fight. And they took away my right to study, the whole two and a half years. But I never cared, because for me, the essential thing was to fight apartheid right inside a South African prison, not to go and acquire degrees. I appreciate what they have done, those prisoners who have acquired degrees, but maybe we don't perceive the fight against apartheid in the same way. Different people have different outlooks. If I wanted a degree I would get it outside. For me it was much more satisfying to see them dancing to my music right inside their prison. EP: Did you get your matric in the end? CM: I wrote the exam. Then I was supposed to do the supplement in March '79 but I couldn't do it because already hell was let loose by then. And they

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had withdrawn all their so-called privileges. I finished my matric, when I came out.

IrTe Necess0Mity to Writea EP: So that brings me to the question of your writing. You didn't actually finish your secondary schooling, and yet you have written a deeply moving book in a vivid and direct style which is very much your own. Had you any previous experience of writing?

CM: Not really. As I've explained, I finished my matric, after my release in 1983, but that is all. In fact what really stimulated me into writing "No Child's Play" was the dearth of literature about women's involvement in our struggle. A lot has been written by and about male political prisoners, both black and white, but nothing is known or said about women political prisoners. I remember one day in prison we were discussing how humiliating it was to find that even people in the leadership were still talking in terms of political prisoners on Robben Island all the time and it was as if we did not exist. Maybe to them we really did not exist. And it was as part of our effort to raise people's awareness of women freedom fighters that we decided to stab the wardress Mbomvana. A case like that has to be taken to a public court and it gave us a chance to make our position and our fight known outside.

Mbomvana was stabbed firstly to punish her for her behaviour; she was a real pain; and secondly we wanted people to recognise that we women were struggling, refusing to obey apartheid laws; that there is serious fighting right inside the South African prisons by women. We didn't care what the consequences of the whole incident would be for us personally as long as our stand was made clear to the outside world. EP: We'll come back to the struggles of women. Now, you had, quite understandably, this passionate determination to make known as widely as possible the experiences of women political prisoners after you were released. I can see that this is a very strong motivation for writing your book. But not everyone who has such motivation succeeds in writing as well as you do. Did you realise that you had this talent for writing before you started "No Child's Play"?

CM: It depends on what you mean by "writing". If I can write a letter, I can always write a lot of letters and compile them and take them to a publisher. How interesting they are depends on the contents... EP: Yes, but not everyone can write well. Maybe they can write letters which other people can read. But letters or articles or books which lots of other people can read and find useful and informative are another thing. And

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writing which others find inspiring or illuminating requires a definite talent. Your book shows that you have a remarkable talent. Were you aware of this? CM: No, I was not aware of it. All I wanted to deliver to the people was the force of our struggle as women.

EP: So now that you know that you can use your writing as an effective tool in the struggle, do you intend to write some more? CM: In fact, when I was in Nigeria I started a manuscript and I began to write some poems which I left in Nigeria. EP:

So perhaps we can hope to see some more work from your pen: poetry or maybe some fiction?

CM: Yes.

Women's Contribution

EP: Good. Now let's return to the great contribution of women to the South African revolutionary struggle. I think we are all agreed that this contribution has been, and often still is, largely neglected. As a black woman, as a person who suffers under what we generally regard as triple oppression, can you tell us about other black women writers in South Africa? Clearly it's difficult for any black person even if they have latent talent to express themselves because of the situation in South Africa. But it's especially difficult for a black woman. How do you see black women writers in South Africa today?

CM: I think, compared to before, there are quite a number of women coming up as writers. For instance, there is an association which was formed in 1987 by women writers in Johannesburg. The motivation exists, and I think it is very necessary that more women should be encouraged to write. We have a very rich history and if we don't write it down nobody will write it for us. Or if we let someone else do it they will dilute it and distort it just as they have done before. So it must come from us. If a lot of women can be encouraged to write by our Culture Department it will be a very good thing both for all women in South Africa and for all those in our own organisation. I think our men also should be encouraged to write.

EP: Is there any particular South African woman writer who appeals to you most?

CM: Well, there are writers like Miriam Tlali and Ellen Kuzwayo. And the book that really moved me was Ruth First's "117 Days". I really liked that book.

EP: Did you read it when you were in South Africa?

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CM: No, I read it in Botswana. And it really pushed me. I felt very excited about that book. Anyway, like I said, there are a lot of writers coming up. And we have poets like Lindiwe Mabuza, Rebecca Matlou and Baleka Kgotsile. We have quite a number of talented people in the movement who need encouragement. And they in turn should encourage the younger generation to develop their talents and put them to good use.

EP: Now I should like to come to another aspect of the involvement of women. In your book you describe how whilst you were in prison you came into contact, in spite of the barriers erected by the prison authorities, with women who were there on criminal charges. And you and your comrades managed on so many occasions to mobilise them and raise their political consciousness to the extent that when they were released they joined the women's organisations. Could you please talk a little more about the women's organisations in which you were involved and about the mobilisation of women?

CM: As an activist it was difficult to mobilise the women to bring about their active involvement in the struggle because of the triple oppression you have mentioned. But we used the issues which really demanded the attention of women. We knew, for example, the feelings of women as mothers. In my

township we formed a women's group called Zakheni Women's Group. The women were church women, factory workers, unemployed mothers, and so on. So this is the sort of thing we used to do: we would write letters to all the churches in the township and ask them to come to one mothers' union on a particular Thursday. And we would call various figures from other townships, mainly comrades who were senior members in our Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW). And we were fortunate to have a really serious Christian in Sister Bernade Ncube who is the President of FEDTRAW. And so during this particular prayer meeting all the mothers were educated about the way in which Christianity and the fight against apartheid are inseparable and no Christian has the right to disassociate herself from our suffering and our struggle. We made it clear that it is the duty of every mother to see that South Africa is free, irrespective of her religious beliefs.

I can also remember a very interesting demonstration in Pretoria where FEDTRAW went to protest against the increase in the price of dairy products, and we had one speaker from our own women's organisation (like the others participating, an affiliate of FEDTRAW). She was an elderly

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woman, in her sixties. And because she was from the Zion Christian Church and was an older woman, it gave her more authority and she was able to make a greater impact as our spokesperson.

Our organisational work was very thorough and wide-ranging. We didn't just concentrate on Christians. For example, whenever there was a workers' meeting we would go to educate not only the women but the men too about our struggle as women. And we would talk about the role to be played by women and by men in the liberation struggle. We would show how important it is that mothers are active in our struggle, not just fighting for better working conditions, not just one issue concerning the local community, but linking things together: like the rent increases which eat up any pay increases. We talked to parents as mothers and fathers: they are going to kill our kids, harass our kids, force them into exile. We talked about bread and butter issues which affected the people directly. This is how we used to bring the women into our organisations.

EP: Would you say you mobilised around specific issues affecting women directly; that you identified particular interest groups amongst the women; and you ensured that experienced women organisers came together regularly with younger people so that the organisation expanded, covering a wide age-range? And that this is what gave, and still gives, the organisation its fundamental strength?

CM: Yes.

EP: I find it interesting, and I'm glad this point came up, that when you were working you were not only educating and organising women workers, you were also educating and organising male workers. I want to ask you whether you feel that it is a mistake to see women's organisations as if they were supposed to limit themselves strictly to issues of concern primarily to women (if such issues could ever be identified and agreed upon!) and restricted their dealings with men? Of

course women's organisations are set up to concentrate specifically on women's concerns, but I feel that in terms of their work and the contribution they make it's much broader than organising this particular sector. It necessarily spills over at times into working, mobilising, raising consciousness and organising among men too. CM: Yes. For instance, in our women's group, we were fortunate to have a lot of male comrades who used to come and attend our meetings and listen. Because we weren't a sexist women's group or that type of feminist group that bans men. Sometimes the male comrades gave practical assistance, like when we were organising the celebration for the 30th Anniversary of the Federation of South African Women. They were slaughtering the sheep, getting vegetables,

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collecting pots from various areas. They volunteered to participate and we were glad of their help. They didn't cut themselves off and say, "This is women's work. It's their anniversary. Let the women get on with it". It's through this kind of indirect process that most of our male comrades are educated about our women's struggle. EP: And you found that the message of resistance and struggle you were putting across found a resonance among the male workers because its content was equally appropriate for men and women? CM: Exactly. We also found that the male comrades who attended our meetings would go after a while and educate their mothers, and invite us to come and talk to their mothers and sisters. And that is one of the ways we drew a lot of people into our ranks. It's not like a youth organisation with a lot of male comrades and only a few female ones. It's a women's organisation and the men can only have observer status. They can't hold office or be on the executive committee. That's how it used to be really and we still support that now.

EP: You left the country a few years ago but I know you've kept in touch especially with your own area. In your opinion, what is the level of resistance, the determination and commitment to fight till we have won final victory? Is it still there, as it was when you were there? CM: I should say that the determination is even greater than before. Looking at the last municipal election held by the apartheid regime, you can see by the percentage of people who refused to vote how strong the commitment of the people is now.

EP: Solomon Mahlangu comes from the same area as you and the Silverton Siege was in that very same area. Now, you were there at the time, working together with other young activists. What kind of impact did these two examples have at home?

CM: In fact I think Solly's execution played a very important role in mobilising the Pretoria and PWV area. People felt it necessary to stand up. A lot of comrades left South Africa in '79 after Solly's execution and we have a lot of people from Mamelodi in the ranks of the ANC. People felt motivated to pick up Solly's spear. And even mothers stood up to identify themselves with the struggle in numbers, quite unlike before. More than that, at one stage Mamelodi was a very conservative kind of place. You know the kind of attitude? Many people were mainly concerned to educate their children, make enough money and mind their own business. But it's something quite different of late. EP: So would you think

that the impact of Solomon Mahlangu's great heroism had a lot to do with this change?

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CM: Yes, I'm sure it did.

EP: Now before we finish, I'd like to return to something more personal. You were a mother at sixteen and you actually couldn't see your son for a long time. And now he is seventeen and yet at the moment you are not with him. What did you feel about this in prison, when they refused to allow you to see your child?

CM: I think that being separated from my child like that made me more determined to fight the apartheid regime so that my child and my grandchildren wouldn't have to experience the same suffering as me. I still feel that we are fighting not for ourselves but for our kids, and our grandkids and great-grandkids... for the future. Let them enjoy South Africa. Let them have harmony in South Africa. We must fight to achieve that even from inside prison if necessary.

EP. Thank you, Caesarina. We can end on that note then: In the name of our children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren, we must never rest till we have destroyed this evil system.

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The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party welcomes the initiatives taken by the Third Congress of COSATU to launch and spearhead a Workers' Charter Campaign. As a contribution to this campaign we have prepared a draft which contains some of our preliminary thinking on what such a Charter should contain.

The draft is presented as a basis for discussion and does not reflect our final positions. We publish and circulate it as part of the debates, discussion and consultation called for in the COSATU resolution. We invite all structures of our Party, our allies in the National Liberation Movement, the mass democratic movement and, of course, COSATU and its constituents, to examine the draft critically. We express the hope that it will contribute constructively to this important COSATU initiative.

DRAFT WORKERS' CHARTER PREAMBLE

We, the working people of South Africa, the main producers of our country's wealth, declare:

- * That, as workers, we are daily robbed of a rightful share of the fruits of our labour.

- * That, as black workers, we are subjected to even more intense exploitation by a system of capitalism which uses national domination to keep wages low and profits high.

- * That, as part of the black oppressed, whose forebears were conquered by force of arms, we continue to suffer all the social, political, economic and cultural deprivations of a colonised people.

- * That the most urgent task facing us as workers, as black workers and as

part of the black oppressed, is to use our organised strength both at the point of production and among our communities, to put an end to the race tyranny and to help bring about a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa based on one person one vote as broadly defined in the Freedom Charter.

* That we see the winning of such a non-racial democracy as part of a continuous process of creating conditions for the building of a socialist

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society which will be in the interests of all our people; a society free of all exploitation of person by person which alone can complete the liberation objectives in all spheres of social life.

* That we are the most vital constituent of the broad liberation movement in which we play a part both as individuals and through our trade unions and political organisations. We stand ready to work together with all other classes and groups genuinely committed to a non-racial democracy, at the same time safeguarding our class independence and our right to propagate, and mobilise for, a socialist future.

" That we extend a hand of friendship to our white brothers and sisters whose long-term interests lie in the unity of all labour - black and white.

In order to ensure

that victory in the national liberation struggle is not hijacked by a new exploiting class, of whatever colour,

that the immediate interests of the working people are fully safeguarded in the post-apartheid state, and

that we are not prevented from asserting our democratic right to win the majority of the people for a socialist future,

we, the working people, adopt this Charter (as an elaboration of the Freedom Charter) and pledge ourselves to strive together, using our organised strength, to guarantee its implementation.

OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF THE ECONOMY

The commanding heights of the economy shall be placed under the ownership and overall control of the state acting on behalf of the people. Such control shall not be exercised in an over-centralised or commandist way, and we must ensure active participation in the planning and running of the enterprises by workers at the point of production and through their trade unions.

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Economic policy shall aim to generate the resources needed to correct the economic imbalances imposed by race domination and bring about wealth distribution for the benefit of the people as a whole. More particularly, steps shall be taken to do away with the white monopoly of ownership and managerial control.

Participation in the state sector by domestic or foreign private capital, where judged necessary, shall not give such capital a controlling share and all enterprises, whether state-owned or private, shall be compelled to safeguard the

interests of their workers and the nation as a whole. The continued operation of market forces in the functioning of the economy shall not prevent state intervention in areas relating to the people's basic needs.

In the period after the defeat of the race tyranny, the fundamental perspective of working class political and trade union organisations shall be to work for the creation of economic and social conditions making possible a steady advance towards a democratic socialist society.

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Every adult person has a right and duty to work and to receive remuneration according to his or her contribution. The new state shall, as a matter of priority, work to create economic conditions in which jobs are available to all. Until this is achieved the state shall ensure that social support is provided for the unemployed and members of their families.

All managerial and administrative posts and other jobs shall be open to every qualified citizen irrespective of race, colour, sex or religion. The equal right of access to jobs, managerial and administrative posts shall be subject to positive measures necessary to correct the imbalances inherited from the era of race discrimination. Public and private institutions shall have a duty to provide facilities for training and opportunities to apply the acquired skills.

The State, in consultation with the trade unions, shall adopt and enforce a national minimum wage.

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Child labour and all forms of forced and semi-forced labour shall be prohibited. Special attention shall be paid to redressing the oppressive situation of workers involved in farm work, domestic service and those trapped in the so-called homelands.

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There shall be no restrictions on the right of workers to organise themselves into political parties or trade unions. Trade union organisation shall be based on the principles of one industry - one union and one country - one federation.

Trade unions and their federations shall be completely independent and answerable only to the decisions of their members or affiliates democratically arrived at. No political party, state organ or enterprise, whether public, private or mixed, shall directly or indirectly interfere with such independence.

The state shall ensure that the trade unions, as the key mass social organisation of the organised working class, are given the opportunity to participate at all levels of economic planning and implementation.

All workers, in every sector of the economy, shall have the right, through their trade unions, to engage freely in collective bargaining and to use the strike weapon.

All legislation dealing with procedures for collective bargaining, including any limitations on the right to strike in exceptional cases, shall require the consent of a majority in the trade union movement.

In the case of all other labour legislation there shall be prior consultation with the trade union movement, whose views on such proposed legislation should be timeously tabled in parliament.

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Steps shall be taken to break the existing media monopoly by big business and the state and to ensure effective workers' access to all sections of the media.

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AmD SOCIAL FACILITIES

All legislation and labour practices which prevent or interfere with the right of families to live together shall be outlawed. Migrant labour shall be phased out or, in cases where it is unavoidable, provision shall be made for family accommodation during any period of service exceeding three months.

The state shall aim to make adequate accommodation and children's schools available to all workers and their families, close to their places of work. All enterprises shall help to create local or regional recreational facilities for the workforce, as well as creches and primary health care facilities.

No parent, male or female, shall be disadvantaged or disabled from any form of employment by virtue of his or her duty to rear children, and where necessary, this should be ensured by the creation of special facilities including provision for paid maternity and paternity leave.

T*az RIGHFIT TO HE *ALTHI ANDSAFETv

Conditions of work shall not threaten the health, safety or well-being of the workforce or of the community at large, or create serious ecological risks.

All workers shall have the right to paid annual leave and paid sick leave.

Those injured at work shall receive proper compensation for themselves and their families. Provision shall be made for the rehabilitation of all disabled workers including, where necessary, the provision of alternative employment.

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All workers shall be entitled to an adequate pension on retirement, provided either by the state or the relevant enterprise.

TH4U mRimmrS OF WOmEr WOckERS

The state shall aim to integrate all women workers as full and equal participants in the economy. Any form of discrimination against women workers in regard to job allocation, wages, working conditions, training, benefits, etc., shall be prohibited. Positive steps shall be taken to help correct the discrimination suffered by women both in the work place and the home. Opportunities shall be created to enable women to acquire skills for employment outside the home.

It shall be the duty of the state, trade union, workers' political parties and all other mass and social organisations to ensure effective women's participation at leadership, management and other levels and to take measures, including educational campaigns, to combat all forms of male chauvinism both in the home and outside.

We declare that the above immediate and long-term objectives are in the best interests of all the working people and of society as a whole. As individuals and as part of the organised working class, we pledge to struggle, side by side, for their full implementation.

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XI BOOK

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THEi POS'--mLIBE*RATIONd

FIGHUT FOR FniEEDOMi

by NgOgi Wa Thiong'o

(Heinemann, London, £10.95)

The appearance of this outstanding Kenyan writer's latest book in English translation is an event of great significance in more ways than one. *Matigari* is a remarkable achievement, both as a work of art and as a justification of Ngigfi's approach in the context of culture as a political weapon. The impact which this work has already had in Kenya was considered by many as sufficient vindication of Ngig's commitment to writing for his own people in their own language. Now the English-speaking world has access to a translation which preserves the quality of language, the skill and artistry which we have come to expect from Ngigfi. This accessibility is of especial importance to Anglophone countries in Africa where the book's universal setting in both time and place gives a painful immediacy to its theme of the post-colonial betrayal of liberation ideals and the stranglehold of neocolonialism.

Originally published in the Gikfiyfi language in 1986, rhythm and pace are firmly rooted in the oral traditions of Africa. Using the allegorical framework of a man's experience as he seeks truth and justice - as familiar in European

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literature as it is elsewhere - Ngiigi skilfully blends narrative with poetry and song, political satire and biting realism with a powerful and imaginative use of fantasy and symbol in a manner quite outside the traditions of European English literature. His work has a directness of appeal, a compelling quality where even the repetition contains development, leading us constantly forwards, involving us further as each phase of the narrative unfolds. We reap the benefit of NgiiglWs experience in community theatre workshop as throughout the book there is the flavour of a dramatic performance intensifying its impact on us, the readers, listeners, audience, participants. Nggi arouses our anger and frustration, makes us laugh and moves us to tears. But overriding all other intellectual or emotional responses, Ngtigrs great achievement is that he makes us also believe in *Matigari*, who gives us back our pride, courage, humanity and hope.

The WoIrd I Upside Dowini

Matigari ma Njirui-ingi [literally: "the patriots who survived the bullets"] returns from the liberation struggle after finally destroying his enemies, the white Settler

Williams and his black ally and collaborator, John Boy, to claim his rights in his independent country. He buries his arms and goes back home to enjoy peace and fulfilment at last. To his astonishment he finds that, in spite of certain superficial changes [black faces where previously there would have been only white, for example] the world is still upside down and justice still as elusive as ever. As before:

"The builder sleeps in the open

The worker is left empty-handed

The tailor goes naked

The tiller goes to sleep on an empty stomach"

Wealth and power still reside in the hands of a few who abuse it to terrorise, exploit and dispossess the people. Matigari, who built the settler's house, now claims it as his own. But far from being welcomed as a triumphant hero, he is insulted and beaten, arrested and labelled 'thief'. The children of the very men Matigari has spent his life fighting have inherited their places in the power structure. The son of Matigari's old enemy, Settler Williams, now represents the interests of various international financial and commercial organisations whose names as acronyms spell out in the Gikiydi language "the real thieves".

And the son of John Boy, educated at the expense of the whole community who had sent him abroad "singing with pride: 'He shall come back and clean up our cities, our country and deliver us from slavery'", has indeed returned

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- as a corrupt and cynical comprador tycoon. The finishing touches to his education have been obtained at Fort Hare in South Africa and at the London School of Economics. He has learnt to scorn the values expressed in Matigari's song of the liberation struggle:

"Great love I saw there

Among the women and children We shared even the single bean

That fell upon the ground"

and has substituted his own individualistic philosophy:

"Go your way and let me go mine

For none of us is carrying the other".

We are constantly reminded of the wider relevance of the neo-colonial experience depicted symbolically through the characters in this book by direct pointers like the question unfortunately so apt in many post-colonial countries: "Who in this country does not know John Boy?", as well as by the introduction which tells us, "Reader/listener: may the story take place in the country of your choice!"

Some of the funniest and most hard-hitting parts of the novel deal with the ideology of the ruling party (chillingly the KKK), known as Parrotology. We are treated to the absurd spectacle of those who eschew 'foreign ideologies' (revolution, Marxism, socialism, etc.,) publicly boasting, "I am an African Anglophile and proud of it!"

When Matigari and his followers become the object of a nation-wide alert the police are instructed to shoot on sight any 'madman' fitting his description. But later the 'Voice of Truth' hurriedly broadcasts a correction after intervention from

the US and British embassies to protect their citizens. This demands contortions in logic that even the 'Voice of Truth' has some difficulty in handling:

"The police have been told not to harass white people even if they are wearing long beards and have unkempt hair or even if they are dressed in rags or dirty clothes, or are hitching lifts, or are without a bus fare... The Minister for Truth and Justice apologised and warned people against racism... The chief of police has told the police and members of the public that, in any case, white people do not go mad. The police would like to inform the public that the escaped madmen, with the exception of one Asian, are all black..."

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We are left in no doubt as to the role of Western governments in this neocolonial set-up, regardless of their moral stance. They provide military and economic support for His Excellency Ole Excellence and his regime and act as acquiescent observers of his system of 'Justice' in action, so as to allay any disquiet in world opinion. These same countries and the regimes they prop up are also seen as the economic and military allies of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Attempts to persuade workers into believing themselves 'shareholders' in 'national' industries through bribes to ministers and officials supposedly 'representing' them likewise fool nobody. The following announcement is greeted with unenthusiastic silence:

"Now this company is yours. It is ours. It is a national company. This is capitalism with a socialist face - or socialism with a capitalist heart. That is to say it is true African socialism. Not like that of Karl Marx and Lenin that the students and teachers are always talking about..."

But "too much fear breeds misery in the land". Most of the people have been paralysed by fear and despair.

As Matigari's quest continues his confident air of authority, his utter fearlessness and his unshakeable belief in his own vision of truth and justice inspire all who witness his actions or hear of them. He lends courage to existing opposition amongst students and organised workers. But significantly he can also recruit from society's most wretched and oppressed

- his two principal disciples are drawn from the women who have been driven into prostitution for survival and the orphans who scrape a living from scavenging in the garbage dumps and who take refuge from further exploitation by adults in their own village - a vehicle cemetery - (the dream home: an abandoned Mercedes Benz).

For Matigari and those who feel his strength, people's power becomes a reality for which they must fight unto death if necessary. Nothing less is acceptable. The people must once more arm themselves as they take up Matigari's song of resistance:

"I will not produce the food

For him-who-reaps-where-he-never-sowed to feed on it

While I go to sleep on an empty belly.

I will not build a house

For him-who-reaps-where-he-never-sowed to sleep in it

While I sleep in the open.

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I will not sew clothes

For him-who-reaps-where-he-never-sowed to wear them

While I strut about naked.

I will not make goods

For him-who-reaps-where-he-never-sowed to grow rich

While I remain empty-handed.

I have refused to be like the cooking pot

Whose sole purpose is to cook and never to eat!"

The reader/audience is constantly asked to take sides. For example we are told repeatedly, "There are two types of people in this country. There are those who sell out and those who are patriots." The overall message is a clear call to action. And three months after the novel was originally published in Kenya in the Gfldiyfi language, as Ngfig tells us with justifiable pride in a note to this edition, "...intelligence reports had it that peasants in Central Kenya were whispering and talking about a man called Matigari who was roaming the whole country making demands about truth and justice. There were orders for his immediate arrest, but the police discovered that Matigari was only a fictional character in a book of the same name. In February, 1987, the police raided all the bookshops and seized every copy of the novel." Whom the cap fits...!

The novel ends with a satisfying symmetry of imagery and action as Miirifiki (the orphan) literally straps on the AK 47 which Matigari had prematurely abandoned. It is as if a whole cycle of events has been completed. But this time youth is taking up the weapons of struggle to the sound of united patriots, peasants, workers and students singing: VICTORY SHALL BE OURS!
G.E.M.

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TUINIMNI WHITE RFIODESIANS INETO ZIMBABWAENS

Whita Mean Blaick War

by Bruce Moore-King

(Baobab Books, Harare, 1988 Z\$11,20)

After Zimbabwe's independence a spate of books were published, largely in South Africa, by former Rhodesians, glorifying the Rhodesian Army. Most of these books had one central theme - the Rhodesian Army was supposedly the best in the world and would have won the war if it had not been "sold out" by the "politicians" or South Africa or the "free world". White Man Black War, written by a former soldier of the Rhodesian army, takes us to the frontline of the battles with the Zimbabwean liberation movement's guerilla forces. But this book is different. It is not an attempt to glorify the past or a whitewash of the brutalities of the colonial army. White Man Black War is the first attempt by a white Zimbabwean to understand his past and to ask what this means for his future. The result is a penetrating look into the minds of white Rhodesians and a challenge for them to become patriotic Zimbabweans.

"My people talk of the courage and bravery with which we, their sons, fought. And in the same breath, without any sense of contradiction, they talk of the cowardice of those who were our enemies, how poorly trained they were, how they did not compare as soldiers. How then did it require such courage to fight them? They fought against our helicopters, our bombers, our gunships, often barefooted,

using third-hand rifles. It must take courage to fight like that." (page 129)

Bruce Moore-King served in various Rhodesian army units during the liberation war, including the elite Grey Scout high speed tracking unit. The first part of the book is drawn from his war experience and shows with brutal honesty what the war was like for the white soldiers and their victims.

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He describes the burning of a peasant village that had refused to move to a protected village as part of the colonialists' counter-insurgency campaign. Moore-King not only describes the terrorism of the soldiers' actions, but also tries to imagine what the owners of the village felt, what the consequences of their actions were:

"They were only mud huts. In the middle of nowhere, half an hour's walk from water. They were only mud huts. The kraal burns. They were only mud huts. They were everything. Carved from the African veld. Each, a volume of stories, a personal history of three generations. They were proof of the worthiness of their lives, their toil. Their lives burn before them."

Then we have the way the soldiers will remember it:

"They are tired, bone weary, fatigued with the monotony of their task... (they) ride away tired, filthy, hot, irritable, bored. The platoon commander checks his map, radios in the grid reference of the next kraal. Another day, another dollar."

(page 13)

We also see confused, nervous young conscripts placed in situations which show the real nature of a people's war. It is Christmas and a racist patrol is meant to be "guarding" a protected village. But the soldiers are more interested in their return to base for the Christmas celebration. They have already moved five kilometres away to where helicopters will uplift them the next morning. It is from here they see freedom fighters holding a mass political rally in the midst of the village they should be guarding. Hundreds of people are singing revolutionary songs, shouting slogans, executing a collaborator and burning the houses they have been forced to move to. The racist soldiers move closer and begin to attack, ignoring the hundreds of unarmed but organised civilians protecting their boys, the guerrillas. "Then we saw two of the enemy, rifles high, moving like cheer leaders amongst the people right on top of the walls." Over the radio comes the order: 'Take them out'.

"As the grenade exploded inside the walls, people began to rise and turn on top of the walls. But we began firing then, trying to search out the two armed figures we had seen, and people dropped like dead pheasants, rolling, arms loose, down the steep sides of the walls." (page 26)

The next day 123 dead bodies are counted in the village. For the soldiers "it was Christmas time in a dry dusty area called Mtoko, and that night we all got happily drunk". (page 34)

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Hutinmanity Lost

There is more to White Man Black War than the brutal and barbarous way in which the Rhodesian army fought against the liberation movement. Bruce Moore-King describes what the war did to those who fought it.

"The horror was that I felt nothing, absolutely nothing... The horror was that in order to 'preseve the standards', 'maintain civilised rule', 'stop the evils of Communism', in order to do all this, I had to lose my humanity. Totally." (p. 64) Bruce Moore-King is searching for the reasons why he and thousands of others fought a war that did this to him; why many ex-Rhodesians still refuse to accept and adapt to the peace and democracy of a liberated Zimbabwe; why there are still white Zimbabweans who are prepared to commit treason by working as agents of the apartheid regime. It is in answering these questions that the book poses a most powerful challenge to white Zimbabweans and all those who enjoy the fruits of apartheid and colonialism in Southern Africa.

For Bruce Moore-King the blame lies with the "elders of my tribe" and especially the "High Priest" - Ian Smith. It was these "elders" who developed the "catechism" that the fight was to preserve democracy against Communism.

"It was not against Communism we fought, not for Democracy, Western Civilisation or Christian Principles. My Elders know not the meaning of communism, know not the difference between Marx, Engels or Mao Tse Tung, know not the difference between Feudalism, Capitalism or Socialism. They were only words, still are only words to them. And we hallowed the Truth of Democracy, killed for Democracy but we had none, by any definition, in our society." (page 112)

He argues that they did not fight for ideology. The bitter truth is

"these Elders valued the comfort of their life-styles beyond the lives of their own children, beyond the lives of any children. They did not want to share. It was for greed they sent us, the battered generation, to war." (page 113)

And as this book shows, today, nine years after Zimbabwean independence, the Elders are still proud of their war and their Catechism. They refuse to accept that they have to choose. As Bruce Moore-King puts it: "Choose to be Zimbabwean or choose to be the enemy." (page 132)

For a person who has so much bitterness for what he and other young, white boys were forced to do by the "Elders", Bruce Moore-King still has hope for the future.

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"The truth I have found is not that war is murderous and degrading, not that our leaders lied and misled and used us. Those are merely facts. The truth is that our fellow countrymen have shown us the meaning of the words we once spoke so easily. The truth is that they have shown us how a civilised people conduct themselves. We have much to learn about civilised honest behaviour." (page 132)

White Man Black War is a powerful indictment of those in both Zimbabwe and South Africa who cling at all costs to colonialism and apartheid in order to preserve their wealth and privilege. At times the writing is a bit too poetic and sometimes it sounds like a bar room tale. Yet this is a book that should be read by anyone wanting to understand why white Rhodesians, and today South Africans, are prepared to fight an unwinnable war. It is also a pointer to what the true meaning of patriotism should be for white South Africa.

Jopie Fourie

REVOLUTINARY OPTIMISM AT THE THEATRE

KatMhnMK The Sound Of The AK

A play by Zambuko/Izibuko, Faculty of Arts Drama, University of Zimbabwe, University Playscripts, Harare, 1988, pp.51

Katshaa!, a play in solidarity with the heroic struggle of the South African people, performed by a group of students from the University of Zimbabwe, was an inspiring event to an ANC audience in Lusaka in 1987, in the presence of President Oliver Tambo and other leaders of the ANC. This was the year marking the 75th birthday of the ANC. A year later, the script of this brilliant play had been published and made available to thousands of those who may never have the opportunity to see it live.

While its highly successful public performance in Harare and Bulawayo is quite understandable, yet the enthusiastic response of ANC members, who know the conditions in South Africa intimately and are actually involved in

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the struggle to change those conditions, shows that there is something about this play that is worth watching.

Katshaa! came about at the end of 1985 when a small group of Zimbabweans and two South Africans met to discuss the possibility of making a play in order to raise awareness in Zimbabwe about the struggle in South Africa. They elected to make as their starting point a dramatisation of the pamphlet This Is Apartheid, which is published by the International Defence and Aid Fund. Later, the group systematically read materials on South Africa and ended up with a clear idea that their play had to provide a brief history of the establishment of apartheid, the suppression of human rights through oppressive legislation and the defiance and struggle of the people to change these conditions.

For those who are used to a heavy and regular diet of theatre whose feature is a definite and continuous story-line, consecutive and well-structured with a single and very limited viewpoint, Katshaa! may be too experimentalist in both language and staging. There are a number of theatrical techniques which distinguish it from the genre of the predominantly verbal drama. One of the features of Katshaa! is the technique of moving constantly from one device to another according to the needs and capabilities of the cast, the type of audience, the nature of the stage, and the current dictates of the theme. Various theatre devices are used or abandoned as soon as the audience has become sensitive to the subject matter.

The technical effect, of course, is felt and understood markedly during live production, and is altogether lost in the written text which lacks all the dynamism experienced by those who have actually seen Katshaa!

Sisa Majola

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LMERS TO THE EDITOR

W. WISH SWAPO A HEALTHY VICTORY

from Lineo Lefuru, Lesotho

Dear Editor

Namibia under the tested leadership of SWAPO and PLAN is entering a new phase in the struggle for independence. When the process started earlier this year we were shocked by the attempt of the South African bandits to start a new conflagration - in their skirmish with the Australian component of the UN peace-keeping forces and their outrageous massacre of SWAPO guerrillas at the very beginning of the transitional process. Clearly the transition process sees SWAPO placed at a relative disadvantage. The racist army was allowed to roam around like a loose dog while SWAPO was tethered to one place.

South Africa's malignant interruption of the smooth implementation of Resolution 435 is due to the fact that it regards the 'loss' of Namibia as a prelude to the final crumbling of the apartheid edifice. Therefore it makes unprovoked and perfervid attempts to sabotage the transition.

One cannot help recalling Englebrecht's instruction to his hirelings when it was proposed to dismantle Koevoet: "That we are no longer Koevoet does not mean we stop fighting. If SWAPO comes to power we shall go to fight again. Go and tell everyone you meet to vote for DTA7.

Pretoria is out to create a new Angola in Namibia, but it "rises too early and will be soaked by morning dew". The efforts of all democratic and progressive forces must go towards repulsing the machinations of imperialism to frustrate Namibian independence. Let us recall the words of Lenin:

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"We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded by enemies on all sides and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire".

Who are 'we' and who is the enemy under whose 'fire' we have to 'constantly advance'?

'We' are not only SWAPO but the whole democratic camp, the socialist community, the non-aligned countries including the frontline states, liberation movements, progressive trade unions, revolutionary intelligentsia, students and youth. The 'enemies' are not only the apartheid galaxy but the entire retrograde cocoon, bantustan stooges and their state machinery, neo-colonialist oligarchies in league with imperialism, bandit units of Southern Africa and the world, multi-sinewed TNCs and their exploitative leverages, petit-bourgeois opportunists etc. We must identify the enemy and its operations. It is the task of the international revolutionary community to assist Namibia to survive the pitfalls of the coming

period in its development. The first step would be perhaps to snatch the Namibian economy from the hands of the imperialists and help the country establish a relatively independent economy after winning its "battle of democracy" against the colonialists.

We can only wish SWAPO a healthy victory and quick passover to absolute independence.

CO mi MMUNI 1ST S AID CHRII STIAN54S

From Jabulani Mhlaba

Dear Editor

Nine articles on Christian *and communist cooperation in the South African struggle have appeared over the last two years in the African Communist, the quarterly journal of the South African Communist Party.

In the course of the debate the issue has not arisen whether communists should be invited by progressive religious people, including Christians, to enter into an alliance. Rather, the general thrust of the

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debate aims at assessing the potential of religious people to become useful elements in the struggle for liberation, in which communists have traditionally played a prominent and effective role.

Of importance is the issue of the extent to which religious people can concretely identify with the cause of liberation and its further implications as promoted by the SACP, including the question of membership in the party.

How should we interpret the AC's attempt to encourage a debate on the subject?

Its intention might be better understood by briefly considering the role of religion in South Africa and relating it to the present struggle of the people. This approach should help us to analyse the root cause of our oppression and the forms and means of struggle necessary to liberate ourselves from all forms of oppression.

Religion, i.e. African, Western Christian and other forms, commands a fair measure of influence over social and political thinking in South African society. Historically, Christianity provided the very foundation of apartheid's ideology of white rule. The churches and their members have been acting as cornerstones of social and economic subjugation.

Today, on the other hand, some Christian individuals and groups actively involve themselves in the people's struggles for liberation.

One would assume it to be in the interest of the government to reactivate religion, including its internal conflicting interests and schisms. And indeed, those at present in power do not spare any effort to win over the people to religious beliefs and tenets which would reinforce the status quo and present day order of society.

Anuti-Social Values

Right-wing religious fundamentalism, advocating a theology of prosperity for a chosen few, makes inroads into the Christian community. Anti-social values of greed, personal enrichment and social inequality are quietly, but effectively, promoted under the cloak of religious propaganda.

The whole of Southern Africa has become a target of this right-wing religious propaganda. Religious people and their institutions have themselves become

battle-grounds turning brother against brother and sister against sister. The conflict over a correct understanding of the South African Revolution runs right through the religious and Christian community.

National liberation and the National Democratic Revolution are the primary objectives of the struggling people led by the ANC and strengthened by the SACP.

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Recognizing that the religious factor needs to be attended to by progressive religious people, the ANC established a department for religious affairs in order to harness all the potential support which could be given by the religious community and their organizations.

South African communists must look afresh, while fully adhering to the Party's ideology of Marxism-Leninism, at the religious factor as an element in the people's struggle.

South African communists conceive the construction of a socialist state as a goal which reaches beyond the stage of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). Consequently, communists must already now work for socialist goals and make it an integral part of the strategy and tactics of which the first objective is the NDR. The religious factor will not cease to exist once national democracy and liberation have been achieved.

It is hoped that those progressive Christians who today risk their lives for their liberation from apartheid will also be prepared to take the next logical step towards an even fuller emancipation, i.e. socialist emancipation from ALL forms of ignorance and oppression.

The ongoing debate in The African Communist serves two useful purposes.

Firstly, it conveys the message to religious people and communists to join hands in a united assault on the powerful enemy of humanity.

Secondly, it sharpens communists' perception of the internal dynamics of Christian and religious perception and politics.

At present, it is in the interest of the working class party to broaden its support base in the South African masses. A large component of the working class maintains some level of religious affiliation and motivation. Communists have a duty to historically and dialectically analyse the relative relevance, or otherwise, of the religious factor in the consciousness and practice of the South African masses.

Whilst in an ideological sense the religiously based activists cannot be termed communists, they do identify with the political and social work of the party.

Where do we go from here?

We ought to analyse the positions of Christian theologians and religiously motivated activists. The AC debate reveals starkly contrasting positions. Compare e.g. Michael Lapsley's theoretical modesty in favour of practical results and Cedric Mayson's aggressive selling of idealism under the guise of

Marxism. If we could analyse these and similar differences in Christian thinking, we would learn more about the dynamics and goals which so powerfully motivate religious people to the good or bad of the people in South Africa.

Religion is an expression of, and used by the rich as a smokescreen for explaining away the deplorable conditions of the working class. Communists must stamp out the fire if the smoke is to blow away.

The party's strategic goal of a socialist republic includes a people emancipated from idealistic illusions. Our immediate aim of establishing the National Democratic Revolution must, on the religious front, encompass the development of a liberation theology which supports the people's fight for a democratic republic. As much as the latter aim is closely linked to the former goal, so must liberation theology endeavour to build a truly liberated people.

The party must assist the working class to develop effective strategy and tactics on the issue of religious forces in our society. One way of doing so is to discuss the question of the church in the framework of the party's concept of class and national struggle. Valuable insights and objectives would emerge for our own planning on how to handle religion in South Africa, i.e. in the short and in the long term. The party's theory regarding the relationship between class and national struggle emerged as a product of struggle itself. Likewise, our strategy and tactics regarding religion have to evolve from practical knowledge of the dynamics, economics, power blocs, the level of workers' consciousness and internal intellectual debates, impacting on the fabric of religion in SA. That knowledge has to be related to the internationalism of religion, its networks and its economic and financial base.

From following the debate in the AC one feels stimulated and challenged at the same time. In this sense the readers should have benefitted. Nevertheless we should seek more clarity on the subject of the role of the church and religion in the struggle for liberation, whether we are communists or religious people. The goal is to work together on the most effective tactical road to a socialist South Africa.

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