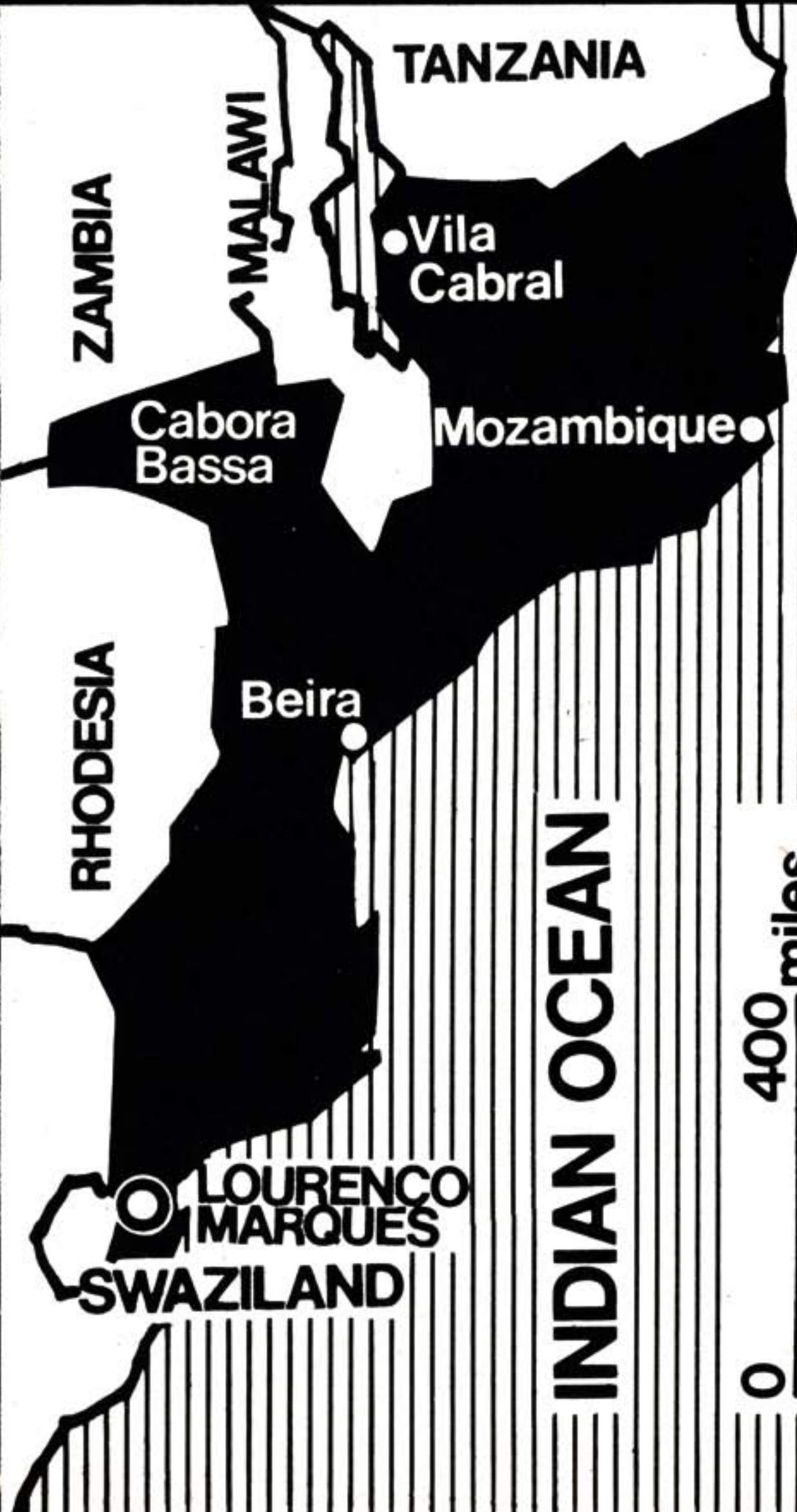


The African Communist

NO 55 FOURTH QUARTER 1973



INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS
Distributors of *The African Communist*

PRICE AND SUBSCRIPTION

AFRICA *1 shilling (5p) per copy*
 4s. (20p) per year post free
 Airmail £1.50 per year

EUROPE *15p per copy*
 60p per year post free

N. AMERICA *50 cents per copy*
 \$2.00 per year post free
 Airmail \$5.50 per year

INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS, 39 Goadge Street, London, W.1.

Readers who have difficulty in obtaining foreign currency may pay their subscriptions with International Reply Coupons, obtainable at any post office.

FRONT COVER PICTURE: FRELIMO Vice-President Marcelino dos Santos addressing a guerrilla meeting in the forest

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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

No. 55 Fourth Quarter 1973

CONTENTS

- 5 EDITORIAL NOTES**
Socialism Proves Its Superiority; Gold, Profits and Job Reservation; Africans Hardest Hit by Inflation; Militant Blacks Fight Back; The Truth About Mozambique; World Marxist Review; Freedom Radio.
- 19 SUPPORT SOUTH AFRICA'S MILITANT BLACK WORKERS**
Statement by the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party
- 23 FRELIMO FACES THE FUTURE**
An exclusive interview with FRELIMO Vice-President Marcelino dos Santos, conducted by Joe Slovo, ranges over the whole field of problems, practical and theoretical, confronting all liberation movements in Southern Africa.
- 54 A GREAT COMRADE PASSES**
The Death of Walter Ulbricht
- R.E. Matajo*
- 57 A NEW WEAPON TO SMASH TRADE UNION APARTHEID**
A South African trade unionist tells the inside story of the international trade union conference against apartheid held at Geneva on June 15 and 16.
- ANC Kumalo*
- 69 RED OUR COLOUR – A Poem**
- Henri Onan*
- 71 AFRICAN CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY**
A Soviet social scientist discusses the problems arising from decolonisation in the spheres of ideology and culture. Part 1 deals with the independent African countries fighting against their colonial heritage and the pressures of neo-colonialism. Part 2, to be published in our next issue, deals with the national liberation movements.

Toussaint

83 AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENTS

Africa and the EEC; Kenya Budgets; Drought; Swaziland; Lesotho.

Basha Ahmed Abdi

99 SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM AND THE SOMALI REVOLUTION

A Somalian comrade discusses the national democratic tasks confronting the revolution in his country and stresses that while it is wrong to confuse the national democratic revolution with the socialist revolution, it is equally wrong to put barriers between them: one is a step towards the other.

109 BOOK REVIEWS

“Justice in South Africa” by Albie Sachs and “No Neutral Ground” by Joel Carlson; “The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje – An African at Mafeking” edited by John L. Comaroff; “From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa 1882–1964”, edited by Thomas Karis and Gwendolen Carter. “A Simple Lust”, Collected poems of South African Jail and Exile, by Denis Brutus. “The Marabi Dance” by Modikwe Dikobe and “Robben Island” by D.M. Zwelonke. “Ambrose Reeves”, a biography by John S. Peart-Binns, and “A Life for Africa”, the Story of Bram Fischer, by Naomi Mitchison.

123 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Comment on “Egypt – Crisis of the Revolution”, by J.B., an Egyptian Marxist who spent five years in Egypt’s prisons because of his political convictions.



SOCIALISM PROVES ITS SUPERIORITY

The capitalist world plunges with ever-increasing speed deeper and deeper into the mire of bankruptcy. Bank rates are raised and lowered. currency rates change with bewildering rapidity, but the goal of stability remains out of reach. Only one rule remains constant – that the inflation which racks the capitalist world produces bigger and better profits for the bosses, while the living standards of the working masses are steadily eroded. Never have workers in the capitalist world felt so insecure, threatened with loss of income on the one hand and redundancy on the other. With money losing its value rapidly, for most workers the possibility of saving does not even exist, as real income falls ever further below the poverty line, and parents find themselves unable to supply the basic needs of their children.

When the Soviet Union was born after the Russian revolution, the economic pundits of the capitalist world predicted that socialism would not work. The profit motive is essential to drive on the economy of any country, they said. Without the lure of profit, nobody will

bother to work.

Today, 55 years after the Russian revolution, let us all take a good look at the world and see which way it is moving. In the Soviet Union inflation is unknown, and the rouble has become the most stable currency in the world. Unemployment has been wiped out, and no worker has any fear for the future. There are no hunting, fishing and sailing millionaires hitting it up on the profits made for them by the toiling masses; the luxury hotels of the Crimea and the Black Sea coast are inhabited by workers and their families, enjoying the cheapest holidays in the world. Every year millions of families move into better homes; rent and transport costs are minimal. The Soviet educational and health systems provide facilities of the highest quality to all who need them. There are no distinctions of race, class or colour to bar anyone from making the fullest use of his talents and reaching the highest posts in the land. Cultural and sports amenities are available to all. Real living standards rise steadily year by year.

There are shortcomings in Soviet society of which the Soviet people are well aware, but they again enjoy an advantage denied to the workers of the capitalist world: they know that what is wrong can be put right, and they have an enormous self-confidence in their ability to fashion their world after their heart's desiring. They are the owner-occupies of their country and pay mortgage interest to nobody.

The difference between the capitalist and socialist worlds is due to one thing – that the motive force in socialist society is planning for the common good, based on common ownership of the means of production, while under capitalism, it is each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost, based on private ownership and private profit. There was a time when all this could be dismissed as either naive idealism or crude propaganda, but today this is no longer possible. Socialism has come to stay and prosper. It is the capitalist system which is going to rack and ruin.

We in South Africa can see this contrast more clearly than most, for our system excludes the oppressed Black majority from practically all avenues of progress. No African may own land freehold anywhere in the country, either in the so-called white areas or in the Bantustans. No African can move about without a pass. The African 70 per cent of the population get only 20 per cent of the national income. Even normal family life is denied to the majority of Africans, who have

to subject themselves to the rigours and hardships of migratory labour. The best schools, universities, theatres, hospitals etc. are closed to people with Black skins.

All this is done to us in the sacred name of capitalism and private enterprise, of which our Government is a typical representative, and which is the basic plank of their apartheid policy. When Vorster says he stands with the West against the threat of communism, what he means is that he is determined to preserve the world of White power and privilege to the bitter end. What is apartheid but a device to avoid sharing the wealth of South Africa equally with the Blacks, to deprive the Black peoples of their right to their land and to deny them their inalienable right to have a decisive say in the government of the country? What do communists ask for in South Africa if it is not the abolition of the colour bar and the capitalism which it shores up, and the extension to all of the rights and opportunities which at present are the monopoly of the White Supremacists? This is the reason why the Nationalist Government fears the Communists — because the Communists stand and fight determinedly for the abolition of all colour bars, the return of the land to its rightful owners, an end to capitalist exploitation, and the creation of a free democratic society in which all shall have equal rights and opportunities.

We can see something else, too. It is the socialist countries which aid our freedom fighters, and the capitalist countries which keep Vorster in power. No socialist country owns any land or other means of production in any country on the African continent, or in any other country for that matter; nor does it want any. But the capitalist countries have over R6,000 million (about £3,000 million) invested in South Africa — more than double the total national income of Nigeria, Africa's most populous country with a total population of about 65 million. The foreign capitalists will fight to maintain the apartheid state for as long as it can guarantee the safety of their investments and profits. The recent exposure of the wages British companies pay their workers in South Africa showed that they invest in South Africa, not to promote the interests of the South African people, but to line their own pockets. It was disgraceful to hear some British capitalists confess they simply did not know how little their black workers were paid in South Africa. Where is the morality of this capitalism which fattens on the blood and sweat of the Black workers,

and at the same time denies them the right to share in the proceeds?

That is why the Black masses cannot be frightened by Vorster's talk about the Communist threat to South Africa. Communism may be a threat to Vorster and his gang of domestic and foreign bloodsuckers; to the Black masses it is a natural ally and partner in the liberation struggle, and a powerful weapon in their fight to end the exploitation of man by man.

GOLD, PROFITS AND JOB RESERVATION

The currency of the world's most powerful capitalist country, the dollar, is one of the two least stable in the world – the other is the pound sterling. South Africa has tied itself now to the one, now to the other, in search of security in a chaotic world, but has changed partners rapidly as now one, now the other, sank on the money markets. What is saving South Africa from disaster is the enormous increase in the price of gold on the free market, with Finance Minister Diederichs now suggesting that the official price of gold should be set at 150 dollars an ounce instead of the present 42 dollars.

Just how much the gold mines have benefited from the gold scramble was revealed by Chamber of Mines statistics for the first six months of 1973. The total working profit of the mines which are members of the Chamber jumped by R186 million to over R401 million, compared with R227 million for the corresponding period of 1972. Dividends paid to shareholders increased from R70.1 million to R117.3 million. In June Dr Diederichs tabled his final revised estimates for the year showing that he anticipated that R218,600,000 will be collected in income tax from the gold mines in 1973-74, compared with only R112 million in the previous year. "I foresee a great future for gold and a golden future for South Africa", he said. Some mines which were on the point of closing down have been enabled to continue, and poorer seams are being worked instead of abandoned.

Another sign of the boost to mining was the announcement at the beginning of June that total gold and foreign assets held at the Reserve Bank in Pretoria had smashed all records to reach R1,208.9 million – well over the previous record level reached in April 1969. Clearly, the mining bosses have never had it so good.

But the mines have gained more than quick profits from the gold price increase. The very size of the profits has enabled them to bribe

the White mineworkers into acceptance of so-called African "advancement" — a profit-boosting device the mining houses have been working for ever since their first attempt was smashed by the mineworkers' strike of 1922. In June and July, all the White mining unions accepted enormous wage increases in return for what the Chamber of Mines terms "improved employment opportunities and earnings" for "experienced Bantu". The 7,000 White artisans on the gold mines and the 1,700 White artisans on the Transvaal coal and platinum mines are to get increases of at least R100 a month plus improvements in holiday allowance, sick leave, medical benefits and pensions. Each of the unions involved — the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the S.A. Electrical Workers, the SA Boilermakers, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers and the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers — has entered into a separate agreement with the Chamber with regard to African job advancement. The White Mineworkers' Union entered into a similar agreement with regard to its 10,000 members on gold and coal mines, who will get an extra R80 a month, plus all the fringe benefits. In return for the increases, the White miners and artisans may allow African "artisan aides" to do aspects of an artisan's job — at the discretion of the individual artisan and within the framework of his union's agreement. Those artisans who do not want to allow Africans to do this work may elect to do it themselves — and it remains to be seen whether the extreme right wing among the gold miners, who have effectively organised to smash previous attempts to relax the colour bar on the mines — will organise to frustrate this agreement too. The Chamber of Mines obviously thinks the bribes it is offering this time will be sufficient to secure the co-operation of the majority of White miners.

The R80 a month *increase* the White mineworkers are to get is more than double the *total* wage of the African mineworker, even taking into account the 25% increase in wages he received earlier this year, and after the agreement has come into operation the White mineworker will still get a wage 16 times greater than that of his Black colleague. A White artisan will now be able to earn as much as R450 a month without overtime.

The statutory colour bar will remain, and only White miners will be permitted to hold blasting certificates. But it is expected Black miners will do more and more skilled work on the mines, and the Whites will

fall more and more into the category of supervisors. The number of African "artisan aides" may number up to 20,000 – say 4 per cent of the total African labour force. The Chamber of Mines has not said what the wage rate of an "artisan aide" will be – this will depend on the decision reached by the individual mining houses. The general secretary of the Boilermakers' Society, Mr Tom Murray, has said that the mining industry will stand condemned if it fails to pay the aides wages approaching R150 a month. "It is precisely what the work which these aides are going to be called upon to do is worth", he wrote in his union journal, warning that the enormous gap between Black and White wages in what is possibly the richest industry in the world cannot be contemplated any longer.

Mr. Murray, of course, is a very interested party – he has to secure the support of the rank and file of his union for what some of them may regard as a sell-out. Even R150 a month is less than half of what the White mineworker receives for doing the same sort of work.

The people who have had absolutely no say in these negotiations about their future are the African mineworkers themselves. At no stage in the "protracted" negotiations leading up to these agreements have they been consulted in any way by anybody. In "advancing" African labour on the mines, the bosses are not moved by any altruistic concern for the welfare of their workers, but simply by greed for higher profits resulting from the dilution of white labour and the increased productivity of black labour. The black men who toil and sweat underground are treated like serfs – labour units, statistics to be juggled about on a balance sheet, but in no sense people with hearts and minds who have a right to determine their wages and conditions of work. It is not for nothing that nationalisation of the gold mines is a key plank in the Congress platform laid down in the Freedom Charter.

AFRICANS HARDEST HIT BY INFLATION

Like other countries in the capitalist world, South Africa has been hard hit by inflation, now reckoned to be running at a rate of between 10 and 15 per cent a year. A Barclays Bank economist warned that with further increases in the pipeline, the situation threatened to get completely out of hand. Nobody in South Africa can blame wage increases for inflation. On the contrary, the "Rand Daily Mail" of July 21 stated: "Some economists see a connection between the

booming gold price and the high rate of inflation". It is the search for higher wages is nearly always a belated attempt to make up for lost higher wages is nearly always a belated attempt to make up for lost ground.

Some items have risen higher and quicker than others. Between May 1972 and May 1973 food prices rose by 16.1 per cent, and during the first five months of 1973 food prices rose on an annual basis by 26 per cent. In April the Johannesburg "Star" reported: "Millions of lower-income South Africans are threatened by price rises of up to 60 per cent for staple foods including meat, mealie meal, margarine and Bantu beer. Fears of a big rise in the cost of living are rising following the Government announced increase in the price of maize, groundnuts, sunflower seeds and grain sorghum".

At the end of July, the Department of Statistics published figures showing that in the year up to the end of June, 1973, the overall cost of living had increased by more than 10 per cent. Since 1970 the price of meat had risen by nearly 50 per cent. These cost of living figures are based on the expenditure of the average white family. But hardest hit by inflation are the poorest paid Black workers of South Africa, who spend 50 per cent of their income on food, and who have to pay higher prices in the townships than are paid by the Whites in the centre of town. In July the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce estimated that a Soweto family now needs R91.14 a month to live, compared with R82.19 in May 1972. This constitutes the so-called poverty datum line, which covers only the bare essentials, with food swallowing up R45.89 of the total. In June, Anglo-American chairman Harry Oppenheimer quoted Government statistics to show that the real gross domestic product in 1972 had increased by only 3.1 per cent over 1971. Averaged out over the whole population, this amounted to a per capita increase of only 0.4 per cent. "This means that the per capita growth rate was virtually zero, and implies an actual decline in living standards for the less protected sections of the population", said Oppenheimer.

Alarmed by the strike wave which has spread over Namibia and South Africa since December 1971, the bosses have been clamouring for the Government to "do something". But at the beginning of August, Economics Minister S.L. Muller said there was no question of the Government introducing a wage, prices and profits freeze. First of

all, he said, such methods had not stopped inflation in other countries. But above all, the Government did not consider such a freeze desirable because it had set an economic growth target which required increased investment from all sectors of the economy. "This investment would undoubtedly be discouraged by more stringent and more comprehensive controls", he said.

In plain language, the Government is deliberately pursuing a policy of higher profits for the bosses and more intensive exploitation of Black labour, because this is the only way it can keep the economy going. The bigger the profits and the lower the wages, the better for apartheid South Africa: this is the essence of Muller's argument.

MILITANT BLACKS FIGHT BACK

In the last few issues of this journal we have noted the increasing militancy among all sections of the oppressed Black people of South Africa. There are no signs that the wave of resistance is diminishing in any way. On the contrary, if anything Black political consciousness, militancy and solidarity are growing steadily in the face of increased apartheid repression and ever-deepening poverty. Here are just a few signs of the growing determination to fight which is sweeping the Black masses into action:

1. The students at the segregated Coloured University of the Western Cape have inflicted a shattering rebuff to educational apartheid. When they demonstrated against the White domination of what was supposed to be "their own" university, the authorities tried to respond in the usual way by victimising the leadership, closing the university and screening the students who were allowed to apply for readmission. Despite the attentions of the Security police, however, the students remained 100 per cent solid; what is even more significant, they were backed 100 per cent by their community, which turned out in force at the biggest mass meeting seen in Cape Town since the war. At the meeting a fund was launched to establish a private Black university "free of Government control and authoritarianism", and afterwards a decision was taken to call a "Black summit meeting" of African, Coloured and Indian leaders in South Africa. The students demanded, and got, the appointment of an independent judicial commission to investigate their grievances.

A similar united protest by the African students at Fort Hare

against Bantu Education and White bossism on the part of the authorities led to the shutting down of the university in August. In Pietersburg, also in August, 116 students who had gone on strike at the Bethesda Training Institute were convicted on charges of disturbing the peace and malicious injury to property; 94 were sentenced to one year in jail, six months suspended for three years, while a further 22 who were "under age" were sentenced to 8 lashes. Evidence was that the trouble started when the principal, Mr G.J.J. Theron, heard the students singing the African National Congress anthem "Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika". He ordered them to stop, but they refused. The magistrate held that the students had no right to sing the ANC anthem. "I cannot be lenient with the accused because of the seriousness of the charges", he said, adding that the homelands were not interested in acquiring agitators but wanted peaceful, law-abiding citizens.

Despite the arrest and banning of most of the top SASO leaders, all the indications are that militancy is growing on all the Black campuses.

2. The Black peoples of Namibia have decisively rejected the attempts of the Vorster Government to draw them into the implementation of his Bantustan schemes for the territory. The top Black leaders have refused to have anything to do with the Prime Minister's so-called multi-racial Advisory Council which he describes as "a meaningful consultative instrument" to advise him on the future of the territory. Before its first meeting on August 16, the "Star" reported: "The South African Government is making strenuous efforts to broaden the base of the Prime Minister's multi-racial South West Africa Advisory Council. . .The Advisory Council is under fire in SWA and overseas for being composed predominantly of members sympathetic to the official policy of separate development. Anti-apartheid leaders do not recognise it". The Prime Minister's efforts were fruitless.

Vorster's attempt to hold elections for the Owambo Legislative Assembly on August 1 and 2 turned out to be an even greater flop. The Legislative Assembly consists of 56 seats, 21 elected and 35 nominated. The 35 nominees are all Government stooges. Of the 21 elected seats, 15 were not contested, and the opposition groups led by the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) called for a boycott of the remaining 6 seats on the grounds that the elections were a farce, especially in view of the fact that the territory was still

administered under emergency regulations providing for detention without trial which had been introduced to deal with the great strike which started in Namibia on December 13, 1971.

The call for a boycott was a phenomenal success. When the 59 polling stations closed at the end of the second day, less than 3 per cent of the 50,000 eligible voters had used their ballots. In Owambo itself about 1,300 votes were cast, and in the whole of the "White" zone only 100 – in Windhoek only four people voted, three of them policemen. The "Star" reported: "The Owambo people – who form nearly half the total population of South West Africa – have clearly rejected the Nationalist Government's separate development policy by shunning the first election ever held in their homeland".

Once again the police resorted to wholesale arrests, some on charges of holding illegal meetings, some without charge under the emergency regulations. But meetings continue to be held, in open defiance of all intimidation.

3. More and more Black leaders are joining the struggle to break down the race and ethnic barriers erected by the Vorster regime in furtherance of its policy of divide and rule.

In July the National Convention, Namibia's most representative Black forum linking the main anti-apartheid organisations, called on Whites to join its ranks and said it would open its membership to anyone opposed to the South African Government. The statement said the National Convention would fight for "the suppressed peoples of Namibia, to weld them into one national unit". It planned to eliminate all group identity based on race, tribal affiliation and "economic class".

Coloured Labour Party leader Sonny Leon said in July: "For a long time we've been estranged from the Blacks. Recently we've found a new togetherness which could result in Coloureds forsaking their old pre-White allegiances and backing the new Black consciousness. The large mass of Coloureds believe it is only by the consolidation of the African, Indian and Coloured people that unjust discriminatory laws, which keep them all inferior to Whites, can be removed".

Similar statements have been voiced by Indian leaders and by Bantustan chief ministers, including Chiefs Lucas Mangope, Gatsha Buthelezi and Kaizer Matanzima, all of whom have subscribed to the idea of a Black summit meeting and the creation of a Black federation

overriding ethnic divisions.

In July Lebowa's Minister of the Interior, Mr Collins Ramusi, called on the South African Government to release all political prisoners and to allow those who are living in exile to return to South Africa. Addressing a student audience, Mr Ramusi was applauded when he said the students should know there were some homeland leaders who were fighting against ethnic grouping of the Black people.

More and more, representatives of different sections of the Black people whom the Government is trying to separate from one another are seen together on political platforms. On July 10, the "Star" reported: "There is mounting concern among certain Nationalists about the increasing Coloured identification with the 'Black Power' movement in South Africa."

New White organisations are being formed to head off the drive for Black unity. One, called Verligte Action, draws its inspiration largely from Afrikaner academics and professional men, but included in its list of speakers at its inaugural meeting last July no less a figure than General R.C. Hiemstra, former Commandant General of the Defence Force. Another is a political party to be launched by former Nationalist Cabinet Minister T. Gerdener, who is obsessed with the notion that Communism cannot be kept out of Southern Africa unless the White Supremacists can enlist the willing support of the Blacks. The South African Foundation has thrown open its membership to selected Blacks.

Commenting on these developments, the national chairman of the Labour Party, the Reverend Alan Hendrickse, said all these various groups of Whites were foolish to think that they could get strong Black support.

"There is nothing they can do to stop Blacks deciding the future of the country", he said. "This business of trying to form a White-Brown alliance against a Black one will never work".

The significance of all this is that despite 25 years of uninterrupted Nationalist rule, the Government's apartheid measures, backed up by vicious police action on the one hand and the brainwashing of apartheid education on the other, have failed to bring about acceptance of or submission to apartheid among the mass of the South African people. On the contrary, opposition is today more outspoken and widespread than ever.

Meanwhile, the guerrilla war in all the territories of Southern Africa is raging with increased intensity. "War Taking Heavy Toll in Rhodesia", reported a "Star" headline on August 9. On the same day the "Star" correspondent Wilf Nussey, just returned from a two-week tour of the Mozambique battle zones, reported: "Frelimo guerrillas have penetrated deeper into Mozambique than at any time since they started the war there nearly 10 years ago. They now also present an immediate danger to Rhodesian security and a growing one to South African interests. The success of their southward thrust from Zambia puts serious doubt on the effect of Portuguese efforts to block them".

SWAPO guerrillas are ever more active in the Caprivi strip and northern Namibia. In South Africa itself, the underground apparatus of the ANC and the Communist Party is being steadily strengthened and extended.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE

The furore over Portuguese atrocities in Mozambique which broke out coincidentally with the visit of Portuguese dictator Caetano to Britain to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance has shaken even some of the South African apologists for Portuguese colonialism.

On July 11, the day after Father Hastings' first article appeared in the London "Times", Wilf Nussey, editor of the Johannesburg Star's Africa News Service, wrote: "One fact is in no doubt: that it is definitely NOT official Portuguese policy to massacre, any more than it was America's in Vietnam".

One would have thought by now that to equate Portuguese policy in Africa with American policy in Vietnam would have been enough to condemn the Portuguese out of hand without further ado. However, by the end of the month Mr Nussey, who had made a special trip round the Tete area to see for himself, began to change his tune. He wrote on August 1: "I must state categorically that I am NOT an apologist for the Portuguese there is so much smoke there must be a fire. My own belief is that many civilians were unnecessarily killed, but whether coldly and deliberately or because they became unavoidably enmeshed in this difficult kind of war, it is not possible to determine without a full-scale inquiry". Of course, no such inquiry

will ever be held by the Portuguese, who do not care how many innocent people they kill so long as they can get away with it.

Meanwhile, FRELIMO forces are operating further south than ever before, and are within striking distance of Beira. In this issue we carry an interview with FRELIMO Vice-President Marcelino dos Santos, who explains the policies and tactics with which FRELIMO is succeeding where the Portuguese are failing in their aim to win the minds and hearts of the people.

WORLD MARXIST REVIEW

We take this opportunity of conveying our fraternal congratulations to the journal "Problems of Peace and Socialism (World Marxist Review)", which celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. In March 1958, a conference of representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties was held in Prague and decided to set up the journal, whose first issue appeared in September of that year.

The journal was set up as a theoretical and information publication of Communist and Workers' Parties throughout the world. In the 15 years of its publication it has become a truly international publication. It was set up by the representatives of 20 parties. Today the Editorial Council includes representatives of 45 parties, with another 30 actively contributing to it. In 1958 it had 22 national editions and was circulated in 80 countries in 19 languages. Today it has 38 national editions and is circulated in 142 countries in 26 languages. Its monthly circulation is over 400,000 copies.

Guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the journal works to promote the cohesion of fraternal parties, to disseminate and elaborate the ideas formulated by the international meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties, discuss theoretical problems, experiences of party life, problems of socialist construction, the class struggle in developed capitalist countries, the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the peace and democratic movements.

Apart from the journal, the international publishing house Peace and Socialism puts out Marxist literature, notably the journal's accounts of theoretical conferences in book form in the various languages. In the last 15 years, Peace and Socialism Publishers have put out 44 books and 29 brochures in Russian, English, French, Spanish, German and Arabic, based on material published in the

journal with a total printing order of about 1.5 million copies.

Our movement in South Africa and our Party have received invaluable assistance from "Problems of Peace and Socialism", and many of our political leaders have contributed to its columns. We wish it every success in continuing to fulfil its vital role in the international working class movement in the coming period.

FREEDOM RADIO

More and more South Africans are listening to Freedom Radio, the voice of the African Nationalist Congress broadcasting to South Africa on the external service of Radio Zambia daily from 21.30 to 22.30 (SA Time). The broadcasts are in English, Tswana, Zulu, Sotho, Afrikaans and Xhosa, on frequencies 9580 and 4965 in the 31 and 60 metre bands.

Commented the "Rand Daily Mail" on August 1st, the opening day of the Ovambo elections: "An unexpected influence is Radio Zambia, which for the past week has been beaming special propaganda broadcasts at the 350,000 Ovambos, urging them to stand firm against 'tribal influences'".

Freedom fighters are overjoyed at the effectiveness of this new weapon in their struggle for national liberation.

OBTAINABLE FROM INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS:

50 Fighting Years: The South African Communist Party
1921 – 1971 by A. Lerumo. £1.25 (S 4.00)
Clothbound, illustrated, 226 pages.

Limited number of 1972 bound volumes. £3.50 each. (S10.00)

The South African Road to Freedom – Programme of the
South African Communist Party. 25p (75 cents)

Africa on the New Road by Pyotr Manchka. 15p (50 cents)

SUPPORT SOUTH AFRICA'S MILITANT BLACK WORKERS

STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

The first half of 1973 has seen the oppressed working people of our country moving into action in many fields to challenge the regime of white domination and starvation wages.

The massive strike movement which spread from Natal, involving tens of thousands of Black workers, is striking evidence of a new wave of unity and militancy.

It is a serious legal crime for Africans to strike, punishable by heavy prison sentences. It is customary for an army of police to descend on strikers, employing tear gas, baton charges, police dogs and even firearms to drive the workers back to work.

This time the movement was too strong, widespread and militant for such methods to succeed in breaking the workers' spirit and unity.

The workers came out into the streets on demonstrations – on at least one occasion, headed by the red flag. They sang the forbidden songs of the African National Congress.

The South African Government is in an insecure and precarious situation. African guerrillas are winning advances in the bordering regions of Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia. In South Africa there is the ever-present threat of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the liberation movement. In this position the Vorster regime felt obliged to avoid a showdown with the workers.

The state and the employers were compelled to behave with other industries which had not actually been involved in strikes. either industries which had not actually been involved in strikes.

True, these increases were small in cash terms and did not even compensate for the increase of prices resulting from inflation. Most African workers are still paid at rates below subsistence level.

The workers have by no means won all their demands. Their trade unions are still unrecognised; their strikes illegal; many leaders have been victimised. But they have taught the employers and the government a salutary lesson. And the workers themselves have begun to learn the immense power they have in their hands once they are organised and determined.

The government and the employers (aided by the white-dominated “official” trade unions, collaborators with apartheid) are trying to provide a safety-valve by setting up dummy “works councils”, company unions, or black unions subordinated to the white-led Trade Union Council (TUCSA). To advance and consolidate their struggle Africans will reject such diversions, demand full trade union rights, including the right to strike, and build up the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), the only truly representative workers’ industrial organisation, which has courageously fought every form of colour bar since its inception eighteen years ago.

The strike movement has given fresh impetus to the world movement of sympathy and solidarity with the oppressed people of South Africa in their fight against apartheid and white terror.

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries; the members of the Organisation of African Unity and the lands of Asia and Latin America and the national liberation movements in other regions striving for freedom, have maintained and intensified their consistent

support for the South African revolutionaries.

The working class in Britain, the United States, the German Federal Republic and other imperialist countries have raised sharp questions concerning the way in which the monopoly capitalists of their countries – through South African subsidiaries and branches – are extracting enormous profits from forced labour and apartheid.

The great Trade Union Conference against Apartheid held at Geneva on 15 – 16 June 1973, representing 186 million workers and uniting, for the first time for many years, all the main detachments of the trade union movement, unanimously denounced apartheid and race discrimination as a crime against humanity, and called for a whole series of practical measures to be taken by governments, trade unions and employers to boycott racist South Africa and render financial, moral and material support to the workers and people of South Africa “through their authentic trade union and political organisations.”

Despite such powerful internal and external pressures, the fascist government of South Africa maintains unyielding terror against the patriotic and democratic forces of the country.

Like thousands of other victims of repression, Mandela, Sisulu, Kathrada and the other heroes of the Rivonia Trial of ten years ago are still serving life sentences under abominable conditions in the hellish prison of Robben Island and other jails. Abram Fischer, eminent advocate and Communist, now in his 65th year and seriously ill, languishes in Pretoria Central prison for a life sentence notwithstanding appeals for his release from church leaders and other notable South Africans.

Savage sentences of imprisonment were recently imposed on the “Pretoria Six” – Petrus Mthembu, Gardener Sejaka, Theophilus Cholo, Justice Mpanza, Alexandre Moumbaris and Sean Hosey for the “crime” of struggling for the liberation of our motherland.

Inside South Africa the call has gone out from the Communist Party and the national liberation movement to raise still higher the banner of resistance; to organise and carry out every form of struggle, legal and illegal, violent and non-violent, until the fascist racialists are overthrown and the people win their freedom.

We, the South African Communist Party, call upon the millions of opponents of apartheid in every country to intensify their splendid

campaigns of solidarity; to isolate and quarantine the racists in every field, political and economic; in commerce, diplomacy, sport and culture.

We appeal with confidence to our comrades of the communist and workers' parties in all countries to take a leading and dynamic part in implementing the resolutions of the United Nations and the Geneva conference.

No truck with the white supremacists of Pretoria!

Throw Vorster out of Namibia!

No apartheid teams in world sport!

Free Mandela, Sisulu, Kathrada, Fischer and all political prisoners!

Expel South Africa from the United Nations!

Forward to a free, democratic South Africa!

July 1973

LABOUR MONTHLY

Founded 1921

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

A Marxist commentary on political events in the cause of national liberation and socialism.

25 pence monthly – £1.50 half-yearly subscription – £3.00 yearly.

Students: £2.80 yearly – £1.40 half-yearly.)

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FRELIMO FACES THE FUTURE

The complex tasks of the national liberation movement in Southern Africa are illustrated in this discussion of the situation in Mozambique by FRELIMO Vice-President, MARCELINO DOS SANTOS, interviewed by JOE SLOVO.

This article, which is exclusive to the "African Communist", throws light on the problems of revolution and social change throughout the African continent, and is an invaluable contribution to the storehouse of revolutionary theory.

Slovo Comrade Dos Santos; When one examines the evolution of FRELIMO from its formation to the present time, one cannot fail to be impressed by its achievements. But we also know from reading FRELIMO's published materials, that the path has not been a smooth one – Revolutionary practice has raised, and continues to raise, important problems of a practical and theoretical

nature. The answers which you have found and are continuing to find, are not only vital for the further unfolding of your own struggle, but enrich the storehouse of revolutionary theory in general.

Firstly, could you give us a brief outline of the present military and political position of FRELIMO inside your country and the main characteristics of the latest phase of the struggle?

Dos Santos The struggle is developing continuously – by which I mean that regularly, almost every day, we are going into new zones. And this means that more and more people are becoming involved in the armed struggle. At the same time efforts are continuing to consolidate the liberated areas in which the enemy still has small pockets of control, based on purely military concentration: these pockets are situated in a few urban centres which they use as military bases. In the liberated areas generally there is no longer any Portuguese civil administration, there is no more Portuguese trade – all their activities are military activities. The function of these bases is to act against the guerrillas. At these urban centres there are air-military bases from which the planes and helicopters bomb the villages, the cultivated land, guerrilla concentrations and so on. The pattern of these air attacks is, I think, well known. If an action is decided upon by the Portuguese command, they go into one particular region to bomb for several days, one week, or more, and after that they come with helicopters which drop troops to act against their chosen targets. Sometimes they merely act and go back; sometimes they act in order to establish a new base. So we have been meeting and counter-acting these Portuguese actions.

Our primary military aim in the liberated areas is to destroy these bases in order to reduce the possibilities of Portuguese action and to make the liberated areas more stable.

I will refer later to the economic consolidation of the liberated areas which is the other primary aim of the present phase.

These then are the two aspects of our work in the liberated areas which cover Niassa, Cabo Delgado and, now, parts of Tete and Manica eSofala. The fact that the struggle is now reaching areas like Tete and Manica eSofala affects the interests of the main enemy – the colonialists and imperialists – even more directly. Manica eSofala is in the centre of the country. It is important in terms of its economic

development with some industries like sugar, tea, mines, agriculture, etc. It is this area which is one of the main sources of the products which the Portuguese exploit for export. Secondly, this area has a strategic situation in relation to communications – the railways go from Beira to Umtali, to Salisbury and Zambia. Another railway to the North goes across the Zambezi River, one part going to Malawi and another to Tete. Also the roads and even the pipeline – all these factors make Manica eSofala very important and particularly in relation to Zimbabwe. Thirdly, it is important because Beira, the Capital of Manica eSofala, is where the Portuguese Air and Military Command is established.

Countries like Zimbabwe and South Africa are reacting much more strongly as the struggle reaches closer to their borders. The closure of the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia is not unconnected with the growing success of our armed patriots.

Slovo How many Mozambican people live in the liberated areas?

Dos Santos Roughly, between 1,000,000 and 1,200,000.

Slovo And what area of the country is part of what you call the liberated areas?

Dos Santos About 24%.

Slovo What is your estimate of the Portuguese armed force?

Dos Santos About 70,000.

Slovo We know that in other countries, for instance in the Chinese and Vietnamese struggles, there were various stages in the unfolding of the military struggle – the early stages being considered mainly guerrilla with the later growth of mobile units engaged in mobile warfare. Have you reached that stage yet in Mozambique?

Dos Santos We consider that we are waging a guerrilla war even though sometimes we can put into action one battalion with more or less three companies – which is not really the classical type of guerrilla group. But even so, the structure of our army is a guerrilla structure and, when we undertake a large-scale action, we can

MILITARY ACTIVITY



Map of Mozambique

bring comrades from different points, put them together, go into the action, after which they return to their points of departure. So our structure remains basically of the guerrilla type although more and more we are in a position to use equipment associated with more advanced stages of mobile struggle such as mortars, cannons, anti-aircraft machines, and so on.

MORE WEAPONS

Slovo Some time back one sensed that you were short of weapons – that there were more men than weapons. Is this still the position or has that been rectified?

Dos Santos There are still more men than weapons but the supply of weapons has improved. It is not so easy, even impossible, to reach a stage in which you have as many weapons as are needed, bearing in mind that in a guerrilla war the whole population needs to be armed. There is also the even bigger problem of ammunition.

Slovo It has been said that in a guerrilla war the stage is reached when you get your main supply of weapons from the enemy. Has this been your experience from the beginning? Or must one ensure one's own independent supply?

Dos Santos One must ensure one's own supply. Let us take the beginning of our struggle when we were using elementary weapons like the sub-machine gun, automatic rifle, etc. By about the year 1965 (a year after we commenced our struggle) a maximum of 20 cadres were functioning as a group. How could such a group get weapons from the enemy? Let us look at this question concretely. There is a Portuguese base where you know there are weapons – can you capture them with a group of 15 to 20 people? It is impossible. Portuguese troops who go from one point to another travel in convoys. If you attack a convoy the enemy does not run away – it reacts. When you see a convoy of 50 trucks with perhaps from 50 to 100 metres, or 200 metres between each truck, how can you ambush it in order to get weapons? You might succeed in a lightning ambush of one truck but the others will immediately take measures to counter-

attack the small unit. Right from the start we had to ensure our own supply. Naturally we did get materials from the enemy, but it was not the main source of supply. The main source of supply is from those countries who are helping us.

Slovo And is this still the position today?

Dos Santos This is still the position today, and particularly when it comes to getting sophisticated weapons.

Slovo Apart from those areas in which there is military activity (Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Tete, Manica e Sofala) in what sort of activity, if any, is FRELIMO engaged?

Dos Santos Underground activity which aims to mobilise and organise the people in order to start the armed struggle using every type of action that fits into this framework.

CLASS STRUCTURE IN MOZAMBIQUE

Slovo I now want to go back to the position just prior to 1962. Firstly, could you give us a broad picture of the class and social composition of the Mozambican people?

Dos Santos It is quite a complex question. I think that we must distinguish two societies. One contains capitalist relationships which developed as a result of the introduction of elements of capitalism by colonialism. The other one is the traditional type – a sort of subsistence economy. *In the first sector* we find the plantations, some mines, and a few light industries. In this sector you have the foreign bourgeoisie – the Portuguese bourgeoisie, and the people employed in the plantations who come to work as they might do in the towns and factories. They are rural workers in the sisal, coconut and sugar plantations. They come to work on the land which is the property of private enterprise. Then you have areas in which people work their own land but are forced to produce only one crop, mainly rice and cotton, which they then sell at prices fixed by the system – so, they are peasants but not in a free market situation. The workers in towns consist mainly of those who work in the light industries, for example, factories producing soap, oil, beer and

tobacco and some small textile industries and industries which treat the cashew nuts. We also have the workers on the railways and dock-workers. Then there are the people who work in the services, the administration – but in the lower levels of responsibility. There are also teachers in Primary schools and nurses. And finally you have the people who work as domestic servants. So these are the groups which were created by the elements of colonial type capitalism introduced into Mozambique.

In the traditional society you have the chiefs and their entourage and the rest of the people in subsistence type agriculture, with the usual type of relationship between the people of the tribe and the leaders of the tribe, including the handing over to the chief of a portion of what is produced.

But these two societies do not exist in isolation from one another; they are entirely linked. Why? Where do those people who work in the plantations come from? All those people who work within the capitalist sector come from the traditional sector. And most of them do not remain permanently outside the traditional society because, for instance, many of them go to work on the plantations for a maximum period of two years and they then come back to the village and to the traditional system. So that is the main link – going back and forth. Then there are people who do not become absorbed into the capitalist system but who are nevertheless related to it. For instance, the people who produce for themselves must sell their produce in the market, mainly food like grain, cashew nuts. They are forced into the market system to find the cash for colonial-imposed taxes and to purchase commodities which they do not produce themselves. So these two societies are linked and on many levels the persons comprising the two societies are the same. But there is a process of change in that the capitalist sector is growing more and more, and the traditional system is naturally declining.

Slovo Mondlane in his book says 95% of the people are working on the land, 5% are workers, and a fraction of 1% are middle class such as teachers.

Dos Santos It is really difficult to be precise. We tried to collect more exact statistics. I estimate that not more than 10% of the population are workers employed in the plantations and

in the small enterprises.

Slovo That is people working in urban areas?

Dos Santos Urban areas and plantations.

Slovo But what proportion would you say are actually permanently urbanised and are not just migratory seasonal workers?

Dos Santos I'd say not more than 5%.

Slovo Mondlane in his book mentioned that in a few areas some of the people had never seen a Portuguese; they were cut off from the integrating economy that you talk about. Does that cover a big number?

Dos Santos No, – very small. And this occurred particularly in the Niassa Province. But the whole of the Niassa Province has no more than, let us say, 300,000 people; and it is only in one part of Niassa that they had never met the Portuguese before the war.

BEGINNINGS OF STRUGGLE

Slovo Could you describe briefly the beginnings of political resistance actions in the modern period and in particular the emergence of national political activity as opposed to purely tribal activities. I refer not to the struggles that occurred when the Portuguese first came, but to the period just prior to 1962.

Dos Santos It is necessary, in the first place to distinguish different types of resistance. Some types of resistance give an appearance of being merely economic struggles related to immediate reforms but in truth contain significant political overtones. In this category falls the action taken by the workers in the ports – for instance, the Port of Lourenco Marques – which was the result of political organisation although the actions themselves were expressed in economic demonstrations which included salary increases, etc. The actions taken by the cleansing workers in the towns made the Portuguese respond with military force and the action of the enemy gave a political content to these actions. The important actions taken by

the workers of the plantations from time to time were certainly the result of political mobilisation. But the actions taken by some on specific economic issues were not directly and immediately against the colonial system as such. Even in these cases, directly political issues emerged because the reaction was clearly political on the part of the enemy. In a colonial situation it is difficult to prevent simple demands from becoming political even indirectly. But one cannot say that they were, in the first place, politically motivated actions. On 16th June 1960 the Mueda people went to the administration to demand back some fertile land and more than 600 people were killed – there is no doubt that this was a political demonstration. Then there were the efforts of the people working in the rice fields to organise co-operatives. The cattle owners also, less successfully, tried to organise co-operatives. These actions were often the result of politically conscious small groups trying to develop the political consciousness of all the people, and engage them in some activity. Other actions are the result of some people feeling that their conditions are bad and as a result they engage in an action which is objectively a political action but the person so engaged does not necessarily have political consciousness in the sense that he is aware that he faces a political power that must be destroyed, his aim may be limited to the need just to have at least enough money to live.

Slovo: In other words, these actions were basically a reaction to conditions and an attempt to improve them. Did this kind of struggle give rise to any sort of broader political organisation amongst workers and peasants?

Dos Santos: After 1947 and '48 in particular small groups were created, first in the towns. Later some people, as a response to the enemy strength in the towns, moved their political activities to the bush and village. So, small groups were formed – here one, there another, and so on. At that same time many economic actions were taking place which helped to develop political consciousness. Inside Mozambique there were many people engaged in this type of action who at the end of the '50s were already politically clear. In the centre and in the south different groups who did not know of one another began organising. Some of them began to make rudimentary contact more or less in the years '58 – '59. Those

likes were often established by those who were employed in the Portuguese administration when they were moved from one place to another. But the first organisation of a truly national character was not born in Mozambique as such but was created outside.

Slovo: Where were these groups that you are talking about mainly situated?

Dos Santos: In towns.

Slovo: Did they consist mainly of the wage-earners in the towns or the intellectuals, or middle class?

Dos Santos: Mainly people in government administration, in commerce, teachers, and nurses. When we talk of our intellectuals we must understand what it means in relation to Mozambique: most of those who are normally regarded as intellectuals were not just thinkers who wrote in the newspapers, poems, novels, etc. Many of them were also wage earners at the level of administration, etc. In the cultural field we had people who had a clear understanding but others who would, say, try to revive the cultural traditions but who did not have a clear understanding of Mozambican nationalism. The unconnected small political groups were started mainly in the towns, but it was outside Mozambique – in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia – that steps were being taken to create national organisations with a national content. In some ways the level of political consciousness of those who were outside and who founded those organisations, was really comparatively lower than the activists inside, despite the fact that the latter never reached the point where they succeeded to launch a real national organisation. The formation of FRELIMO came about as the result of the union of three organisations which were based in the outside territories I mentioned.

Slovo: Before you come to that, I want to ask about the role of what – for want of a better word – one might call the Mozambican national bourgeoisie. Could it be said that this class exists in the real meaning of the term.

Dos Santos: There is no national bourgeoisie worth talking about.

Slovo: What has been the role of the settler Portuguese compared to, say, the white group in South Africa?

Dos Santos: We must say that the situation is not the same as in South Africa because the political power in Mozambique is not in the hands of the settlers. Economically the settlers are not the owners in Mozambique. The owners of Mozambique are those who are in Portugal, in France, in the U.K., in South Africa, Belgium etc. If we look at the situation in Mozambique and we try to find the main contradictions, we find that the main contradictions are between the Portuguese bourgeoisie allied to those in France, in South Africa, England, etc. and the Mozambican people. So the chief oppressor is not in Mozambique. What they have in Mozambique is the machinery for the oppression.

Slovo: Is there not a relatively big settled community which benefits economically from the oppression of the Mozambicans?

Dos Santos: Yes, naturally.

Slovo: Well, won't they resist the kind of change FRELIMO is struggling for?

Dos Santos: Ah, that is another question. But we were discussing what is the real force. The real force is not the settler. But the settlers do benefit and they are part of the system. What are they? They are small capitalists compared to those who really own Mozambique. In any case they are not a homogeneous group. Some are workers, some are in agriculture. There are those white people who are in towns, in administration, commerce; there are those who have small industries. So, their reactions can be different. What I am trying to explain is that one should not say that because they are white or because they are settlers they will automatically react against the Liberation Nationalist Movement. Particularly in the present stage one should accept that political consciousness, political action can play a certain role. A lot depends on what perspectives the Liberation Movement can offer for these groups. We have been saying that we are not fighting against Portuguese people; we are fighting against Portuguese colonialism — so those who are not exploiting our people have nothing to fear. When we started the struggle in Manica eSofala for example, we made an appeal to the white population there (it is a province in which there are many settlers) and we said that those who

are not interested in perpetuating exploitation should unite forces with us against the same enemy.

Slovo: And have you had any positive response from that type of person?

Dos Santos: We have not yet had a clear response but it is at the same time true that it has been difficult for the Portuguese administration to mobilise the whites against us; to unite these whites in a group and form them into a political force against us. This had proved difficult for the Portuguese administration. And after our appeal was issued in the Province of Manica e Sofala, the Portuguese government reacted by saying that what we were putting forward was just propaganda....So provisionally one can at least speculate that if they react like that, then our statements are at least making some impact on the Portuguese population. In general, whilst we recognise the dilemma of those isolated Portuguese whites working on the land, we do not take for granted that just because they are whites they will react against us.

Slovo: At the moment you are presenting an alternative to these whites which might either neutralise them in the struggle or might gain support from a section of them?

Dos Santos: Yes, this is important. The concentration of whites in the towns is certainly bigger than the whites on the land, and it is when the struggle reaches the towns that we will be able to test more clearly whether our approach has been successful.

BIRTH OF FRELIMO

Slovo: In 1962 FRELIMO was born – the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique. Was it at that stage an alliance of groups i.e. a Front like the F.L.N. in Vietnam consisting of a number of political groups; or was it a Party? The P.A.I.G.C. is called a Party; FRELIMO is called a Front. Is there any significance in the use of the word Front?

Dos Santos: Well, it is true P.A.I.G.C. is called a Party and FRELIMO is called a Front. But I would say FRELIMO is a Front – not a Front of organisations in spite of the fact that it was

formed by three organisations which dissolved to create a new one. I would say it is a Front because it groups together all the social groups or social classes with the one aim of eliminating the oppressor. Everybody – whether he is involved in the capitalist or traditional sector – is suffering humiliation because of racism, and economic exploitation, including even the tribal chiefs. So, I would say that FRELIMO is a Front not because it is a federation or something like that, but because in FRELIMO all the social groups are represented.

Slovo: So it is correct to say that when FRELIMO was formed it represented all strata of the Mozambican people. Now, at that stage in 1962 when the organisation was formed what was the minimum basis for this unity between the various social groups? What was the minimum ideological framework in 1962?

Dos Santos: Just to be against the colonial oppression and for national independence. Nothing else.

Slovo: Now we know that FRELIMO was formed out of three organisations which existed externally – UDENAMO, MANU and UNAMI. What part did the cadres inside who had been working clandestinely, play in the formation of FRELIMO?

Dos Santos: I would say that they played the major part. In 1961 cadres started to come from the groups which had been working inside. They came to Zimbabwe, to Malawi, to Tanzania.

Slovo: To work or to form political organisations?

Dos Santos: To join the existing political organisations because they heard about these organisations which had started in 1960. What was the reality when they arrived there? They found in fact that the people leading the organisation did not have clear political understanding, and very little knowledge of the reality of Mozambique. These people who came outside immediately pressed for the creation of only one body. And on 25th June, 1962 a meeting took place which founded FRELIMO. Only four of those elected to the leadership came from the exile group. The rest were from inside. Thus a unity was created with the major part coming from activists in Mozambique. It was an expression of the fact that people had been

working under the concrete reality that gave them the political consciousness, the political awareness, and the capacity of producing a solution to the problems facing the action for freedom.

Slovo: From the way you have described the level of political activity and organisation inside the country before 1962, it is clear that it was not the sort of situation in which you could say the people were on the verge of revolution and showed that they were ready for violence. There were isolated confrontations but in general, from your description, it is clear that the position was not on the face of it erupting into insurrection. So what were the main reasons for FRELIMO turning to armed struggle?

Dos Santos: In fact the armed struggle started only two years after the formation of FRELIMO. But I think that is correct to say that even in 1962 everybody – or at least those who were responsible – realised that the armed struggle would be the only way. The 1962 Programme and Constitution of FRELIMO states that we are engaged in a struggle for independence by all means. By then many people in Mozambique had already learnt through bitter experience that it would not be possible to get independence through strikes and constitutional methods alone. Mass action was, of course, still necessary because it is part of the process of raising political consciousness. As a result of the experience of the Mozambican people in quite a number of mass actions, the political consciousness which developed led to new responses. For instance when there was talk of strike actions, many said: “But strike – for what? What goal do we want to reach? Freedom with strikes – impossible!” I am not saying that the masses had spontaneously turned to the idea of armed struggle as a higher form of struggle. But let us say that people began to understand that the type of actions they had carried out could not on their own result in any sort of breakthrough.

Slovo: So you are saying that the Mozambican people in general, even though they could not clearly see this in the same way as advanced political cadres could, were beginning to feel that they could not really get anywhere with traditional methods of mass struggle. This was your assessment of the mood of the people in 1962?

Dos Santos: Yes, and we acted on it. Immediately after the formation of FRELIMO in June, 1962 our first Congress took place in September, and already in January, 1963 the first comrades

were going to Algeria for military training. At the same time we started intensive political preparations inside the country. Those who were the main inspiration for the creation of FRELIMO – the cadres from inside who were closer to the reality of our situation – set about the task of mobilising and organising the people inside Mozambique. Immediately after the formation of FRELIMO, the small group structure that already existed inside Mozambique automatically became part of the FRELIMO network. The accent at that time was to restructure it in accordance with the knowledge local militants had of conditions in their own localities.

Slovo: What was the main emphasis of political mobilisation at that time?

Dos Santos: It was to give people a clearer understanding of the nature of the oppression which faced them, and that their problems could only be solved with independence. And to get independence it was necessary to prepare for the armed struggle.

Slovo: How did you set about this task?

Dos Santos: The first action was to bring out comrades from inside and to send them for military training. At the same time we began mobilising people inside to prepare the conditions for the armed struggle. Of course there were many mistakes. People did not always work in an ideal way. But anyway, this was the main emphasis; to recruit people for military training and at the same time to organise the situation inside for the beginning of the armed struggle. Also one should not forget that in 1962 the Angolan war had already been going for more than a year; the PAIGC had also already declared for guerrilla war by direct action in August 1961. So we already had two examples of people under Portuguese colonialism who were following the road of armed struggle. All this helped to create the understanding that in the long run nothing else could bring about a fundamental change.

Slovo: But when you actually started the armed struggle in September 1964, could it be said that, at that stage, the conditions for armed struggle had already been prepared throughout the country? Or did the beginning of armed activity in one part of the

country help to prepare the conditions for the further unfolding of the armed struggle?

Dos Santos: Let us say that minimum conditions were created; not everybody was politically conscious. We believed that the conditions were such that we could start in the knowledge that, in starting, other people would be convinced and would also engage themselves in the armed struggle.

Slovo: So in other words, you assessed that conditions were ripe in 1964 for the beginnings of armed struggle? At that stage you could not say that the whole country was on the verge of going over to armed struggle, but its beginnings – in other words armed propaganda – would help prepare the conditions and heighten the consciousness for your strategic aims?

UNDERGROUND STRUGGLE

Dos Santos: In general that is so. But I want to add a few comments on the complexities that faced us during this phase. We faced a colonial fascism so it was impossible to have legal and open organisation. The police network was everywhere, even in the bush. So first, it was impossible to organise many people. Why? Because if you go too fast and incautiously in creating organised structures you will open the organisation to infiltration by the enemy. But in spite of the fact that you could not organise everybody into organisational apparatus, what is important is that mobilisation must reach everybody. At least the maximum number of people must be mobilised one way or another even if they cannot be part of the underground structure. It is quite clear that we could not expect to create organisational networks simultaneously all over the country. Secondly, it is impossible to expect that the armed struggle would start at the same time all over the country, and that the whole country would be ready on the same day to start the armed struggle. Why? For the same reasons that we could not organise everywhere; we recognised differences in the levels of political consciousness and understanding of people in different parts of the country. The unfolding of the armed struggle is a process but, of course, the minimum basis must be there. If you want to set on fire a big area of grass, what you have to do is to make sure that at least

part of this grass is in an inflammable condition and at the same time ensure that the drying of the rest has already started. So when you start the fire you are sure that it will spread to parts which, in the meanwhile, are being dried. If we had waited for everybody to be ready to undertake armed struggle, we would never have started.

Slovo: What about the theory of the Foco based on the simple proposition that where people are oppressed and, objectively speaking, there is only one way out, the successful injection of a foco will in itself trigger off nationwide support for the armed struggle? From what you have told me, this is not the way in which you proceeded because the beginnings of armed activities were combined with the preparation of minimum conditions, both political and military, throughout wide areas of the rest of the country.

Dos Santos: Yes, that is correct. I would add that the armed struggle is a unique instrument. We do not consider mechanically that everywhere, in all countries, armed struggle is the only instrument for independence. No, what is important is for each people to be able to determine for themselves what instrument of struggle will enable them to reach independence. The armed struggle can only be launched when the conditions are ripe for it. Even now for us the basic problem is not guns; the Portuguese have guns too but that does not make a revolution. The problem is the man. It is not because you give the Mozambican a rifle that he becomes a revolutionary – the basic problem is a political one. Political consciousness is the base. So just to start an armed struggle does not mean you will obtain independence.

Slovo: Which brings me to the next question. In the case of Guine Bissau, Cabral said that the political and military leadership of the struggle is one – it is the political leadership: “our fighters are defined as armed activists”. Is this FRELIMO’s approach? And have there been any special problems in making sure that the political side dominates the military side, that the political side is in fact in the leadership and stands at the head?

Dos Santos: There are different tasks thrown up by the struggle. There is military action, organisation, health activities, work in the field of education and so on. But all are being taken in one direction, under one orientation defined by our political line.

Slovo: But who controls the army?

Dos Santos: The Central Committee of our Party. The army is also part of the Party. We approach the problem of the relationships between the army and the Party in a way which should apply not only at this stage of guerrilla war but even after independence. What is our basic approach? We must aim to achieve a situation in which armed activists are essentially no different from other activists; from people who are nurses, teachers, workers, peasants; people who are all carrying out tasks which are linked to the one aim based on one political line. Of course, I do not say that there are no problems and your question relates really to the way FRELIMO is trying to overcome the problems. We inherited the political groups which existed in Mozambique and we had to develop them and mould them into a national organisation with a clear orientation. But we must remember that the structure we inherited was basically orientated to mobilising and organising the people politically. In addition we had to create a military force in the first place outside Mozambique. When it comes to the relationship between the military and political organs, the approach is often influenced by the way in which one characterises a situation in which the armed tactic has become the basic weapon. In such a situation one finds that there are different definitions – one says that the armed struggle is now the only form in which politics can be expressed; others will tell you that the armed struggle even when it becomes the main requirement of a given phase is still basically a political struggle and has to be combined with political action and organisation. How did we combine political and military activity? Those who remained in Mozambique concentrated on mobilisation, organising the people in a general political sense. But they also had concrete tasks in connection with the armed struggle; to store food for the time the war started, to organise the structures which would link up with the guerrillas, etc. Of course problems arose. Even though both the military and political structures were working for the same aim, the main tasks of the internal groups had now to be expressed in relation to the fundamentally altered character of our struggle with its primary emphasis on military activity. Those structures inside which up to then had been concentrating on general political mobilisation, now had to adjust to the additional role of becoming an integral

part of armed activity and those who had not had special training were not as well equipped to solve some of the political problems created by our armed activities. For example, problems like the necessary measures required for the defence of the population against bombs etc., where to establish medical centres, where to establish a school, how to organise production – should we go on producing the same things or should we change; those who were in the guerrilla groups were given specialist training in these fields whereas those who were inside the country all the time were not able to acquire this knowledge. Differences appeared in the level of consciousness of the realities. Those who had remained inside were the leaders – of the structure, of the Party and were leading the population. When these new problems emerged the population expected the answers from them. They could give no answers. When the people began looking to those in the guerrilla sector for the answers, a certain amount of unhealthy competitiveness developed. We unfortunately were not able to foresee that this would be a problem. And when we began to understand this problem we took a number of measures including the giving of military training to all our internal cadres. So we have achieved the position where all our activities are carried out by people with both political consciousness and military training. And the artificial division between the military and the political structures began to fade.

Slovo: So, as I understand you, you are saying that even to pose the question by asking about the relationship of two separate wings is unreal for your situation; the whole direction is with the Party. Could you just illustrate this briefly in relation, say, to the struggle in the Niassa Province where you have political administration, economic reconstruction activities, an army, a people's militia, and so on?

Dos Santos: The central Committee of FRELIMO directs all these activities. At national level the highest organ is the Congress. Between Congresses the direction of the struggle is under the central Committee which has a smaller working executive. At the Provincial level we have a provincial committee which is in day to day charge of all aspects of the political and military struggle under the broad direction of the central committee.

Slovo: Now in a broad struggle such as yours it is, of course, in the first place necessary to reach the stage where people's consciousness becomes national rather than tribal or regional. Has this first battle been won in Mozambique? Or are there still some relics of tribalism or regionalism?

Dos Santos: I would say firstly that we have not completely won the battle against tribalism. I could not say that in the future we will never have a case of tribalism. But we are confident that FRELIMO as an organisation has the capability to win any challenge that will be made by tribalism. Any action based on tribalism will be defeated. The main conditions for its successful rejection are present. On the general point of whether we have already moulded a nation in the true sense of the word, I want to say that a nation is based on concrete realities. And the most important reality in the present stage in Mozambique is the fight against Portuguese Colonialism. It is our common fight against our common oppressor which plays an outstanding role in creating a national bond between all the diverse groups and cultures; secondly the common action to begin building a new society in the liberated areas also plays an important role in stimulating a national consciousness. To build a nation you have in the first place to build economic realities of which everyone will instinctively feel they are a part. At the level of regional economic subsistence, at the level of an economy based primarily on agriculture at its lowest level, it is difficult for people to relate to one another in a truly national sense, in the sense of even sharing a common economy and all the social links which this creates. So I would say that national economic development is an essential part of the continuing process of building a nation. Of course a nation is a product of history and, its formation goes through different phases. In this sense the work for the final achievement of complete nationhood will continue even after independence although the fundamental elements of nationhood are already in existence and in the process of being further developed in Mozambique.

Slovo: Would you say that manifestations of tribalism have created difficulties for you in some of the liberated areas? For example, have the traditional institutions, the tribal chiefs, etc., been integrated into the struggle or are you experiencing problems in this connection.

Dos Santos: We had chiefs who were against us and collaborated with the Portuguese. Then there were chiefs who said: "O.K. I close my eyes, you do what you want, but as for myself I cannot do anything." There were others who worked fully with us. Many of the second category thought that independence would enable them once again to re-assert the tribal empire, that FRELIMO would be able to give back to them all the powers which the Portuguese had undermined. When some of them realized that this was not FRELIMO policy they withdrew and a few went to Tanzania. But there are those who integrated and who became part of the structure of FRELIMO. We must also remember that the problems of tribalism are not always triggered off by the actions of Chiefs. In fact in many modern struggles tribalism is just a useful instrument for certain people to advance their individual or group interests. We have had people with some responsibility in FRELIMO who fell into this category.

Slovo: In other words people who are using tribalism to further their own individual advancement, who try to rely on some power base which they find in tribalism.

Dos Santos: Not exactly. It is not really a power base. No. It is power that has its origins in tribalism and is based on the exploitation of tribal values of the people. Some who exploit such sentiments might say: "Why are we going to fight outside our tribal area?" or "You see, our language is not used as much as other languages" or "You see, in this leadership there are no people from our tribe." We have more than 42 tribes. So, you can imagine how easy it is for opportunistic elements to prey on sectional fears.

Slovo: Even while this ideological battle which you have described to make people think nationally rather than tribally or regionally, is going on, is there an awareness in FRELIMO of some of the limitations of national consciousness itself especially from the point of view of the future Mozambique? For example, Fanon says that national consciousness has its pitfalls and limitations and one of these is that it very often goes no further than the desire by some groups to occupy the privileged positions of the oppressor. The other limitation of nationalism of which Fanon speaks is that it can degenerate into racialism. Is there in FRELIMO an awareness at least at the top levels, of the limitations of purely national consciousness?

Dos Santos: When we talk of limitations we mean there is an aim that in certain situations cannot be fulfilled. If, for example, we are talking of revolution and not just formal national independence, one could say that nationalism and a nationalist struggle have limitations. Of course, within almost every national movement there are different types of nationalism. There is the elementary, primary one – what is called primitive nationalism. But there is also revolutionary nationalism. Some people who take part in the struggle for independence do so not to realise or to satisfy the interests of the people as a whole but to satisfy the interests of a small group. They have a specific ideology which in general has a bourgeois-national framework. In other words within a nationalist movement there can be two general types of ideology – one which is bourgeois and one which is revolutionary. So when we speak about the limitations of national consciousness we mean limitation by those who use the ideology of bourgeois nationalism to prevent liberation from moving on to the revolution. Naturally there are people who are sincere but who lack the knowledge, ideology, political awareness and do not see beyond the very first stages of removing the foreign oppressors from their monopoly of power. But such people when they take part in the struggle soon enough realize the narrowness of their approach. But also there are some who deliberately use tribalism and racism. So, in truth, nationalism is not just one concept. Within it there are two ideologies, and the limitations relate to the aims of the reactionary one. For example, in our struggle, to continue to have racist attitudes is a sign of reactionary ideology which we fight because it is an ideology against the interests of the whole nation. So I would say that it is not a question of pitfalls or limitations but of the characteristics of some types of nationalism.

Slovo: But it is correct to say that you are at the moment fighting a broad national struggle the basic aim of which is independence, sovereignty of the people, expelling foreign domination so that the people (in the broadest sense of the word) control their own destiny and so on. Now is there not therefore a danger that, unless you at this stage define more clearly what you mean by true national liberation and the content of national consciousness, you will include under your umbrella all sorts of elements who will agree in

general with your policy of getting rid of a foreign oppressor but when it comes to the question of real independence (as you and I might understand it) would not agree? Therefore is there not a need to define the ideology of revolution and national liberation more precisely than generalities about independence and getting rid of the foreign oppressor?

Dos Santos: I agree that this is absolutely necessary but I would like to add that the struggle for independence is a process with a number of phases which the revolutionary must recognise. One should be able in each phase to define the aims, to define the political line most appropriate to that phase. In other words in relation to any given situation we must establish our basic aim, which are the forces that must be brought together to achieve this aim, who are our main enemies, etc. At the beginning in FRELIMO the general aim was to fight colonialism and to many colonialism just means white people. But with the unfolding of the struggle it became clearer that colonialists were not such simple entities. When we faced colonialism in real struggle, we faced the army, the police, the administration; these were the expressions of colonialism. And after that we could go further and say: "Ah, but these are just instruments of something else – of economic interests." And it also became clearer that these economic interests were not only the interests of some white people but could also be the interests of some Black people. There were indeed some white people not linked with these interests. So at each stage and as the struggle progressed one should be able to give greater clarity to the main aim, to define the enemy more scientifically, to define the liberation forces with greater precision – in other words to develop one's ideology, and a more advanced political line. In our case the necessity to define a revolutionary ideology with greater precision emerged when we started to build the liberated areas, to engage ourselves in national reconstruction. As always, the task of building a society economically poses the problem of the type of production and distribution, and especially who is going to benefit from what the society produces. This life process also raises much more sharply than in the classroom the deeper question of the type of ideology to embrace. So to summarise, there comes a stage when it becomes clear why everybody in the nation should accept the idea that the main aim of the struggle is to advance the interests of the working

people. In the field or organising the people we follow collectivistic ways as is the case, for example, with our co-operative movement in the liberated areas. We must also realise that it is not only the enemy who stands in the way of this co-operative effort but even some Black people who act against the general interest of the struggle. But what must be done is to conduct the struggle in such a way that if such people desert this will be no more than an individual person running away and will not be the cause of any significant split.

WHO ARE THE DEFECTORS?

Slovo: Well, talking about that, there have been a number of defections of people like Kavandame, Simango, Gwenjero and Marupe, are these individuals part of the impure element which the revolution's progress rejects or do they represent some more basic class interests in the purely anti-colonial phase of the struggle?

Dos Santos: In practice these were individual defections. But one should say that they represent group interests too – the natural attitudes of certain types of social groups. Let us consider the people you mention. Gwenjero was a priest; Marupa was a man from a university and Simango also a priest. Marupa and Simango had responsibilities in FRELIMO. If we look for a compartment for these people we could say perhaps that they represent different elements of the petty bourgeoisie. Kavandame is a slightly different case. He was a man with individual economic interests. In the past he had people working for him, etc. One could say he was a small planter. It is clear that his main aim was always to establish a system in Mozambique which would favour him – a capitalist system. Gwenjero, Marupa and Simango were not taking these positions openly along those lines but they were driven by a desire for individual political power, by a bourgeois ideology and a desire to build a capitalist type system. In fact Kavandame and Simango defected from the organisation at about the same time and Kavandame could without difficulty accept Simango as a political leader because the type of economic system he supported was acceptable. So I would say that the desertions were individual acts but their attitudes reflected those of a class. Kavandame was a small capitalist. The others are petty bourgeoisie who are

interested in political power and are ready to impose a system to represent the material interests of the capitalists.

QUESTIONS OF IDEOLOGY

Slovo: FRELIMO has said publicly that in 1962 it consisted of a heterogeneous group of people linked by the idea of independence and the vague philosophy of nationalism. Beyond this FRELIMO did not really have an ideological line. But your publications suggest that the struggle itself presented the organisation with new tasks which laid bare the contradictions which had been hiding beneath the surface. Can you be more concrete about the developments? What contradictions emerged and how were they resolved?

Dos Santos: It is true FRELIMO as such had no clear ideological line apart from primary nationalism. But the very fact that the leadership was heterogeneous meant that different types of ideologies were represented in it from the start. It meant that there were also people who accepted revolutionary ideology and who understood, even if only in an abstract way, that independence must be for the people, and who were in an elementary way against the exploitation of man by man. It was not only the internal dynamic of the process of fighting of the Mozambican people that resulted in understanding by some of those who were in 1962 in the leadership of FRELIMO. A study of the experiences of other countries and the general knowledge acquired by humanity in its struggle against oppression penetrated the minds of quite a few in the leadership. So right from the start, in 1962, different ideologies were reflected at the top. But the tasks facing us in those early days demanded that we create a collective which would accommodate all those who were prepared to work together to get the basic struggle off the ground. So, the nature of the political, social and economic realities of the situation as it then was, demanded a pragmatist attitude. But the struggle grew and new situations emerged and in the process political consciousness and political awareness were increasing and developing even though in some ways our approach still remains pragmatic.

In general what were the Phases? The first phase was characterised by the heterogeneity of the leadership. As I have said the latent

contradictions really emerged when we started to have liberated areas and the question of the organisation of a new life arose. Which way should we follow? So it was in that phase that the contradictions appeared and those who were mainly fighting for their own individual interests or for the interests of a narrow group, came more openly to the surface. Of course, you can find many people who, in the beginning, belonged to the same social group but who, while engaging in the process of the struggle, were able to change and transform themselves. Others refused to change and were rejected by the Movement.

Slovo: And would you accept, that however vague the idea is, the point of departure between the first and the second periods is this idea of a society in which there would be no exploitation of man by man?

Dos Santos: Yes, this is true.

Slovo: Now these developments in the areas which have been liberated – in the fields of economics, health, education, embryonic state structures, etc. are they of a permanent character? Or are they just the reflections of the needs of a war situation? It could be said that in a war situation it is easier to get people to accept a certain type of communal effort even by those who are ideologically not committed to this as defining the form of a future society. Can you reflect on this?

Dos Santos: I accept that it is partly made easier by the demands of war. But does that mean that once we have independence the approach will be changed? In the particular conditions of fighting against Portuguese colonialism, revolutionary attitudes are not only possible, but necessary. If we do not follow collectivist attitudes we will not be able to face the enemy successfully. In this sense it is true to say that the internal dynamic of the struggle is such that the conditions generate collectivist thinking. But one should also say that even if the origins of such attitudes are partly pragmatic it can, nevertheless, provide a basis for the growth of real social revolution. There is certainly a strong possibility that in the course of collectivist effort a situation is created from which it will be difficult to withdraw. If our organisation maintains a true revolutionary leadership the special circumstances of the process of our liberation open up real possibilities

for an advance from liberation to revolution.

Slovo: You have talked about going beyond the nationalist phase and achieving a real social revolution. How does a movement make sure that this is achieved?

Dos Santos: The main defence must be to popularise the revolutionary aims and to create such a situation that if for one reason or another at some future time some people start trying to change these aims, they will meet with resistance from the masses. This must be the defence until the situation has been achieved where the truly revolutionary classes dominate all levels of power.

NEED FOR A PARTY OF REVOLUTION

Slovo: It is correct to have faith in the masses in a general way, but we know that the masses were almost completely silent when Nkrumah was overthrown; we did not witness a single major demonstration. The masses were also completely silent when many other progressives in Africa were deprived of political power by cliques. It is not enough just to rely on the good sense of the masses. What has to be done is to create an apparatus, a Party capable of calling on the masses and leading them at every level.

Dos Santos: Yes, this is a problem of building the Party and, in the first place, politicizing the cadres in the aims of the organisation, the political line, the ideology of the organisation. Our methods of work must always allow for free and continued discussion which will facilitate communication at all the levels of the organisation and which will enable the lower levels of the organisation to express their will when we are engaged in defining our orientation, etc. The cadres of the organisation must participate fully and it is through these cadres that the aims are popularised and spread to the masses.

Slovo: Are you convinced that FRELIMO is moving along those lines?

Dos Santos: I am sure that FRELIMO is moving in that direction. If you read the 1971 message of the 25th September you will see that we consider it as our main task to develop the

political consciousness of the cadres. Everyone must, of course, be involved in the practical work, but equally every cadre must study, it is obligatory to study. In the message of 25th September 1972 again we emphasise the aspect of developing still further the political consciousness of the cadres. Every cadre must be completely equipped to interpret the aims and ideology of our revolution.

Slovo: There is a fashionable theory that violence has the effect of cleansing a people fighting a political struggle by violent means. The forces which are of necessity brought into play in the course of an armed struggle give some guarantee that the degeneration which we have seen happen in some parts of independent Africa, will be avoided. In other words, the fires of violence purify. Could you comment on that as a general proposition?

Dos Santos: Fire burns, whether it purifies is another question! Whether it purifies or not depends on the type of violence. For example, the fire from the Portuguese burns and destroys. The fire coming from FRELIMO purifies and builds. Why does the fire coming from FRELIMO build? Because it is a revolutionary fire. A reactionary fire just destroys. It is not really the weapon that you have in your hand that counts but the men who carry it. So, if you are a revolutionary your fire purifies, and if you are a reactionary it destroys. If we speak just of violence there is no guarantee that it will purify anything unless it is directed for the good of the people.

Slovo: Lenin in dealing with guerrilla struggle said that without a revolutionary ideology behind it, armed struggle in fact becomes corrupt, becomes prostituted, it becomes the area of the adventurer, the brigand, the terrorist in the bad sense of the word.

Dos Santos: That is no doubt true. I would add that a revolutionary fire destroys the enemy and purifies us. In the process of the struggle the individuals who are on the side of the revolution grow as human beings and this is important because we consider that there cannot be a new society without a new man. This applies to all revolutionary struggle whether it takes the form of violence or not. And so, the revolutionary fire helps us to purify our ranks.

Slovo: But the qualifying word is revolutionary, not the violence?

Dos Santos: That is correct.

UNITY BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS

Slovo: I want to come to a few general questions on the liberation movement. There is a good deal of talk of unity in Africa, particularly in the areas where liberation struggles are being waged. And the way in which this is often put in the case of South Africa (even in the case of Mozambique) is that the mere fact of two organisations getting together will achieve something special. In your experience is not unity the expression of a complex process rather than a formal act? Is there not this unreality in the approach to unity, in this insistence on a formal act, as if from there will flow all we want to achieve?

Dos Santos: When we speak about unity we mean, in the first place, unity of the people; not just groups who claim to represent the people. Every situation generates numerous individuals and groups who have the ambition to exploit a struggle for their own ends. The real question is: what is represented by an organisation? It follows that unity between organisations only has meaning if they have a real base amongst the people, otherwise it is purely formal and does not serve the interests of a people. Such a kind of unity may even serve to divide the people rather than unite them. Unity is a complex process. It is never achieved easily and its basis is always in the process of transformation. One has to know at each stage what the platform of unity is. In FRELIMO in 1962 what was the base of unity? It was to eliminate foreign oppression. Later the word oppression came to include even internal groups who want to replace foreign oppression with their own. So the base of unity is continuously changing. When we ask two or more groups to unite, we have to establish the base of this unity and the base must be determined by the level of development of the struggle and the objective realities. It is not enough to talk just of unity in principle.

Slovo: This year it will be 10 years since the OAU was established. Have you any reflections on its positive and negative features especially from the point of view of the liberation movements?

Dos Santos: I think that it has been positive for the liberation movements although I would not say that its role has been fulfilled completely. Many liberation movements were, of course, disappointed in some of their expectations based on some of the early promises. Internationally there has been a very important contribution. If Africa takes a position in favour of the liberation movements (which it usually does) it forces the rest of the world to take notice. Some of the negative features must be related to the level of political development in Africa. You cannot expect more from the whole than from the parts.

THE DOMINO THEORY

Slovo: Right, now I want to come lastly to this problem which worries so many South Africans – the domino theory. Let us hear you on that.

Dos Santos: Personally, I do not believe in the domino theory which as I understand it postulates that if one country becomes independent the others (which are contiguous to it) will follow. Tunisia and Morocco became independent and Algeria still had to fight a war to get real independence. I think the main determinant is action inside each country. But this does not mean that there are no possibilities for one country to become independent before the others.

Slovo: Do you believe that when the struggle in Mozambique reaches the point of threatening the basic interests of South Africa in a very real way (which will happen more and more as you travel South) that South Africa will stand by? We know that she is already involved. Theoretically, of course, Mozambique can get its independence before the other unliberated countries. But unless there is a struggle going on in South Africa and in the rest of Southern Africa does it not make the prospect much more difficult?

Dos Santos: I would like to put the problem somewhat differently. Perhaps we should look further to the content of independence. I think that a stage will be reached in which the main problem will not be whether a country becomes formally independent or not, but what the social nature of the new regime will be. This

will be the real problem. Our enemy will be forced, for one reason or another by one means or another, to accept independence. But when the stage is reached where they have no option, they will try to influence the content of independence. I really believe that South Africa is interested in becoming the stronghold of white supremacy in Southern Africa.

Slovo: Must not one work on the assumption that the struggles in Southern Africa are indivisible in the sense that the enemy is more or less united and will throw its forces in at strategic points in order to perpetuate white rule in Southern Africa as a whole? And, therefore, like in any war, one does not allow the enemy to concentrate its forces in this or that area to suit its tactics at each moment. Therefore in order to facilitate the struggle of all the people in Southern Africa whether in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique or in Angola, it would obviously be of enormous importance if there were a meaningful struggle going on simultaneously in each of the countries and especially in South Africa which would make it less capable of playing this role of policeman in Southern Africa?

Dos Santos: It follows that any theory which is based on first liberating one territory and then another must be to the advantage of the enemy. Naturally. Therefore, our position on this matter is that there should be maximum action inside each country. Nobody will give help unless you are yourself engaged in action. Secondly, it is an elementary part of the tactics of a struggle such as ours, always to disperse the enemy. This applies at regional, national and international level. We must prevent the common enemy from concentrating on one point – this is clear.

A GREAT COMRADE PASSES

THE DEATH OF WALTER ULBRICHT

The "African Communist" records with deep regret the death on August 1, 1973, of Walter Ulbricht, the Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic and, until May 1971, the First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party.

Born in Leipzig on June 30, 1893, Walter Ulbricht devoted his life to the cause of the working class and the international Communist movement. He was a foundation member of the German Communist Party – a party which survived the worst horrors of the Hitler period and which, together with its allies in the tense cold war era after the Second World War, laid the foundations for the all-round development of the German Democratic Republic which has so gratified the friends and astounded the enemies of socialism in recent years.

We in South Africa have especial reason for sorrow at the passing of Walter Ulbricht, for he, the Socialist Unity Party and the

Government of the German Democratic Party which he led have proved amongst the staunchest and most steadfast friends of the national liberation movements of Africa. The high example of fraternal solidarity which was set by the leading organs of the GDR proved an inspiration to its people, who always received our comrades and the members of the South African liberation movement with especial warmth. Nor was this warmth merely that of the traditional host towards a guest. Nowhere more than in the GDR is there a keener realisation of the vital role of the national liberation movement in the world-wide struggle against imperialism. Under the guidance of Walter Ulbricht and the Socialist Unity Party, the GDR established such organisations as the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee which provide invaluable aid to our movement in the way of historical research, theoretical guidance and in



measures of practical assistance. No one did more to cement the alliance between the international communist movement and the national liberation movement than our dear departed comrade Walter Ulbricht.

In expressing our grief at his death, we take the opportunity to assert at the same time our confidence that the high example which he set will be continued by those who follow in his footsteps, and that the relationships between our Party and the Socialist Unity Party and between our two peoples will grow deeper and stronger with each

passing year.

On the occasion of the death of Walter Ulbricht, the following cable was sent by the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party:

The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party expresses its profound sorrow at the passing of comrade Walter Ulbricht, communist and working class leader who played an outstanding role in helping to create and build, with meagre resources and under great difficulties, a great socialist state. His lifetime struggle against fascism and his devotion to the cause of the proletariat throughout the world has earned him an honoured place in the history of mankind.

Our party and our people mourn the loss of a man who was a great internationalist and who for many years, as the leader of the Socialist Unity Party and head of the German Democratic Republic, was one of the most committed supporters of the struggle against fascism and racism in our century.

**LONG LIVE THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC!
LONG LIVE THE SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY!**

A NEW WEAPON TO SMASH TRADE UNION APARTHEID

By R.E. Matajo

The International Trade Union Conference Against Apartheid held in the Plenary Assembly Hall, the Palais des Nations, Geneva 15-16 June brought together for the first time since 1948 the three great trade union internationals – the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL).

Three hundred and eighty delegates from 200 trade unions representing 180,000,000 workers from 130 capitalist and socialist countries in Africa, America, Australia, Europe and New Zealand participated in the conference.

The Secretary General of the UN was represented by Mr. A.A. Farah, assistant General Secretary and up to last year chairman of the UN Special Committee on Apartheid, who made a valuable contribution to the holding of this conference. The UN Special Committee on

Apartheid was represented by its present chairman Ambassador Edwin Ogbu of Nigeria.

The remarkable feature of this unprecedented gathering was the unanimity of views expressed by all the sixty speakers. Delegate after delegate in this great assembly of the world's labour leaders denounced apartheid as an anachronism, a relic of colonialism, a survival of an outdated imperialism and therefore a threat to the working people of all nations.

Labour leaders from Latin America, Asia and Africa compared the system of racial discrimination with the indignities and injustices suffered by their own people at the hands of colonial rulers, foreign investors and representatives of the great imperial powers. South Africa represented to many of the delegates a symbol of their own recent past and a standing warning of the need for vigilance against the recurrence of such evils. The Spanish workers' delegate, at his first meeting with the international trade union movement after 22 years in a Franco jail, linked the struggles in Spain against fascism with the struggles against racism.

The reasons for this extraordinary consensus are to be found in the structure, theory and practice of the racist regime in South Africa. Apartheid denies the concept of free enterprise and equality before the law, which a revolutionary capitalism advanced in its struggles against 18th century feudalism. By denying four-fifths of its population free access to the labour and property market, by vesting hereditary power and privileges in the white minority, Apartheid reproduces the restraints of feudal society against which the youthful capitalist class of Europe took up arms.

Apartheid violates to an even greater extent the socialist and communist ideal of economic equality and working class rule. South Africa combines the advanced technology of an industrial economy with feudal restrictions on the great bulk of its working population, denies Africans the right to form recognised trade unions, to participate in the procedures of collective bargaining and to obtain access without restraint to work opportunities. It denies the working people – African, Coloured and Indian – the right to elect and be elected into the governing bodies. In this respect the Apartheid system challenges the ideals and threatens the standards which the international labour movement has struggled to achieve over past centuries.

This is probably the first time that trade unionists of different ideologies have been able to agree about the nature of a particular social system.

Never before have so many trade unionists been alerted to the iniquities of Apartheid and the dangers that it represents to working men. The speakers condemned the capitalist and imperialist forces, the multinational companies behind the Apartheid system and called on the international labour movement physically to demonstrate the rejection of South Africa's racist regime.

Never before has there been so powerful a movement for the destruction of this evil social system.

Mark William Shope, General Secretary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in his address pointed out: "The goal must be nothing less than the transfer of political power to the African people on the basis of one man one vote". He argued eloquently that while it was necessary to press for improvements in wage standards, for the right of collective bargaining and free trade unionism, for equal opportunities to work, for freedom of association, movement and residence – these and other things that the voteless majority demand as of right, will come to them when they have obtained democratic rights.

Moses M. Mabhida, SACTU's vice-President, in a moving speech reminded the assembly of the conviction announced in the Pretoria Trial of the Six under the terrorist laws. He described the position of the African worker as an uprooted, homeless being without a place of his own in the country of his birth.

He rejected any notion that the African working class should be treated as an appendage of the white trade unions. African workers, he pointed out, had many years of experience of trade unionism and would have built a powerful movement of their own if not for the repressive measures adopted by the police state. South African white trade union leaders have betrayed African workers in the past and could not be trusted to represent the African workers.

A new phase had begun, he said. The evidence could be seen in the recent strikes – 100,000 African men and women risked their freedom and jobs, took a stand against the employing class and the police and showed a great capacity for organisation and determination to win their demands.

The achievement of this great assembly of labour was manifested in the unanimous adoption of a composite resolution based on six separate resolutions submitted by the WFTU, ICFTU, WCL, SACTU, Zimbabwe T.U.C., Yugoslavia and various amendments submitted during the discussion. (Text of the resolution is attached).

Many speakers pointed out that it bears the imprint of a compromise. Some of the passages are less precise than they should be, but it was necessary to achieve and maintain the widest possible unity.

The question is how far will the resolution be acted upon?

The resolution imposes a strong moral obligation on the trade union movement to act along the lines indicated. Trade unions who recognise the crimes of Apartheid and its threat to the labour movement may be expected to press their national trade union organisations for action by carrying out the text of the resolution. The trade unions of every country represented at the conference have committed themselves to a positive plan of campaign, to eradicate racism and to destroy the Apartheid system.

The resolution makes provision for the appointment of a continuing committee working in conjunction with UN agencies, charged with the duty of securing the implementation of the resolution. This can only be done by the trade unions in every country maintaining close vigilance, by exposing trade agreements with and investments in South Africa, by taking steps to prevent emigration to South Africa and generally severing communications and indeed any social ties with the land of Apartheid.

The struggle against Apartheid has united not only the trade unions on the international front, but is uniting sections of the labour movement on a national plane. Examples of these are the collective action taken in Japan by all the trade union bodies and the Socialist parties to stop trade, cultural and sport exchanges with South Africa.¹

The three trade union Federations in Holland have already acted. They urged their government to discourage emigration to South Africa by stopping financial aid to emigrants going to S.A., as well as investments in South Africa. They have done a great deal of work in exposing the Apartheid racist regime.² Their action is bound to hurt Afrikaners in view of the close historic and kinship ties between the two countries.

Conference may be described as the cry of oppressed people from all over the world against the evils of Apartheid, which is seen as the manifestation of everything that is hated, feared and despised by the downtrodden and deprived. The conscience of the working class of the world has been aroused as never before on the issue of the oppressive South African regime.

Mr. Farah said on the adoption of the resolution:-

“An agreement has been reached today which is indeed a landmark in the struggle against Apartheid. The unanimity reached is a great cause of satisfaction to the people of South Africa; it must be seen that it has sprung from the hearts of humanity.”

Mr. Edwin Ogbu said:-

“This conference has issued two messages. One is to the workers of the world together with the South African workers to establish and take on as their challenge to ameliorate the conditions and race discrimination in South Africa. The second is to the racist regime of South Africa – that they will have to confront the world labour movement.”

Mr. Joseph Morris, Executive vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress and Chairman of the Workers' Group in the ILO, who presided over this conference, said in his closing speech:-

“This has been a historic occasion in the struggle of the people of the world to achieve the dignity of man. Today we have achieved the cooperation of the world trade union movement to create an instrument to help the South African workers win the rights they rightfully deserve.”

He appealed to the delegates on their return to their countries to mobilise their membership to carry out the resolution.

BEWARE OF COLLABORATORS

In spite of the apparent unanimity among the worker delegates, there

were undercurrents which indicate that consensus was not as complete as the proceedings indicated. The friends of the South African Government – trade union leaders in those countries that invest heavily in South Africa i.e. the USA, West Germany and Britain, together with the African-American Labour Centre, a CIA outfit, worked for a division of the forces ranged against racist South Africa.

This explains the presence at the conference of Lucy Mvubelo, of the National Union of Clothing Workers, Johanna Cornelius and Mrs. Harriet Bolton of the Garment Workers' Union of South Africa and Mr. Arthur Grobbelaar, of the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA). They together with their friends were active lobbying the I.L.O. officials and trade union delegations to be given a hearing at the conference. It became apparent during the negotiations behind the scene that leading members of the platform were sympathetic to the idea that TUCSA and their star performer Lucy Mvubelo should be given a hearing. Only the intervention of the African delegates and the threat to hiss her off the platform prevented Lucy Mvubelo from receiving this recognition by the world trade union movement.

Lucy Mvubelo and her associates represented a point of view that was wholly opposed to the spirit and indeed the terms of the resolution. In the duplicated speech she had hoped to deliver she pleaded:-

“Don't isolate us, don't break off contact and don't advocate disengagement and withdrawal of foreign investments
I appeal to our trade union colleagues not to make the task of the people of South Africa more difficult by asking for withdrawal of these companies from South Africa, or for boycotting South African goods . . .”

In conversations with delegates she pleaded for the organisation of African workers under the patronage of the registered White and Brown trade unions in South Africa. Thus she pleaded for TUCSA's policy which is that White, Coloured and Indian trade unions should adopt the corresponding groups of African workers, take them under their wing and give them paternal care.

Their ideal model for this relationship is the National Union of Clothing Workers (African) which works as an ancillary to the Garment Workers Union of South Africa (White, Coloured and Indian). This is

clearly illustrated in TUCSA's National Executive Committee resolution submitted to the 19th Annual Conference held in Durban on 13-17th August 1973, which states:-

“In view of the fact that the government is unlikely at this stage to give full recognition for the unionisation of African workers into the Registered Trade Union movement, conference recommends that individual affiliates of the Council take steps to examine practical ways to establish parallel union organisations for African workers. Conference suggests to affiliates . . . to set up such organisations . . . so that at some future date recognition will be given by government to such de facto working examples of practical and responsible labour organisations for African workers.”³

This policy brings into question the role of trade unions, both Black and White in the South African situation. Firstly, the aim of establishing parallel trade unions.⁴ This objective falls clearly within the framework of Apartheid policies, and does not challenge the Government's basic proposition that Africans shall have no place in a common society shared with fellow South Africans of other races. No class-conscious African, no African nationalist can approve of this declaration that he and his trade unions are to be regarded as an appendage of the registered and recognised unions of white, coloured and Indian workers. It is not good enough that TUCSA leaders should claim to be acting under duress; they will not cure the sick society by accepting the disease as a permanent condition. Apartheid must be challenged.

Consistent with the acceptance of Apartheid in the trade unions as a kind of 'natural law' which cannot be reversed is their notion of 'practical and responsible labour organisations for African workers'.

These resolutions and the lobbying of the international trade union movement are part and parcel of TUCSA's campaign to become acceptable to the international labour movement, to harness and devitalise the African workers for their 'controlled change'.

The choice lies between TUCSA's path of collaboration and compromise which might at the most produce tame African trade unions which are bound hand and foot by discriminatory laws and by paternalism of the registered white and brown trade unions.

The other path which SACTU has mapped out is the path of struggle not only for free African trade unionism, but for much more. It is the struggle for the removal of all discrimination, for winning for the Africans their rightful place in the community of nations.

SACTU received recognition from the delegates – it received the respect it deserves as the true representative of the 7 million low-paid African workers, the biggest concentrated labour force on the African continent. SACTU must warn the labour movement against becoming involved with TUCSA. SACTU cannot rest on its laurels on the achievements at the conference. Our job is to organise the strength of the African working men and women in South Africa, transform their movement from protests and strikes into an organised force directed at the social and political system based on the oppressive exploitation of the mass of the African people.

SACTU must expose any attempts to evade the resolution, to evade the preparation for active struggle against racialism. Already it has been announced that trade union delegations from the USA and UK are planning to visit South Africa. This is contrary to the letter and spirit of the resolution which declares clearly that South Africa must be isolated.

The implementation of the resolution, the challenge to the racist regime depends on:

- a) making the African, Coloured and Indian workers as well as all opponents to racism at home aware of the contents of the resolution
- b) the extent to which trade unionists, anti-apartheid movements and above all the advance guard in the labour movement all over the world will give effect to the principles and call for action set out in this World Labour Manifesto against Apartheid.

The responsibility of making the resolution effective – for giving it ‘teeth’ as one of the delegates put it – rests upon everybody who recognises the evils of Apartheid. Special efforts must be made in France, UK, USA and West Germany, where the capitalists are the main backbone of support to the Apartheid regime.

The resolution, our ‘instrument’ of struggle, must be taken up right now for the world-wide week of action against the Apartheid

system in South Africa in the UN's Decade of Action to Combat Racism from 10th December to 17th December 1973. Implementation of the resolution creates the opportunity to strike a mortal blow to South Africa's racist regime.

REFERENCES

- 1 The Guardian 16/6/73
- 2 Evangelie en Maatschappij (Zuid-Afrika) Kaderblad van het Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond in Nederland, Nov./Dec. 1972
- 3 TUCSA, Circular No.27/1973, 21/5/73, 19th Annual Conference Durban, 13-17th August 1973, First Agenda.
- 4 This in fact was the policy adopted by the Garment Workers' Union when Mr. E.S. Sachs was their general secretary in the early 1940s.

RESOLUTION FOR ACTION AGAINST APARTHEID PASSED AT GENEVA TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, JUNE 1973

The International Trade Union Conference against Apartheid, meeting in Geneva on 15-16 June 1973, at which 380 delegates representing more than 200 trade union organisations from all over the world participated:

DENOUNCES the inhuman policy of apartheid and racial discrimination pursued by the Government of the Republic of South Africa, which is a crime against humanity, a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and, as such, a threat to world peace and security;

NOTES with profound concern that the Government of South Africa continues to intensify its inhuman and aggressive policy of apartheid;

CONSIDERS that the most elementary human and trade union rights continue to be denied to the African workers, and that the vast majority of the workers of South Africa are kept outside the system of collective bargaining and are denied employment opportunities in skilled jobs;

EXPRESSES full support and solidarity with the African workers of South Africa who have courageously taken strike action against their intolerable conditions and have unequivocally condemned the system of works committees which cannot in any way be regarded as a substitute for genuine trade unions;

VIGOROUSLY CONDEMNS the South African white minority racist regime for the annexation and extension of apartheid to the neighbouring territory of Namibia;

FULLY APPROVING paragraph 16 of Resolution 2923E(XXVII) of the General Assembly of the United Nations, which invites all organisations, institutions and information media to organise in 1973 intensified and co-ordinated

campaigns directed towards the elimination of apartheid and the discontinuation of all military, political, economic and cultural collaboration with South Africa; and

RECALLING the Declaration concerning the Policy of Apartheid of the Republic of South Africa, unanimously adopted by the International Labour Conference on 8 July 1964, which made an urgent appeal to governments, employers and workers of all States Members of the ILO to combine their efforts and put into application all appropriate measures to lead the Republic of South Africa to heed the call of humanity and renounce its shameful policy of apartheid;

DEPLORING the failure of some United Nations member States to fully implement United Nations resolutions and decisions on South Africa;

CONDEMNS the colonialist racist alliance of Portugal, South Africa and the illegal white minority regime of Salisbury and their drive to maintain colonialism and racism in Africa;

STRESSING that South African and foreign employers and investors have proved to be sources of direct or indirect support for the policy of apartheid, and have collaborated in the exploitation of African labour in South Africa;

STRONGLY EMPHASISING that white immigration to South Africa can only reinforce the policy of apartheid;

RESOLVES that concerted action must be undertaken to eradicate apartheid in southern Africa;

REQUESTS the United Nations to make sanctions against South Africa mandatory;

ALSO REQUESTS all UN specialised agencies as well as intergovernmental organisations to initiate and intensify anti-apartheid action and to increase aid to the oppressed people of South Africa in their legitimate struggle for the observance of fundamental human rights, in close co-operation with the African peoples and their organisations and the whole international trade union movement;

DEMANDS that the South African white minority regime complies with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2145 and the decision of the International Court of Justice, which stated *inter alia* the South African presence in Namibia is illegal and she is under obligation to withdraw immediately;

URGENTLY APPEALS to all United Nations member States to strictly adhere to and apply UN decisions and resolutions concerning apartheid;

CALLS ON governments throughout the world to:

- sever political, cultural, commercial and diplomatic relations with the South African Government; and
- stop public and private investment in South Africa as well as emigration of their nationals;

INVITES employers' organisations to take measures to sanction their members who maintain relations of any nature with southern Africa; economic and financial groups to renounce their policy of collaboration with the regimes and practices of southern Africa;

STRONGLY URGES all workers and their trade union organisations, irrespective of international, continental, political or religious affiliations, to give full support to the oppressed workers in South Africa engaged in a legitimate struggle against the racist minority regime of South Africa, by:

- condemning South Africa's continued suppression of fundamental human rights and democratic liberties;
- campaigning for the recognition of African trade unions with full rights to collective bargaining and to strike, the right to organise and freedom of expression and association;
- campaigning for an immediate and unconditional release of all trade union and political prisoners and a stop to the rule of police terror and oppression;
- campaigning for a general amnesty for opponents of apartheid and the lifting of all bans on African and progressive political organisations and trade union and political leaders and militants, both in South Africa and in exile;
- calling for an end to the notorious system of contract or migrant labour in South Africa, which is a disguised form of modern slavery;
- giving financial, moral and material support to the workers and people of South Africa through their authentic trade union and political organisations;

URGES AND RECOMMENDS all trade union organisations throughout the world to continue and intensify their action and to bring pressure on their governments to:

- initiate or support international action against apartheid and all forms of racism and racial discrimination wherever they exist;
- to ratify immediately the international Conventions defining apartheid as an international crime against humanity;
- to ensure the strict implementation of United Nations decisions and resolutions on apartheid, in particular by:
 - (a) refusing to supply arms or any other form of military assistance to South Africa;
 - (b) closing their ports and airports to South African ships and planes;
 - (c) calling for the exclusion of South Africa from the United Nations and all UN specialised agencies;

CALLS UPON all trade union organisations to take all measures within their power to implement these aims and associate all their members in such action, and in particular to:

- strongly oppose emigration of skilled labour to South Africa;
- bring pressure on economic and financial groups which collaborate with South Africa to cease such collaboration;
- boycott the loading and unloading of goods to and from South Africa and/or Namibia, and South African ships and planes;
- organise, in co-operation with consumers' associations, a boycott of goods imported directly or indirectly from South Africa;

- bring pressure, through workers employed in companies with branches in South Africa, on such companies to abolish wage discrimination against African workers in these branches;
- boycott all sporting and cultural activities in which representatives of South Africa take part;
- keep their members and public opinion regularly informed of the situation in South Africa through all information media;
- insist on the effective implementation of the resolution concerning apartheid and the contribution of the ILO to the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1971, which provides for a long-term ILO programme to eliminate discrimination in employment and restore fundamental human and trade union rights in South Africa;
- to establish at the national level a trade union committee against apartheid and the racist and colonialist regimes, whose task would be to develop concrete action by workers' organisations in this field;
- take an active part in the Decade of Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination which, in accordance with the decision of the UN General Assembly, is to begin on 10 December 1973, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- to commence on 10 December 1973 a world-wide week of action against the discriminatory policy of apartheid in South Africa;

AND FURTHER WE REQUEST that the United Nations associate the members of the Preparatory Committee of this Conference with the work and action of the Special Committee on Apartheid with a view to including the representatives of the various tendencies of the international and African trade union movements in the application of all measures taken to end apartheid.

RED OUR COLOUR

Let's have poems
blood-red in colour
ringing like damn bells.

Poems
that tear at the oppressor's face
and smash his grip.

Poems that awaken man:
Life not death
Hope not despair
Dawn not dusk
New not old
Struggle not submission.

Poet
let the people know
that dreams can become
reality.

Talk of freedom
and let the plutocrat
decorate his parlour walls
with the perfumed scrawls of dilettantes.

Talk of freedom
and touch people's eyes
with the knowledge of the power
of multitudes
that twists prison bars like grass
and flattens granite walls like putty.

Poet
find the people
help forge the key
before the decade
eats the decade
eats the decade.

ANC Kumalo



AFRICAN CULTURE & IDEOLOGY

By Henri Onan

Part I : The Experience of the Socialist-oriented States

Beginning from the latter half of the 20th century, the young African states have become increasingly involved in the world struggle between capitalism and socialism. This influences not only their socio-economic and political development but also the intellectual life of the African people. The latter is affected by the bourgeois outlook of the ruling social forces in those countries that have taken the capitalist path. The state is used not only as a means of establishing, broadening and protecting the profitable exploitative social relations, but also as the “first ideological power over man”,¹ as a new means of forming a cultural and social outlook to correspond with these relations.

In countries that have chosen the non-capitalist path the situation is entirely different, for example Guinea, Congo (Brazzaville), Somali,

and others. In the conditions of the economic integration of the capitalist world economic system, and its massive ideological influence, they are forced to deal with the numerous complex problems connected with a radical transformation of society in a historically short period of time. Amongst these problems are the need to prevent the spontaneous spread of capitalist production relations, and the need, on a basis of different economic structures, to create the objective and subjective prerequisites for the gradual formation of a socialist base and a corresponding superstructure.

Besides profound socio-economic transformations, a solution to these problems will also entail well-guided ideological work by such specialised bodies as the mass information media, schools etc., and likewise other segments of the state apparatus which, in one way or another, directly or indirectly, influence the subjective side of people's lives. This work has two aims: first, to raise the people's cultural standards, at the same time developing their political awareness; and second, as far as possible to prevent the penetration and spread of bourgeois ideology. These aims will be achieved as public awareness, psychology and morals change, and also in the course of struggle against reactionary traditions. As a product of the class essence of the state, ideological activity will change its content during the various stages of the national liberation revolution. During the first stage the ideological activities of a state on the non-capitalist road are shaped by the tasks of general democratic and anti-imperialist transformations. In the course of their fulfilment, a national-democratic state is faced with the task of deepening the socio-economic transformations – which can only be done with the reliable support of the working people and their conscientious and active participation in the solution of these problems.

“When it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation,” wrote Engels, “the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves have already grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for . . .”²

This is achieved by constantly explaining to the working people the essence and main trends of the state's socio-economic and cultural policy in order that the people should fully comprehend its expediency

and necessity and identify it with their own basic class interests. It is also accomplished by raising cultural standards and improving the people's political awareness. In an interview with the Algerian magazine *Revolution Africaine* President Sekou Toure of Guinea pointed out that ". . . the creation of a developed economic and political organisation presupposes a definite level of people's intellectual and moral development." Lenin, for instance, believed that the cultural, educational and educative activities of the state are more difficult than the organisation of a country's defences.

NATION BUILDING

For African states these intrinsically difficult tasks are made more complex by the fact that the formation of statehood, not yet completed, has defined the national consolidation of African peoples. The formation of statehood by tribes and nationalities which were artificially divided against each other in colonial times is still at various levels of social development. Not all the people, so far, have been brought within the sphere of governmental, socio-economic, political and cultural activities. And this indicates one of the tasks of the ideological agencies: to foster an awareness of national unity and opposition to regionalism, micro-nationalism and tribalism, which, in the words of Siad Barre, Chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Council of Somali, "serve as a source of the population's alienation, retarding the country's economic development and providing a pretext for interference in a state's internal affairs."

A policy of national unity is one of the more important and permanent components defining the ideological problems of African states. It is expressed in constitutions and other juridical acts — legal forms of the political principles and ideology of the ruling forces. The Preamble to the Rules of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), an integral part of the constitution of Tanzania, states that each citizen is an inalienable component of the nation. The Rules of the Democratic Party of Guinea state that the party strives to "unite and consolidate the working people of Guinea in a single powerful prosperous democratic and socialist nation." The anti-tribalism law adopted in November 1964 by the National Assembly says in part that "any act of racial

discrimination, or racist propaganda of a tribal or detrimental nature is punishable by a prison term of from one to ten years.”

The peculiarity of this process of formation of statehood for the non-capitalist states is that it is tackled simultaneously with the political education of the masses, which includes creating an awareness of the objective inevitability of the class differentiation of the population. In the capitalist-oriented countries, however, the anti-tribal policy is combined with attempts to conceal the increasingly acute social contradictions and create the impression of a one-class world, of the unity of interests of all the different segments of the population.

EDUCATION

The problems of spiritual decolonisation depend greatly on rebuilding the system of education to correspond with the urgent needs of African states and their socio-economic and political problems. Socialist-oriented states, where the ruling party gives it the required attention, have achieved certain successes in this regard. Indicative was the colloquium held at the end of 1970 by the Central Committee of the Congolese Party of Labour to outline the direction of the development of the country's national education. This discussion led to a decision on the need for far-reaching reforms in the system of education, the establishment of a truly people's school, democratic and available to the people, oriented to educate the people in the spirit of the ideas of scientific socialism and drawing on the rich experience of the socialist countries.

The reconstruction of the system of education in Tanzania continues in line with the Arusha Declaration which proclaimed the socialist-oriented transformation of the country. Abolition of tuition fees in primary schools has more than doubled the number of schoolchildren in 1973 as compared with the colonial period. The changes are particularly noticeable on Zanzibar where 90% of the young attend schools, which are now completely in the hands of the state.

The system of higher education is also changing. The trend here is to train as many specialists as possible in a short period for practical work. Algeria has achieved certain progress in this. It adopted a new system of student training, and launched the building of technological

colleges (of which there are already 31) in order to overcome the shortage of engineers and other specialists.

Identical goals are pursued by the organisation of specialised study-centres, with the stress on applied and professional training, in the People's Republic of the Congo (PRC), by the centre of revolutionary study in Guinea, and by the new system adopted in the PRC and Somali of sending students abroad to learn those professions which are not taught at home.

Abolishing illiteracy among the adult population is also being tackled with great effort. This problem is being tackled simultaneously with the fostering of political awareness.

THE LANGUAGE QUESTION

National consolidation cannot succeed without dealing with the problem of a *state language*, without eliminating the effects of colonial language genocide. For this reason propaganda of the basic local languages, establishing a written language where none existed, teaching these languages in schools, establishing a press, radio and so on, are all an integral part of state policy to raise the national culture. The difficulty here is that the natural historical process of the formation of a common national language from among numerous local languages, a process which was cut short during the colonial period, must be reduced to a minimum with the aid of a determined state policy. The problem is further aggravated because the choice of one state language means reducing the value of others, and influences the political and socio-economic development of the ethnic groups these languages represent. This, in turn, could cause a flare-up of tribalism where strong inter-tribal competition still exists. This problem is handled carefully in Guinea where two basic languages have gradually emerged and which all the people of Guinea must study. By decision of the Democratic Party of Guinea, all state and party posts are occupied by citizens with a knowledge of these languages. A similar policy is adopted in Algeria where since 1967 party and government employees have been obliged to study Arabic, and since 1971 the government has aimed at conducting all its business and publishing all documents in Arabic. Then again in Somali, starting this year, the official language for all government

employees has been made Somali.

Believing the re-birth of a national culture to be an absolute condition for the re-birth of a people, the non-capitalist states reject the principle of exclusiveness, i.e. the alleged specific nature of African culture supposedly formed by the so-called communal solidarity of African peoples and their distinctiveness. Such an approach to a cultural policy leads to stagnation of society, conservation of outdated norms and institutions and, in the final analysis, belittles the significance of a truly African culture. Such a pseudo-scientific cultural policy can serve only privileged groups who are not interested in progressive social development.

“Colonialism’s greatest crime,” says President Sekou Toure, “is that it attempts to deprive us of the responsibility of handling our own affairs, with the result that we were branded irresponsible and lacking conviction in ourselves.” That is why in the non-capitalist countries culture is not only a means for the spiritual education of the people but also an important political instrument for the formation of a world outlook helping the individual to realise his affiliation to and responsibility for a unified state. The cultural policy of these countries also aims at fostering in the working people a consciousness of the common interests and realisation of their place in a system made up of new production relations. This is considered necessary in order that the people understand the tasks facing the state, identify with them and be interested in their realisation. This objective condition is the result of the fact that, as Engels wrote, “. . . in the history of society . . . the actors are all endowed with consciousness . . . Nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim.”³ President Nyerere believed one of the most difficult and urgent tasks to be “involving the masses in our activities, affording them the opportunity to judge, control, and if necessary to influence government activities.”

Dealing with this problem, in 1971 the Zanzibar Party leadership created special committees for the political education of the population to help liquidate the remains of colonial thinking among the people, explain party and government policy in national building and mobilise the people to help the country’s economic development.

Commenting on the three year plan of development (1971-1973) the Somali newspaper *Stella d’Ottobre* wrote “The process of development necessarily presupposes a radical change in positions, customs

and convictions. For this reason those countries, which, like the Somali Democratic Republic wish to rapidly transform their economic and social structures, must focus attention on the political and national orientation programmes which are intended to inform all citizens of the requirements and tasks of development and in this way win their participation in realising the plan”.

The difficulty is that the masses are often not in a position to comprehend their own interests particularly in the period of radical changes in the established socio-economic relations and the organisation of new relations not directly preconditioned by the former. The influence of reactionary traditions and vestiges of the past in the minds of the overwhelming majority of the people are also a barrier. Parallel with this is the need to overcome the social inertia of the masses, alienation from the state and its institutions, (which more often than not are still looked upon with hostility), and the ensuing attitude to state property and work at state-owned enterprises. All this is necessary to bring the working people out of the state of political nonentity and instil a feeling of civil responsibility. The socialist oriented states are eager to arrive at varied forms and methods of involving the people in conscious and active participation in the socio-economic transformation of society, taking into account its present level of development.

TEACHING THE PEOPLE

Mass political campaigns organised by the ruling parties with the aid of the information media are widely used to improve the people's social consciousness and explain the essence of the party's political and socio-economic policy and the concrete measures employed within this framework. A good example of this was the almost year-long nation-wide campaign (January to November 1972) on the principles of socialism and their implementation in Somali society, which was very effective ideologically and practically (during the second stage of the campaign 38 projects were carried out in Mogadishu alone). The supreme coordinating centre set up to guide the work, the technical and human reserves committees (for practical activities), professional committees (for ideological work) and the committees on observation (to control fulfilment of campaign plans) included representatives of

the Supreme Revolutionary Council, the armed forces, the youth, students, workers, peasants and intellectuals. Definite goals were pursued by such campaigns as: State loans for Construction (Algeria 1971), involving the people's capital in economic development and raising labour productivity (Algeria, Somali 1972), "raising the people's moral standards" (PRC 1970), and so on.

In dealing with the problem of raising the class consciousness of the proletariat through the trade unions, the ideological activities of the non-capitalist states facilitate the formation of the proletariat as a class, while in the capitalist-oriented countries this question does not even arise.

It is much more difficult for the state to exert ideological influence upon the peasants, whose conservative thinking and reactionary influence require great and not always successful efforts by the state (when introducing one or another progressive reform) to convince the rural population of their expediency. In Guinea, for example, these factors almost quelled the cooperative policy in the villages, while in Tanzania the successes in building cooperative settlements called "ujamaa" depended to a great extent on the nation-wide explanatory campaign launched by the mass information media. Attention was focused on training personnel to supervise organisation of the villages and to explain the inherent advantages. A broad programme of explanatory work was carried out in Algeria prior to and during the agrarian reform.

The state also aims at exerting ideological influence on the middle strata who in large measure occupy the state apparatus. The establishment of national statehood was not accompanied by the dismantling of the colonial system of management and it is characterised by Africanisation. Therefore, the socialist oriented countries, which reject the idea of the political neutrality of government officials, are faced with the task of educating them in the spirit of party ideology. In Somali, for example, where the government apparatus is still conservative in many ways, this work was combined with the ideological-political re-education of the personnel at special courses of "revolutionary orientation". Similar studies have been opened in administrative schools in the People's Republic of Congo and Tanzania.

These energetic measures are meeting with serious resistance because of the tenacity of the views concerning government employment as a

source of individual enrichment. These views are cultivated by the remaining representatives of the colonial administration and part of the African elite which was brought up on bourgeois traditions. This is also facilitated by the still feeble mass media which are incapable of broadly advertising the rights and duties of government officials in respect of the population, and their rights in relation to the government. These factors were noted by Lenin who believed it important not only to create laws against the defects of the government apparatus but for the masses to want and be able to make use of them. Top African lawyers met in Addis-Ababa in April 1971 to discuss this problem and in a message to the governments of African states they appealed for providing the masses with more vitally important information concerning their legal rights.

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

One of the most important sections of the government machine is the armed forces. African realities fully support Lenin's observation that "the armed forces cannot and should not be neutral".⁴ In socialist-oriented states where the army did not experience a struggle for national liberation and was strongly influenced by the colonialists, its ideological education is rather complicated. The army is called upon to play a most active part in the building of a new society. It is capable of doing so only if it untiringly continues to raise the political awareness of its personnel. The aim of the party's ideological guidance of the army is to gradually transform the army into an institution serving the people. Party leadership of the army is fulfilled by political commissars, for example, the Congolese President is a commissar, and in the Congo there are regular seminars for military personnel with the participation of the top party leadership.

The change in the socio-political role of the Somali army following the 1969 revolution raised the question of the ideological re-orientation of its personnel in order that they may gradually but actively start taking part in the building of a new society. That is why those who attend special orientation seminars and courses study party politics and broad problems of culture, as well as agriculture, health protection etc. In contrast, the capitalist-oriented African countries claim that the

army must stand aside from politics. But as Lenin pointed out, the idea of an army's "neutrality" is a convenient way of hiding the true intentions of the bourgeoisie.

AGAINST BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY

The younger the socialist movement, wrote Lenin, "the more vigorously it must struggle against all attempts to entrench a non-socialist ideology."⁵ That is why one of the main goals of the political education of the masses is to protect them from the influence of bourgeois ideology which seeps in through numerous channels, from the voluminous misinformation and slander campaigns against the socialist countries, particularly the USSR, and against the progressive African countries striving to follow an independent policy. This requires a significant build-up of the mass media which, as the Chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Council of Somali said, ". . . should channel all its efforts into explaining the goals of the revolution and showing the people the correct road . . .". It also requires a reshaping of the work of the media and improvement of the ideological-political level of those employed on the ideological front. In the PRC this work is handled by the President's press and information service established in 1971. In 1972 Guinea passed a decision to improve the political training of persons employed by the radio and to increase broadcasts in the national languages. Several ministries, large enterprises, organisations of the DPG and the trade unions are obliged to prepare broadcasts reflecting important aspects of party and government activities. The press is also being reinforced. It is planned to publish trade union, youth, women's and other periodicals. In Tanzania a meeting this year of the Central Committee of TANU likewise decreed to strengthen party-government guidance of the mass media. The influential newspaper "*Uhuru*" became a party organ and "*The Standard*" speaks for the government. Similarly, the work of the Zanzibar Radio and Information service is guided by the Revolutionary Council.

Because of such objective reasons as a weak mass media, dependence upon foreign sources, a relatively low efficiency level due to mass illiteracy and a lack of trained specialists in ideology, socialist-oriented countries are often incapable of waging effective counter-propaganda

on a national scale. Using their sovereign right to protect themselves from imperialist sabotage, these countries resort to administrative and sometimes legal measures. For example Congo-Brazzaville in 1964 passed a decree against the spread of rumours capable of “disturbing public order, harming national interests or undermining national morale.” The Government Service for the Study and Coordination of Information, established in 1970, supplies state ideological organs with information after sifting it to prevent the spreading of information detrimental to the state. To avoid material appearing which might discredit the state, a ruling was introduced that all foreign journalists would receive their information from the Congolese Information Agency.

In 1970 the Chairman of the Congolese Party of Labour, Marien Ngouabi, stressed that “good ideological work means success in other endeavours,” meaning the necessity for strict government and party control of all organs of information, cultural and educational establishments.

The concrete objectives, limits, forms and methods, and – most important – the class trend in the party-government guidance of ideological organs, are defined by the true socio-economic course of the ruling party and the political regime of the state. It may well happen that, following shifts in the balance of class forces, a formerly progressive regime may veer in a reactionary direction. Yet, for tactical reasons, it may continue to make use of the former revolutionary slogans. One must look to the concrete actions, not just the words, of such regimes. As Marx once observed: “Just as everyday life differentiates between what a person may think and say about himself and what he really is and does, the more so in historical battles we must differentiate between the phrases and illusions of parties and their true nature, their true interests.”⁶

End of Part I – Part II, which will be published in our next issue, deals with the ideological activity of national liberation movements.

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**political
affairs**

Monthly Journal of Marxist Thought and Analysis

Theoretical Journal of the Communist Party, USA

Annual subscription

\$6.00 (USA) \$7.00 (elsewhere)

**From: Political Affairs, 23 West 26th Street
New York, N.Y. 10010, USA**

AFRICA: Notes and Comments

by Toussaint

AFRICA AND THE EEC

In a significant show of unity, the representatives of African states have had their first formal meetings with the heads of the European common market (EEC) to try and settle relationships between them. At the time of writing, no information is available on the progress of the talks. But the stage has been set for a debate which may profoundly influence the whole economic and political future of Africa, and of the struggle to throw off the heritage of colonialism.

The EEC is sixteen years old. It was formed by the imperialist powers of Western Europe to foster their own development, partly against growing American domination of their economic and political life, partly to promote joint exploitation of the developing countries. This joint exploitation is known politely in EEC language as "Association".

"Association" invented by the EEC in 1957, is at present governed by rules decided upon without any participation of the 'associates'.

The basis was a simple one. The EEC would gradually abolish restrictive barriers against the entry of goods from associated states into the EEC, provided that the associated countries reciprocated and abolished barriers against EEC products entering their markets.

On the surface, it looked like a simple 'give-and-take' arrangement. In reality the EEC markets opened only to a narrow range of agricultural and mineral products – coffee, cocoa, bananas, copper – which do not compete in any way with West European products; but the associated states were opened up to a flow of EEC manufactured goods, produced by advanced, highly capitalised industries, with which the emergent industries of developing countries cannot compete. The 'give-and-take' has proved to be a means for maintaining a relationship of imperialist domination and "associate" inequality and dependence.

The present EEC associates in Africa number 24. 19 full associates, the others 'partial associates'. Through the custom privileges that their association gives them, these countries increased their exports to the markets of the EEC. Between 1958 and 1971, exports to these markets doubled. Despite this apparent gain for the African states, the trade in fact helped to increase their dependence on the EEC – that is on their former imperialist 'possessors'. At present, 75% of exports from these African states, and 72% of imports into them are accounted for by the EEC. One needs little understanding of economics to appreciate what a powerful influence this trade dependence places in the hands of the EEC countries.

The influence does not operate the other way. The African 'associates' supply only 4.3% of the EEC's imports. The imbalance empowers the EEC to influence the development of its "associates", so as to preserve the pattern of colonialism. In the associated states, just as in the period of colonialism, private foreign capital holds the key positions in the economy; industry scarcely develops; and the basis of the economy remains farming at a very low, hand-labour level, generally linked to a one-crop economy. In 1970, 85% of Senegal's exports was accounted for by peanuts, 55% of Chad's by cotton, 40% of Ivory Coast's by coffee.

Trade associations which place as much as three-quarters of a country's total trade at the mercy of the EEC also give it enormous power to manipulate prices. In recent years, a steady decline of prices for the main agricultural exports from Africa has been accompanied by

a steady rise in prices of finished goods imported from the EEC. The prices of bananas have dropped in recent years by one third, peanuts by one fourth, cocoa – until recently – by a half. Thus the well-known phenomenon of the “scissors”, by which rising prices for imports have to be met by an ever-increasing volume of exports at falling prices – a brutal process of cutting off the wealth produced in impoverished Africa to enrich still further imperialist Europe. One way to fight off the disastrous consequences of commodity price fluctuations would be to diversify production and expand the range of exports. But the rules of the EEC “Associateship” game are designed to stimulate the production only of raw materials, and thus to maintain the basically one-crop nature of African economy.

When the EEC was formed, without Britain, the former British colonies and the members of the Commonwealth in Africa remained outside the ranks of the “associates”. Their economies remained tied to Britain by special privileges and preferences. But the EEC, by closing its markets to them, has been able to exercise a powerful influence on even these countries – especially those of them which are trying to break their total dependence on Commonwealth trade. Entry to the vast market of Western Europe is closed to them by tariff barriers. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania – and two others not formerly British, Tunisia and Morocco – have been forced to enter into special ‘partial association’ with the EEC, which has proved to be even less beneficial to African development than full association. During the first year of partial association, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania sustained vast deficits from their trade, their exports to the EEC going up by £1.4 million, while their imports from the EEC rose by £16 million.

And now Britain has joined the EEC and undertaken to enter the EEC trading pattern, which means abolishing the patterns of “Empire trade” and Commonwealth preference which has been the basis of Britain’s no less than former British Africa’s foreign trade. Thus those African states not already in the EEC net are forced to find new patterns of trade or starve. But now, with the experience of the past years of EEC to warn them, they are not being dragged, unprotesting, into “associateship” as before. The African states have been impelled to unite their forces in confronting the EEC with demands for a new relationship, stripped of some of the worst features of the old.

At the meeting of finance and trade ministers, convened by the

OAU in May, the 19 EEC associates found themselves in face-to-face debate with 22 other African states on the vital matters at stake. On most matters, the divisions were sharp, revealing how strong is the influence still of imperialism in Africa – particularly, on this matter, French imperialism. There were three key matters for discussion. First, “Reverse preferences” – that is whether, as quid-pro-quo for association with the EEC, African states would give preferential tariffs to EEC exports to Africa. Second, “rights of establishment” – that is whether associates of EEC can have trade-economic talks with third parties outside EEC without prior consultation and agreement of EEC members “whose interests might be affected”. (This provision of the present convention of association means, in practice, that full EEC members consult the associates only in the rare event of talks with third countries on trade in the agricultural products vital to the associates; whereas the associates consult EEC members on practically all matters of trade with third parties in manufactured goods of any type, since almost all such goods are within Western Europe’s range. Though this arrangement, EEC seeks to prevent the development of mutual trade relations of Africa with others, especially with the socialist nations.) And third, the linking of aid to trade – that is, restricting aid from the European Development Fund exclusively to trading patterns in the EEC, to prevent any aid flowing to non-trading associates of the future. Senegal led the minority group for reverse preferences, and for aid linked to trade. But the final declaration reached by the 40 states present declared, despite “reservations” by some, that they would seek a non-reciprocal arrangement, with trade separated from aid, free from discrimination against third parties. Thus the EEC attempt to provide for joint imperialist exploitation of Africa provides a lever for the contradictory unity of Africa against neo-colonial encroachments.

This process of unification has been reflected in the decline of some of the regional groupings of states set up in earlier years under the influence of imperial influences. OCAM, the Afro-Malagasy Common Organisation, led by President Senghor of Senegal, has been shaken by the decision of Cameroon and Chad to withdraw from membership. Mauritania has withdrawn from the financial network of the franc zone, and Madagascar has announced its intention to do the same. Cameroon, Congo and Dahomey have all announced their intention to renegotiate

their co-operation agreements with France, to place them on a more favourable and equal basis. Zaire and Congo had withdrawn from OCAM some months before. Though France may well be the front runner in the EEC, it is the French-dominated grouping of African states and the franc-dominated financial zone which is beginning to flex its muscles, and seek in unity with the rest of Africa to find new ways towards a more genuine independence. It is perhaps a measure of Africa's new strength in unity that the decision of Mauritania and Madagascar to break with the franc and establish their own currencies has met with none of the violent French reaction and reprisals which met Sekou Toure's Guinea when it took the same decision in 1958.

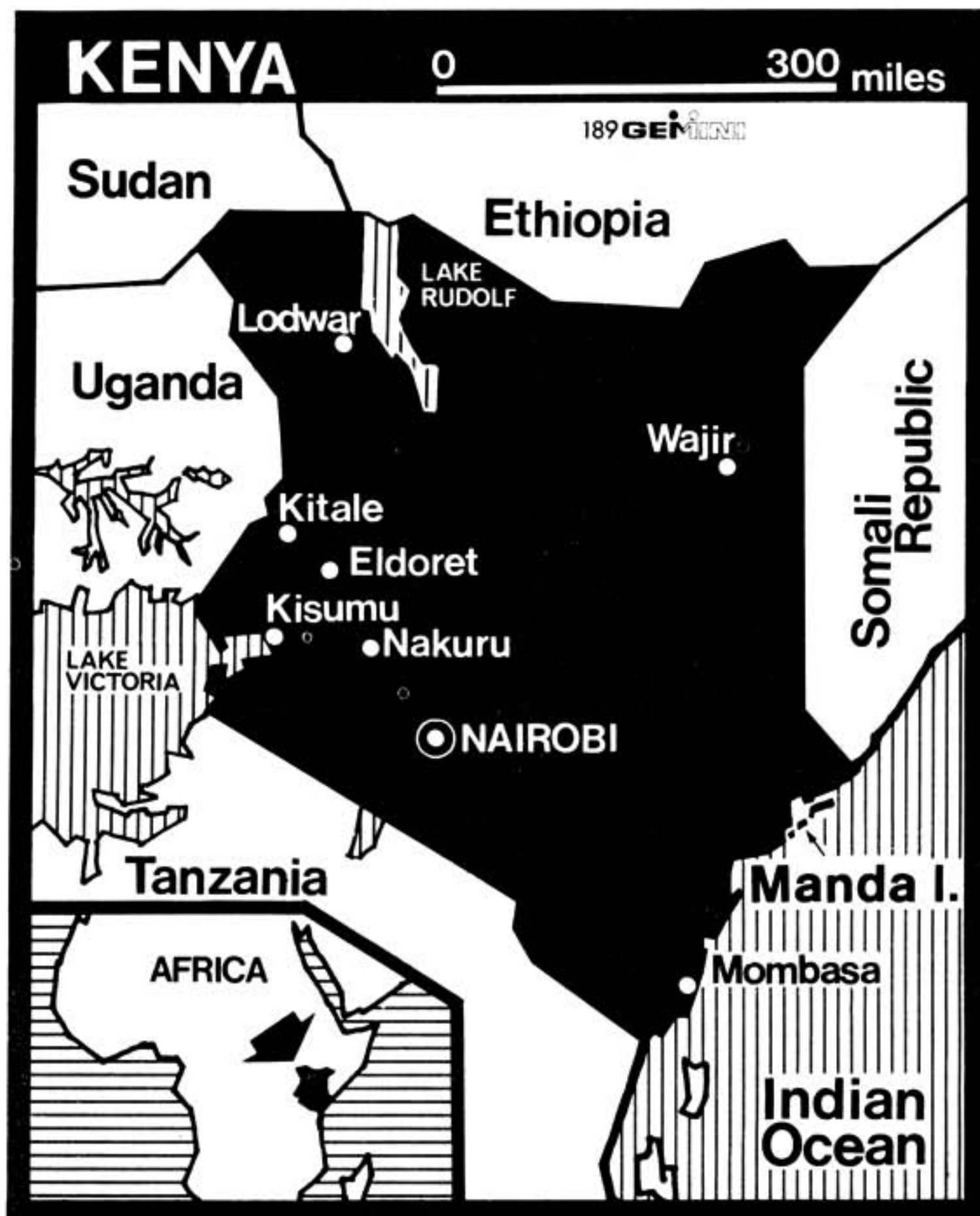
African unity is a force to be reckoned with. It would be naive to imagine that the unity being revealed at this early stage of the EEC negotiations is total. There are divisions of class interests between French-influenced and British-influenced states; there are divisions between classes within states, between the few who fatten themselves as agents of foreign influence, and those who suffer from it. These divisions show themselves, and will continue to show themselves in attitudes towards EEC, and in the extent of readiness to fight off neo-colonial ties which the various African states show. But the battle has been joined – on the one hand the EEC aiming to make the whole of Africa one entity for exploitation; on the other, Africa uniting in self defence and for casting off its shackles.



KENYA BUDGETS

From J.A. Juma

This “go-ahead” “nation-building” budget; this was what the press described it as after its presentation on June 15. The matter not mentioned was *who* would go ahead; or that the budget ensures that Kenya’s majority poor are going to be subsidising the rich in an export drive designed to bring in more foreign exchange. The poor, too, will



largely bear the costs of the chaotic inflation, which has gripped the capitalist system.

What are the new measures? The most hated of all is a ten percent sales tax on all manufactured goods, whether imported or locally manufactured. Even this rise of 10% is not all of it, as Finance Minister Kibahi himself observed in an interview after the budget.

“The traders” he said, “have raised the prices of all items, and most of them have raised them not merely by 10%, which is what the sales tax is all about, but by as much as 40% and 50%.”

The government has never done much to stop indiscriminate exploitation of the people by the traders. Now its only step has been to appoint a Commissioner to check the traders – though he himself says that his main power is not law but “the general public.”

In addition to purchase tax, the Graduated Personal Tax (GPT) previously paid by all income earners over 18 years of age has been abolished. This tax, inherited from the colonial regime, brought in little revenue to government, but much pain to the poor. However much the poor may welcome its abolition, they will now be taxed proportionately more than before. Because while GPT was heaviest for the higher incomes, Sales Tax operates on all purchases whether made by rich or poor. An accountant in the “Sunday Nation” of June 24th calculates that a person with a fairly typical worker’s wage of £15 per month who was paying 9 shillings GPT will now pay 10 shillings Sales Tax. “For income groups higher than this category, the proportionate expenditure on necessities and essentials of life forms a smaller proportion of their overall expenditure.” And so they pay proportionately less in Sales Tax.

The new income tax structure announced in the budget shows even more clearly the orientation of the government. Generally, lower incomes are to be taxed more heavily than before – incomes below £180 per year are to be taxed for the first time – while the burden of taxation on higher incomes has been reduced. An accountant’s computation published in one Nairobi newspaper, for example, shows that for incomes below £1,000 for a married couple, £1,500 for a couple with 2 children, or £2,000 for a couple with 4 children, 1974 taxes are up on 1973. While for all those *above* these limits, taxation is *down*.

Those earning over £2,000 a year in Kenya are generally businessmen,

for whom there are still further budgetary advantages. Those, for example, who export goods outside East Africa will have the Sales Tax repaid to them, amounting in effect to a 10% subsidy for exports. Export taxes on coffee and sisal are abolished, to the advantage of the small group of plantation owners, brokers and exporters who are almost all foreigners from the West. Raw materials for use in local industry have been cheapened by the reduction of import duties from 47% to 40%, while the duties on certain fertilisers and grades of paper have been increased to protect local manufacturers, even though the local consumer will have to meet the higher bill.

And finally, prices on some cigarettes and tobacco have been raised, while capital gains tax has been abolished.

Taken together, all these measures are designed to give incentives to business, and particularly to export business. At the same time, local business will be assisted by the fact that all Government and East African Community purchases of goods from abroad will become subject to duty, thus ending the duty-free imports and giving protection to local producers.

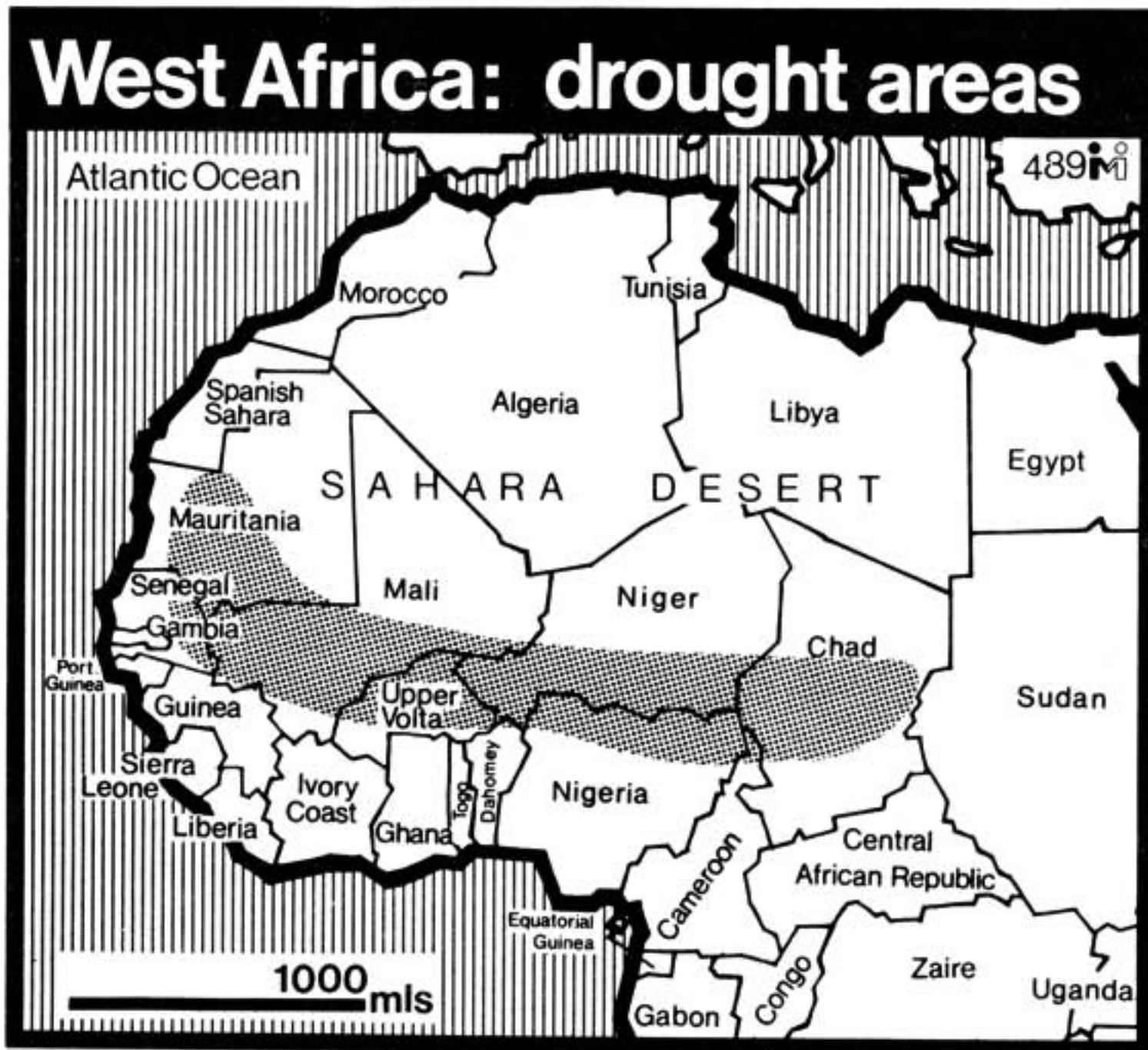
Any rise in government revenue from the higher rates of taxation on the people, however, will not be available for greater government expenditure on social services. For the extra will be eaten up by the higher cost to government of stores purchased at the new duty-paid rates.

The same bias in favour of the capitalist class appears in the expenditure estimates for the financial year '73 – '74. Total expenditure will rise by £14.7 million, or 11%. Of this, some £3.6 million goes on extra military-police expenditure, up almost 40% on last year, and £2 million on subsidies to local government bodies which lose revenue from the abolition of GPT. Education, with £2 million more than last year – an increase of only 5.4% which will be largely wiped out by the price rises caused by Sales Tax – is disproportionately distributed between the university and special schools for expatriates and the rich, on the one hand, and poorly staffed schools for the mass of the population on the other. The Ministry of Health will have a small *cut* in expenditure despite rising prices, and the only other big spender, the Ministry of Agriculture a £2 million, 5% rise.

From such a distribution of revenue, and from such a tax system of

revenue raising, there can be little change for the mass of the Kenyan people. The rich will get richer, no doubt. But the poor will get poorer. For Kenya at least, so-called “African socialism” as practised here is proving to be a breeding ground for African capitalism.

DROUGHT



There is room for serious study and debate on the causes of the terrible drought which has spread across the vast Sahelian zone of West Africa, just South of the Sahara. How much of the disaster is due to a climatic change beyond the control of governments, and how much the result of social policies followed in those areas will no doubt keep the students of these areas busy for some time. But whatever the reason, critical conditions have spread across six countries – Senegal, Chad, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Upper Volta, – in what is accepted

as the worst drought for over sixty years. Great rivers have shrunk to trickles and dried up; great lakes like Lake Chad have shrunk to a fraction of their normal size; crops and cattle are dying off, and thousands of people – always living on the borderlines of subsistence – face death by starvation.

In the face of such disaster, it is natural that first thoughts should turn to the provision of immediate food relief for the starving. And in this field, with much self-congratulatory publicity, the imperialist powers who have lived off the fat of Africa for so long, have given a little back. But the food and aid donations, though they temper the present sufferings, will do nothing for the future of the region on a long term basis.

Professor Lamb of the University of East Anglia, writing in Britain's 'Economist', says that both the drought in India and Africa may be signs of

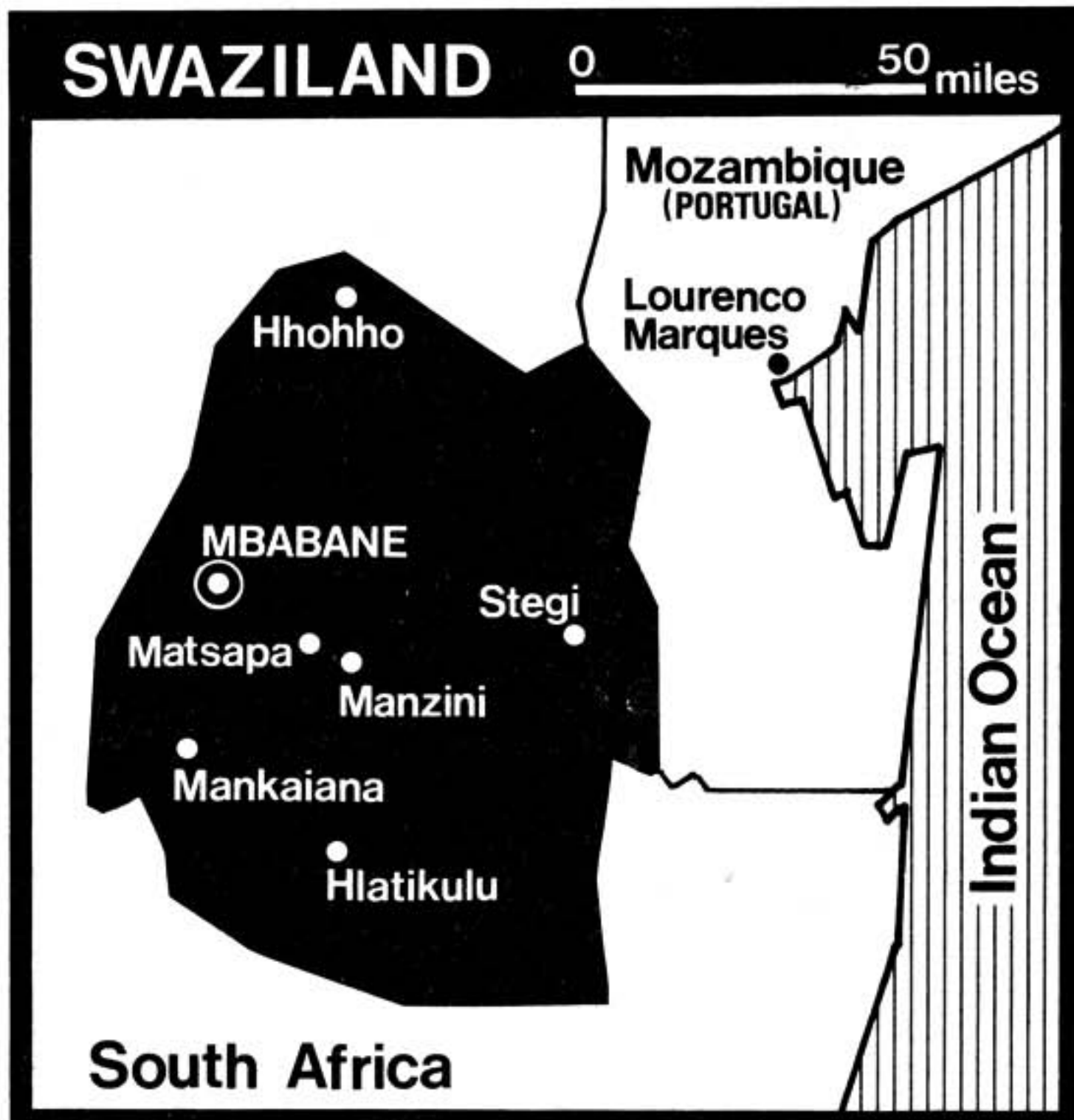
“ . . . the greatest and most sustained shift in the world's climate since 1700. The shift, which began around 1950 and took definite shape in the 1960's does not mean drier weather everywhere all the time; the equatorial zone has been getting wetter as the arid zones have been getting drier.”

The result, according to Lamb, may well be that arid areas which have always been marginally productive, may now be entering a period when they cannot sustain their present populations. To this we would add the thought: “Unless social conditions are changed to overcome the difficulties of nature.” The experience of many countries – and in particular the experiences of the USSR and China – show that men *can* master the vicissitudes of nature, but only when they find the right social and political courses of action, only if they are prepared to transform their societies on a new basis of socialism, which will release the creative genius of the people, suppressed by the class structure of the bourgeois world. That experience needs to be taken deeply to heart now in drought-stricken Africa.

For to conquer nature is not a simple economic problem of development. President Hamani Dori of Niger, for example, conscious of the need for long-term solutions to the areas problems in addition to immediate aid, spoke of solutions at a dinner given for the President of the European Commission. He called for a “Marshall Plan” to

assist the economic development of Africa, through technical aid, and a vast financial loan. He too might ponder the experiences of the past more deeply. Marshall Aid made Europe more dependant upon and more submissive to the political and economic domination of the United States – not less. Marshall Aid is exactly what Africa does not want, for it will only strengthen those negative features of imperialist economic domination which today contribute to the tragedy in the Sahelian area, and its inability to withstand malignant nature.

SWAZILAND



How uneasy lies the head which wears the crown? The question is very relevant to King Sobhuza II's coup of April this year, for which only the very flimsiest justification in Swaziland affairs can be found, even by his apologists. Since 1972, the country has been ruled by the

Mbokodovo National Party, firmly under the aegis of the king, whose campaign for the party in the elections won it 21 of the 24 elected seats, and whose nomination of Mbokovodo supporters to all the nominated seats made his own royalist majority overwhelming. There has been little evidence in the country that the opposition Ngwane National Liberation Congress has, since that date, been able to make any substantial headway against this formidable royalist power bloc.

Yet the king's coup of April 12 abolished the parliamentary form of government, abolished all political parties, banned all political meetings, and established direct rule by the king advised by a hand-picked council. Overnight, members of the opposition party were detained, and many were reported to be in hiding, fearing arrest and detention without trial under the King's new South African style '60-day detention law.' Dr. Ambrose Zwane, leader of the opposition, was arrested and held under the decree, released and then re-arrested again almost immediately.

The immediate cause of the coup seems trivial. In elections last year, the opposition NNLC won three seats. One of their successful candidates, Mr. Thomas Ngwenya, was immediately declared a prohibited immigrant on the grounds that he had been born in South Africa, and steps were taken to deport him to South Africa. Ngwenya challenged the deportation order, successfully, the Swazi appeal Court ruling that the special Citizenship Tribunal which had found Ngwenya to be a prohibited immigrant was *ultra vires* the constitution. The king's coup restores the Citizenship Tribunal "notwithstanding any other law or any decision of any court."

Immediately after the coup, a Johannesburg barrister who sought to petition the Swaziland courts for the release of Ngwenya, Dr. Zwane and three other NNLC M.P's held without charge, was also declared a prohibited immigrant, thus frustrating an application for habeas corpus by the five men.

Sobhuza's dictatorial crack-down on the opposition has doubtless cheered the South African government, even though some of his measures in the economic field have not. Last December the Swazi government, seeking to close the door after the horse had bolted, and to stop the steady take-over of Swaziland by South African speculators, passed a Land Speculation Control Act; this requires all land sales to non-Swazi citizens to be approved by a new Land Control Board.

There is as yet little indication of the orientation of the Board, but the very uncertainty, as one estate agent complained to the South African press,

“ doesn't directly discourage developers, but makes it very uncertain whether they will be able later to sell their properties at reasonable prices. I see it as part of a process of forcing more land away from non-Swazi into Swazi hands.”

In addition, a discriminatory tax has been placed on sugar, the country's biggest foreign exchange earner, and largely controlled by white South African corporations. From April, half of whatever producers receive above £90 per ton will be levied by the government. And the hotel and restaurant trade, catering almost exclusively for South African visitors, has had a 5% Value-added tax imposed.

These first tentative steps towards economic independence from South Africa have been paralleled by steps towards alignment with independent Africa. Trade agreements, giving 'Most Favoured Nation' treatment have been signed with Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya – without much concrete result yet in actual trade. But they are the first signs of uneasy stirring against the stranglehold of the customs-union arrangements with South Africa, against the total control of import-export transport by South African state road and rail monopolies, and against the dominance of South African capital in the country's large-scale agriculture and trade. At this point in its development, Sobhuza's retreat to the hallowed tribal institutions of a past era – of kingly rule and tribal advisory councils, can only signal the way back for the country, and the people, not the way forward.

LESOTHO

Uneasy lies the head that tamed the crown. Three years ago, Leabua Jonathan seized power by coup, declaring a state of emergency to forestall his own defeat at the hands of the opposition Basutoland Congress Party in the elections whose votes were still being counted. King Mosheshoe II was first house-arrested, then finally bent to accept Jonathan's coup. But now, three years after, the first stumbling steps are being taken to reinstate a form of representative government. The move has been causing considerable disquiet in Pretoria – where



Jonathan was once the blue-eyed boy; but in part, at least, it is a sign of Jonathan's desire to rehabilitate himself with independent Africa and the OAU, whose sympathies have generally been with the outlawed Lesotho opposition.

Jonathan's new move has been to establish an interim National Assembly to draft a new constitution. The interim Assembly is nominated, not elected; it is of the same size as the Parliament sacked by Jonathan in 1970 — 60 ordinary members, 33 chiefs. Of the 60 ordinary members, Jonathan proposed that the Basutoland Congress Party — leading the 1970 election returns when it was summarily declared void — should have only 20, to be nominated by King Mosheshoe 11 on Jonathan's own advice from a list submitted by the BCP. BCP leader Ntsu Mokhehle immediately rejected the proposal; and the BCP's executive committee resolved not to recognise the interim Assembly unless the BCP became an equal partner in a coalition government during the period, and could nominate its own members to the government.

But Jonathan, it appears, has outmanoeuvred the BCP. The interim Assembly has been set up; the deputy leader of the BCP, G.P. Ramoreboli, and deputy chairman P. Chaolana led a breakaway group of the BCP to participation in it; they submitted a list of candidates to Jonathan for acceptance; and from this list, 20 BCP members have been nominated to the Assembly, which 13 have consistently attended,

while Mokhehle and his supporters have consistently boycotted. The rift in the BCP seems complete.

Even in this land-locked corner of Southern Africa, surrounded on all sides by South Africa, the influences of Africa and the world make themselves felt. When Jonathan in 1970 slammed down on Mokhehle and his followers, he was following out faithfully the scenario designed from Pretoria – of conservative, backward-looking African subservience to white South African hegemony, stamping down with heavy foot on popular discontent, nationalist ambitions and strivings for real independence.

But the facts of life assert themselves. Lesotho has remained a “Bantustan-type” colony of South Africa – its greatest export being men to work the South African gold mines. In the dizzy South African boom of the past ten years, Lesotho has been left behind, like the blacks in the Bantustans. Even a Jonathan turns, however slowly and late. In seeking to legitimise his regime inside the country, he is seeking also to ingratiate it with Africa outside. In his opening address to the new Assembly, he told the members that his government was fully in accord with the OAU in its attitude to guerrilla movements in Southern Africa. “We shall not cease to give moral support and any other possible support to our fellow men in these liberation movements who are still struggling to free themselves from the yoke of colonialism and racial oppression.” He took swinging attacks at the major imperialist powers who sell arms to white-dominated states of Africa “ . . . to perpetuate racial oppression and retard the political progress of the black majorities.” “The countries of the West which continue to have a vested interest in the white-ruled countries of Africa must realise that opposition to racialism is escalating to a point where there will no longer be any room for dialogue. The victims of this system will see violence as the only means for the attainment of equality and freedom.”

Thus, the gauntlet is thrown down in the face of the Nationalist Party government of South Africa, which financed and masterminded the 1965 election which brought Jonathan to power. And another challenge too is brewing up – the challenge of Lesotho for the vastly fertile crescent of cultivated land along Lesotho’s Western borders, which now forms the most productive part of South Africa’s Orange Free State province. The land, known in Lesotho as “the conquered

territory” was handed to the Orange River Republic by Britain in 1869. The territory had been seized by the British from the Basuto people under their greatest leader, Moshoeshe I, to be used as a British “concession” to the early Boer republic. The return of the ‘conquered territory’ is an aim of all Lesotho political parties; and it is also the most vital change needed in the battle to make Lesotho capable of feeding itself without South African imports. Some time ago South Africa proposed a joint border commission with Lesotho to try and settle some minor issues and anomalies. But now, in the interim Assembly, the issue of the ‘conquered territory’ has been raised, and pressure is being exerted to extend the border commission’s sights to this the real and major border problem. Nothing is more certainly calculated to end the honeymoon period of Lesotho-South African relations than a real challenge on this issue.

from the Marxist classics...

“... How is the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its perseverance, self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to link itself, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent, if you like, to merge itself with the broadest masses of the toilers — primarily with the proletarian, but also with the non-proletarian toiling masses. Thirdly, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard and of its political strategy and tactics, provided that the broadest masses have been convinced by their own experiences that they are correct. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party that is really capable of being a party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved.”

—V. I. Lenin, “Left-wing” Communism, an Infantile Disorder, pp. 10, 11.

SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM & THE SOMALI REVOLUTION

By Basha Ahmed Abdi

Our contemporary world is governed by the contradiction between the forces of peace, progress and socialism and the forces of neo-colonialism, based on exploitation, aggression and denial of the people's right to freedom.

Thus it is essential to understand the reality of the world revolutionary movement, represented by its three component trends - the world socialist system, the working class in the capitalist countries and the world national liberation movement.

Now I wish to discuss some of the vital tasks and problems faced by the revolutionary forces in our country.

After the rise, under Jaalle¹ Siad, of the nationalist October Regime that destroyed the defunct reactionary system, the political power was

¹ Jaalle = Comrade (in Somali)

taken over by one of the units of the national democratic revolution (armed forces). This unit, which is considered a part of the people, but not its substitute, placed our country on the non-capitalist road that leads to Socialism. Since then, some objective conditions were ripe for the units of the National Democratic Units to explain the philosophy of scientific socialism (its stages, its governing scientific laws and social classes) so as to guide us in our just struggle against neo-colonialism and in the building of a socialist society based on social justice.

The non-capitalist road towards socialism was scientifically foreseen by Comrade Lenin as being possible for the development of economically backward countries through a number of intermediary stages in which the tasks of the democratic revolution and some of the Socialist revolution are achieved. Lenin, in his report on the Russian colonies which he submitted in 1920 to the Second Congress of the 3rd International, said: "With the help of the working class in the advanced countries and the support of the Soviet Socialist Government, the backward countries can advance to the socialist system through certain stages of development, thus by-passing the capitalist stage."

The non-capitalist road is not devoid of class conflict since all the democratic reforms implemented are carried out through violent class struggle against town capitalist and rich land-owners in the countryside. Class conflict is an objective law and the sole force that drives history, and class interest governs everything, but certain petty-bourgeois regimes reject the idea of class conflict and try to suppress it. In the newly-independent countries that took the non-capitalist road (the road of national democratic revolution — Egypt, Congo-Brazzaville, Democratic Yemen, Somalia) wherein State power is in the hands of revolutionary democrats, there are large sections of the people that struggle against capitalism, and local reaction. Thus all national democratic revolutions can be considered as an integral part of the socialist revolution.

The former bourgeois democratic revolution generally paved the way for capitalism, whereas the national democratic revolution paves the way for socialism. Therefore, the transition period from the national democratic revolution to the socialist revolution is objective and inevitable; and the socialist revolutions in Europe and Asia faced the task of accomplishing the national democratic revolution and

transformation to socialism.

Comrade Lenin said that in the transition period to socialism there are four economic modes which co-exist and conflict at the same time:

- 1 Socialist Economy (Public Sector)
- 2 Capitalist Economy (Private Sector)
- 3 Small Commodity Production
- 4 State Capitalism (i.e. mixed sector and foreign investment)

A definite social class stands behind each of these economic modes mentioned above. (1) working class (2) bourgeoisie (3) farmers (peasants) and small commodity producers (4) working class as a co-partner of bourgeoisie through the socialist stage. This means that socialism, i.e. the liquidation of exploitive relations and exploiting classes has not yet been achieved. In the national democratic revolution in which we are engaged we cannot totally liquidate **exploitive relations**, but we seek to lay down the material basis with which to overcome it. The total elimination of exploitation is considered to be the task of the socialist revolution, and the liquidation of exploitive relations means the provision of the material needs which **will enable** us to do so rather than cancel them with a stroke of a pen under the compulsion of an ideal feeling of social justice.

But the progressive regime in the People's Republic of Democratic Yemen which is led by the national liberation front implemented, after the 22nd June 1969 revolutionary movement, a series of progressive steps (like the nationalisation of monopolistic banks and firms; issuing of a new constitution; formation of people's supreme council; solving agrarian problems through the people; rehabilitation of the national and democratic elements to take part in the political power). After the fifth congress of the national front, the thesis of the necessity of ending exploitive relations in the national democratic stage was put forward. Thus it made a new creative contribution to the national liberation movement. But ending exploitive relations is one of the tasks of the socialist revolution. The national front of Democratic Republic of Yemen pioneers a new revolutionary experiment which deserves to be studied by the revolutionary units. This explains why World Imperialism and its mercenaries are eager to overthrow the progressive regime in Democratic Yemen.

SOME FACTS ABOUT SOMALIA

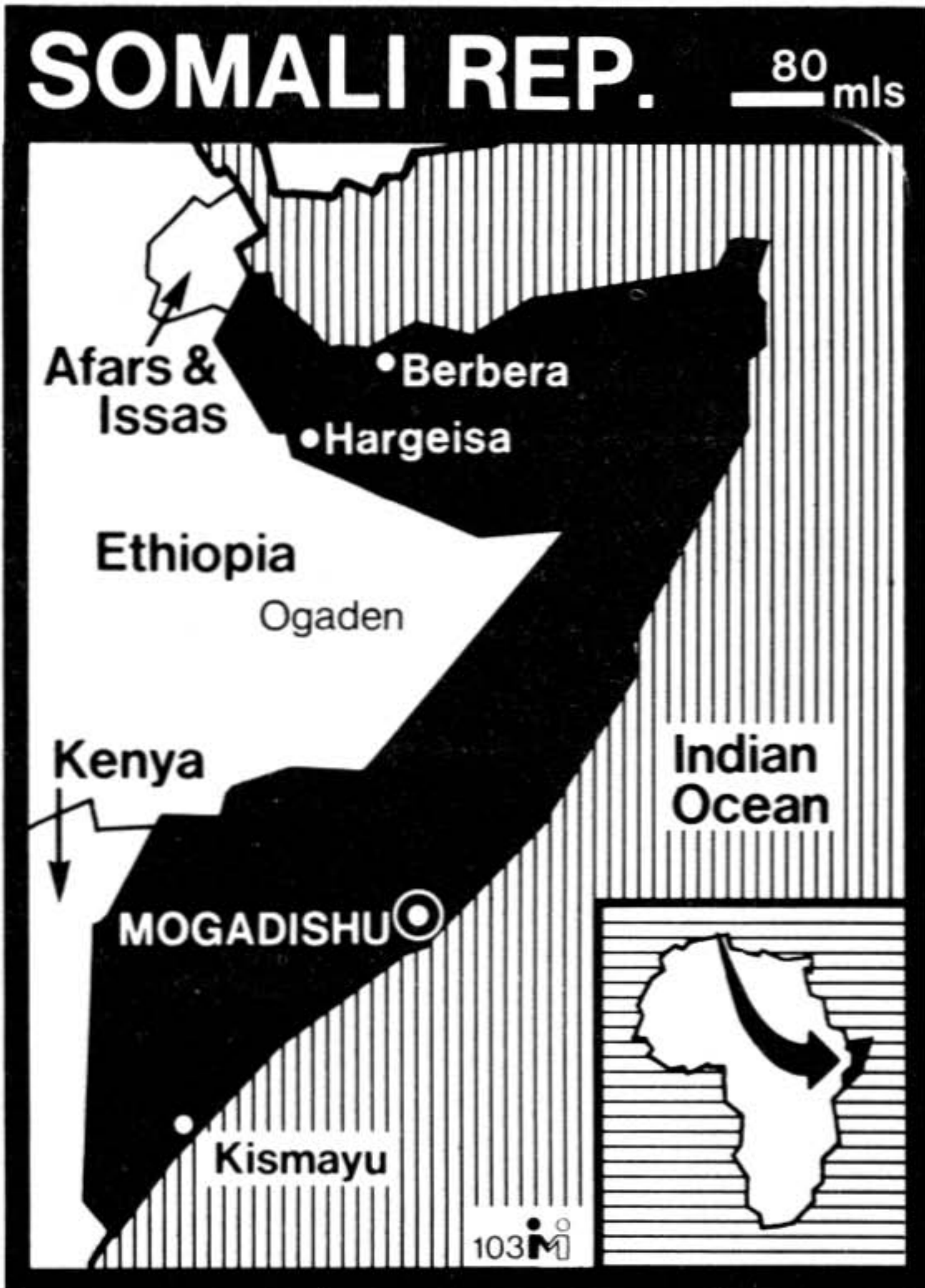
The former British protectorate of Somaliland became independent on June 26, 1960 and was unified with former Italian Somaliland on July 1 of the same year. The present Democratic Republic of Somalia was established following the overthrow of the previous reactionary regime on October 21, 1969 by army officers of the Supreme Revolutionary Council, whose president is Major General Muhammad Siad Barre. The SRC is assisted in the tasks of government by an almost entirely civilian cabinet.

The Somali Democratic Republic covers an area of 637,000 square kilometres and has a population of about 3 million. Most Somalis are nomadic herdsman, but there is a small commercial and industrial sector which was nationalised in 1970, together with all foreign trade. Since then there has been considerable economic development with the aid mainly of the socialist countries, and in particular the Soviet Union.

According to World Bank estimates, the gross domestic product of Somalia in 1970 was 190 million dollars, with per capita income at 70 dollars. The 1971-73 development plan provided for considerable expansion, particularly in the infrastructure which is necessary for industrial development.

The government of the SDR has been able to bring about great advances in the educational, social and health fields since it came to power four years ago.

The struggle of the national liberation movement in any newly independent country with a revolutionary social content is able to grow in a more appropriate international climate since it develops, not in the epoch of capitalism, but in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism. It is also influenced greatly by the new world social forces, headed by the socialist power, with its moral and gigantic material potentialities for the support and strengthening of national independence and its defence against imperialist aggression which aims at overthrowing progressive regimes either through reactionary military



coups or through foreign mercenary invasion (Guinea, Democratic Yemen).

The talk of the socialist revolution in our country at this stage does not go beyond defining it as a strategic objective for our revolution, which we seek to achieve through the fulfilment of the objective

conditions (development of productive forces and their conflict with production relations), and the subjective conditions (political organisation armed with scientific socialism – ideology of the working class – as it is the only scientific theory which commits no error in the assessment and building of the historical stages). These conditions can be realised through the successful accomplishment of the task of the Somali revolution, because it is not possible to cross the historical stages in a unique or individual manner. Despite the existence of dialectical and historical inter-relation between the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution, yet each of these stages has its social forces, economy, class alliances and peculiar characteristics without there being any barriers or there being overlapping between the stages. To avoid committing tactical and political errors, we should scientifically analyse and objectively assess the historical stage our country is passing through at present.

We should also define the social forces that are historically destined to fulfil the tasks of the current stage. On the other hand, we have to define those social forces whose interests clash with the revolutionary movement, because it is impossible to overcome the objective reality by means of political demagoguery and idealistic slogans. In his book “Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy” Comrade Karl Marx says “*Mankind does not burden itself except with soluble questions*”.

Then, what are the primary questions which Marxist teaching conceives to be solved in this current stage of the Somali Revolution, the National Democratic Stage?

THE TASKS OF THE CURRENT STAGE FOR THE SOMALI REVOLUTION

The foremost task which confronts our revolution has a nationalist character and is opposed to colonialism and imperialism. It aims at freeing the national economy from the vestiges of foreign monopolies and building a national productive economy, which is independent from the metropolitan market in its growth movement. On 7th May, 1970, our nationalist government dealt a blow to the economic citadels of the foreign bourgeoisie by nationalising the monopolistic banks and

firms and putting them in the service of the people thus creating vast possibilities for the public sector to play its leading role. The last nationalisation measures came to constitute a decisive rejection of the bourgeois development road, because it is considered to be closed for the newly-liberated peoples. In the epoch of imperialism (the highest stage of capitalism) and transition to socialism there are major potentialities, favourable for the non-capitalistic road due to the existence of the world Socialist forces, the class ally of the national liberation movement in the third world and the working class of the capitalist countries in their just struggle against international monopolies.

The liquidation of bourgeois colonial thinking which persists in our educational and cultural institutions can only be realised by objectively reviewing our traditions, lifting the prolonged historical oppression which the defunct reactionary regimes practised upon all the mass establishments, clearing them of the opportunist elements, and abandoning the old direction of glorifying the past. To end these reactionary bourgeois concepts, we have to arm the Somali masses with the revolutionary ideology of Scientific Socialism; create a revolutionary national culture, which coincides with our principles; democratise education; and give free access to the progressive human heritage. The creation of patriotic progressive culture and building a free national economy constitutes the basis of the nationalist revolution without which our independence remains paralysed and unable to achieve any social progress for the Somali man.

Our revolution also confronts tasks, which have democratic character and are opposed to feudalism and reaction. The *democratic revolution* essentially means the basic settlement of the agrarian question and issuing agrarian reform laws. In other words, it means the effecting of a radical revolution in the form of property to free the peasants from exploitive semi-feudal relations and from tribal social formations; building of a credit bank for the poor peasants; and the dissemination of co-operative spirit in their ranks.

Our nationalist government has undertaken to set up state forms (known popularly as crash programmes) and enacted a reform law, which fixed prices for basic consumer goods (especially grain) thus dealing a heavy blow to the rich land-owners and black market traders. This step constitutes a greater victory for the toiling masses that have to be freed from pre-capitalist relations which are still prevalent in the

Somali countryside, and drawing them to participate actively in the practical work by practising their political and organisational rights which enable them to check neo-colonialism and local reaction in defending the achievements of the revolution.

The only guarantee for the success of the national democratic revolution in our country is conditioned by the extension of democratic freedoms, the creation of objective discussions in the midst of the masses, the release of their creative initiatives, and the conducting of democratic dialogue with the progressive elements. This does not mean, however, that there are no contradictions between the national democratic units at this stage. On the contrary, there are contradictions between them, but these should be considered as secondary to and governed by the main contradictions with imperialism and local reaction.

The establishing of democratic atmosphere and the speeding up of building mass organisations (workers, peasants, youth, women) stimulate the masses to increased work and production. This calls for more cohesion and ideological awareness on the part of the popular forces, and their participation in the political work through their organisations ensures them political and organisational expression to elect freely their representatives to the executive and legislative organs without any trusteeship. The conscious and organised masses (organisation is the highest level of consciousness – Lenin) are the sole guarantee for the continuation and development of the revolution by observing the necessity of dialectically linking the national democratic revolution with the socialist revolution.

THE SOCIAL FORCES OF THE REVOLUTION IN THIS STAGE

The revolutionary camp in the stage of the national democratic revolution comprises the alliance of these social strata, workers, peasants and petty-bourgeoisie. Their alliance is effected through a phased programme of work for successfully completing the tasks of the present revolutionary stage. This is because there is no single class which is able to realise the tasks of the current stage all by itself. They are all weakly-composed classes in our society, because their means of production are weak and primitive. They make their own alliance so that they are not eliminated

by world imperialism and local reaction. The alliance between the revolutionary units at this stage is made up of social strata with different social positions but with a common interest. Any attempt by one of these strata to impose its ideology on the other strata at this stage is ignoring the objective conditions of society, and forms a threat to national unity. The political alliance between the social strata does not mean that the objectively existing contradictions and ideological differences are to be ignored. But, every class must have a certain degree of ideological freedom in order to retain its independent stand. Being the most radical class in the society, the working class should be allowed to have its political organisation. Political vacillation and hesitation may, however, be created at this stage due to the absence of the mass organisations. The workers, by virtue of their basic thinking that springs from their relationship with the means of production, are the last class which is subject to vacillation and inconsistency and the most able to perceive the horizons of the revolution.

ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY FORCES

The class forces whose interests clash with those of the revolution are:

- 1 Colonialism and neo-colonialism;
- 2 Comprador bourgeoisie that serves the interest of neo-colonialism;
- 3 Reactionary and bureaucratic elements in the different organs of the State that have been fostered by colonialism and neo-colonialism;
- 4 Opportunist elements, cloaked with progressive garments to defend the bourgeois ideology;
- 5 Landowner and semi-feudal elements in the countryside.

The social system alone is not the decisive factor in the definition of the historical stage. It is the total objective circumstances (such as the economic situation, i.e., the development level of the productive forces, production relations, form of property and the character of the ruling political systems, which is inter-related with the nature of the epoch — the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism

together with the current tasks of the national liberation movement in its just struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism and local reaction) that determine the peculiar character of the current historical stage.

The revolutionary units in our country (workers—peasants—petty bourgeoisie) are called upon to deal with the national democratic tasks as they constitute a vital and pressing question posed by the nature of the Somali Revolution. The basic tasks which confront our revolution have a national and democratic character. Thus our country is passing through the national democratic stage which is not over yet. We are, therefore, struggling to fulfil and complete the tasks of the national revolution that rose on 21 October, 1969, so as to advance to socialism.

It is wrong to confuse the national democratic revolution with the socialist revolution. It is equally wrong to put barriers between the two historical stages. The building of socialism and the socialist society remains an ultimate goal for the Somali Revolution and not an immediate task, for socialism means: politically, the setting up of an appropriate form of working class dictatorship; economically, the domination of the means of production by the people; socially, the total elimination of man's exploitation by man; and the socialist revolution is completed under the leadership of the working class, led by its Marxist-Leninist Party.

BOOK REVIEWS

INEQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

"Justice in South Africa" by Albie Sachs (Sussex University Press: £3.25)

"No Neutral Ground" by Joel Carlson (Davis-Poynter Ltd.: £4.00)

In the past, general historians of South Africa have dealt rather superficially with the legal system. Legal history, on the other hand, has been a highly academic subject, devoted mainly to the tracing of influences upon the rules of the civil law. Albie Sachs has produced something entirely new: a detailed history of the South African legal system in its social and political context, with the emphasis on criminal and administrative law. He has covered the whole history of the Anglo-Dutch legal system in South Africa, from its first transplantation here until the present day. The legal systems of the indigenous inhabitants are also mentioned, but in very much less detail.

In dealing with the past, and with the varying legal traditions of the four South African colonies, Mr. Sachs brings out some interesting

points. He makes it clear, for example, that it is a gross oversimplification to discuss race attitudes in terms of "integration" versus "segregation", taking it for granted that "integration" inevitably goes with freedom and equality. On the contrary, it is often when there is a substantial degree of economic and geographical integration that a ruling caste has the most need for artificial legal barriers to protect its privileged position.

In his detailed discussion of the modern period, Mr. Sachs shows himself keenly aware that for the average South African, the law is not so much a matter of the Supreme Court and the Bar and famous men fighting famous cases, as a matter of the police raid, the magistrates' court and the prison cell. The book contains a wealth of valuable statistical material on the police force, crime and the penal system.

The issue which lies at the heart of this book, however, is the perennial debate between the Marxist view of law as the instrument of class rule and the idealist concept of an impartial, neutral, eternal justice which not only should in theory but can in practice transcend class or race interests. This idealist concept is a very old one, going back through the capitalist and feudal periods to the earliest times. It has always had a strong appeal to the best elements in the legal profession. Because there have always been lawyers who have believed in abstract justice, so there have always been judges who have tried to administer it. Therefore there are always individual cases to which the idealists can point in their attempts to refute the Marxist position. "Look here", they cry, "in this case a poor man obtained judgment against a rich man; in that case a revolutionary was successful against the state. Does this not prove how rigid and artificial and wrong the Marxist theory is?"

Of course, it does nothing of the sort. The Marxist analysis of the legal system does not exist for the purpose of predicting the outcome of individual cases, any more than the Marxist analysis of capitalism exists to predict the price of individual shares on the stock exchange. The legal system, like the economic system, is the aggregate of many particular cases, any one of which may be atypical. The forest may be growing even though an individual tree is dying, or vice versa. The function of social and economic analysis is to perceive the characteristics of the forest, without being side-tracked by even the most conspicuous tree.

This is just what Mr. Sachs has achieved. A lawyer himself, he is by no means unsympathetic to the ideal of abstract justice. With scrupulous fairness, he records the heights which that ideal has sometimes reached under British bourgeois democracy and the sincerity with which some South African lawyers have tried to scale the same heights. Yet his analysis leaves not the slightest doubt about the verdict on the system as a whole. From its beginnings until the present time, the South African legal system has been the instrument of class and race rule.

Mr. Carlson's book is a more personal and less profound one. It has obviously been written with a fairly popular American market in mind. It is full of somewhat over-written descriptions of the beauty of the South African countryside and inaccurate potted excerpts from South African history. The American reader is catered for in such matters as the conferment of the title "Judge" upon South African magistrates. Nevertheless, the book has considerable value. It contains accounts of a number of important court cases in which Mr. Carlson was engaged. These include the cases in which the Bethal prison farms were exposed, the inquests upon two men who died in the custody of the South African police (Looksmart Ngudle and James Lenkoe), the trial of a number of SWAPO militants in 1967 and the trial of Winnie Mandela and her twenty-one comrades. Anyone who is unfamiliar with South African fascism and wants to learn some basic facts about the sort of things which happen to ordinary people under that system, could scarcely do better than to read Mr. Carlson's book.

There is also another lesson to be learned from this book. Mr. Carlson was, and still is, a loner who refuses to associate himself with any political organisation. Frequently in his book he describes the sense of frustration and inadequacy which he experienced in trying to fight the South African state as an isolated individual. He himself refuses to draw the obvious conclusion; he stubbornly adheres to his position of isolation. His readers may perhaps be able to put his experience to better use. For the perceptive reader, Mr. Carlson in fact, unconsciously confirms the analysis of Mr. Sachs. A courageous and honest lawyer can win a case here and a case there, with happy results for a few individual clients. In the end, however, he will find the system serving the purpose for which it was created – the maintenance of class rule. Unless he is prepared to associate himself with the

people's struggle to overthrow that rule, the progressive lawyer is doomed to impotence.

P.M.

BLACK VIEW OF THE BOER WAR

"The Boer War Diary of Sol. T. Plaatje – An African at Mafeking", edited by John L. Comaroff, published by Macmillan, Johannesburg.

Dr. Comaroff, currently a lecturer in social anthropology at the University of Manchester, was born in Cape Town in 1945 and educated at Cape Town university. While engaged in post-graduate research, he lived with the Barolong boo Ratshidi tribe on the border between South Africa and Botswana, and discovered Plaatje's diary while researching in the tribal capital.

The diary which is now presented to the world for the first time 74 years after it was written is a fascinating document of the day-to-day experiences of the people of Mafeking while under siege by the Boers. It also provides new insights into the nature of the young man of 23 who was later to become the first general corresponding secretary of the South African Native National Congress (later re-named the African National Congress) when it was formed in 1912 – politician, newspaper editor, novelist, linguist, translator of Shakespeare into Tswana and generally public figure extraordinary.

Plaatje, who never entered a secondary school but spoke English and Dutch as well as his own language, could type and write shorthand, was employed in Mafeking as interpreter at the Resident Magistrate's Court and also acted as secretary to Reuter's correspondent Vere Stent and other journalists. Dr. Comaroff says he is satisfied that Plaatje wrote his diary without any thought of publication – certainly he made no attempt to exhume it at any time from the end of the Boer War until his death in 1932.

But if these are merely the jottings of a tired functionary at the end of each hard day's work, they are jottings of genius. The style is detached, almost laconic, laced with a gentle humour, but always penetrating and exact, brilliantly catching the changing mood and

atmosphere as now victory, now defeat beckoned. Here is the entry for November 30, 1899:

“Early this morning Captain FitzClarence was at it again and declined to give the Boers opportunity of coming near their own gun. This must have enraged them very much as they tried to approach in large numbers and knock the cheek out of our few naughty snipers. They were quickly silenced and we enjoyed that sweet and enchanting music from our musketeers. It gave us an entertainment of the sweetest music imaginable when slow volley after volley was directed at the angry Boers: now and then a 7-pounder would harmonise the proceedings with an occasional ‘boom’ in sweet bombardment, and the whole of the proceedings is as safe as at an Altar”.

On December 6, 1899:

“Another shell came round in the afternoon. It entered the private house of our young Town Clerk, pierced the outer wall and went on to a room in which the Town Clerk was. It destroyed the room and wrecked everything inside except the Town Clerk – a marvellous escape: one fragment went into the kitchen, where the cook, a very stout bastard lady, was and shook her so vehemently that she nearly had the perfect circulation of her blood disorganised”.

Vivid descriptions of destruction and death are interspersed with fragments like the following, the entire entry for November 14, 1899: “Not a single shot during the forenoon. Lovely showers set in in the evening. And altogether one fairly concludes that life is really worth living, even during a siege.”

Plaatje’s political views were scarcely developed at this stage of his career. Born in the Orange Free State, he knew the Boers well enough to side with the British during the war, and records with admiration the cool and stubborn courage with which they defended Mafeking in the face of apparently insuperable odds. At the same time, his diary places on record the vital role played by the Africans during the siege, especially in the sphere of procuring both food and information for the

beleaguered garrison. He also notes that it was the African community which suffered most from hunger and deprivation when the siege was at its height.

For their services, the Africans received little but flattery from their British "protectors". After the siege was over, life slowly returned to normal. Plaatje's diary ends some weeks before the siege was lifted, but Dr. Comaroff writes in an epilogue:

"In the *stadt* the tribesmen listened proudly to tributes paid to their bravery and resilience. In return, they pledged their unswerving loyalty to His Majesty and the Imperial government. The 'foreign' Africans of the Black Watch and other contingents were promised a farm as a collective reward. They never received it. The Barolong were assured of British political protection from the Boers in reciprocation for their part in the alliance. They, too, were later to feel more than a little dissatisfied with British breach of promise."

Perhaps the more discerning may detect in the pages of this diary the first traces of disillusionment with White authority which ultimately drove Plaatje full-tilt into the political arena.

Z.N.

A HISTORICAL TREASURY

"FROM PROTEST TO CHALLENGE: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa 1882-1964". In 3 Vols, edited by Thomas Karis and Gwendolen Carter; published by the press of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, 1972.

Vol. I *"PROTEST AND HOPE 1882-1934"* edited by Sheridan Johns.

Some of the leading US academic experts on South Africa assisted by one of the main academic Cold War institutions in the United States, have released to the world a selection of the documents of African politics in South Africa which they have been collecting for nearly

two decades (in Miss Carter's case, since 1948). The Hoover Institution's collection of the materials which the struggle for African liberation has spawned so generously — letters, resolutions, statements, leaflets, newspapers, articles, minutes etc. — is widely regarded as being the most comprehensive collection in the world. Whether it is, only a professional historian could judge. But a great deal of effort and money has been devoted to its compilation; and no less effort is being devoted by a sector of the American academic and policy-making elite to the study of the national liberation and working class movement, which this treasury of documents greatly facilitates.

The motives of this group of experts have frequently been exposed in these pages, and can be easily inferred from the close connection of some of its members with the US State Department, also, of course, from their writings (see especially the nauseating apologia for white minority rule in Southern Africa by Peter Duigman, director of the African Programme of the Hoover Institution, and Lewis Gann, one of his colleagues, a colonialist historian of Rhodesia).

It is necessary to refer to the political complexion and highly political character of the individuals and institution involved in the publication of 3 volumes of documents concerning African political movements in South Africa because this is an essential caution with which to temper the enthusiasm that might well be aroused in any supporter of the African liberation struggle by the discovery of a rich and fascinating selection of the building blocks of our movement's history.

The reader will find, amongst many other documents, some early editorials and articles from *Imvo Zabantsundu*, the first independent African newspaper; resolutions of the South African Native Congress (forerunner of the A.N.C.) of 1906; petitions to Britain against the designs of the settler minority, from individuals and organisations, in the period leading up to the formation of the Union of SA in 1909. Several documents on the land question around the time of the Natives Land Act of 1913, and others about passes, wages and other grievances; the struggle for unity amongst Africans in the 1920's; relations between different black organisations and leaders in the twenties and thirties, and the resistance to Hertzog's programme of discrimination against the African people. The volume stops just short of the culmination of this struggle in the mid-30's. All this is of tremendous interest to any

reader with some previous knowledge and the desire to get the 'feel' of the spirit of the times. Later volumes will be of even more interest, judging from the list of documents to appear in them given at the back of this volume.

It is impossible in a short notice to give the full flavour and range of this material. Much of it is long-winded by contemporary standards, and some of it will surprise anybody who naively believes that the African liberation movement sprang militant, radical and highly politically conscious from the virgin soil of African subjugation and suffering. It is tempting to quote, and while many passages suggest themselves, the following has a certain piquancy in the wake of the recent great strike wave in the Republic. S.M. Makgatho, in his Presidential address to the SA Native National Congress in May 1919, spoke about recent labour troubles amongst Europeans:

"In every instance where well-paid white men, getting as much as £1 a day or more, struck for higher pay, they got it; but our first strike for 6d. a day over 2/- and 2/6d. was met on the part of the Government by violence, arrests, heavy fines and imprisonment."

Half a century later, African workers in the main are still earning less than that £1 a day which white workers then were striking to improve!

Amongst several historical lessons which these documents illustrate, one is of special and universal significance. That is that anti-communism within the national liberation movement, such as gained the upper hand temporarily in the ANC in 1930, ousting Gumede and endorsing a 'moderate' reformist leadership in his place, serves only to weaken and divide the movement, to the benefit of the oppressors and the loss of the militance and unity of the masses.

A.T.

LUST WITHOUT PASSION

"A Simple Lust" (Collected Poems of South African Jail and Exile) by Dennis Brutus, published by Heinemann Educational Books. £1.75.

Heinemann Books in London recently published a collection of poems by the South African poet Dennis Brutus. The collection includes his earlier works, namely *Sirens Knuckles Boots*, *Letters to Martha*, *Poems From Algiers*, *Thoughts Abroad*. All these and others are now published under the title, "A Simple Lust".

A victim of apartheid oppression and police persecution, one who served a sentence on the notorious Robben Island, Dennis Brutus has also been active in the campaign to isolate South Africa from world sport and in campaigns for the release of political prisoners. The reader of these "poems of South African jail and exile" would therefore look forward to an experience of poetry rooted in the realities of South African life and the poet's identification with his country and his people's experiences, inside jail and out. But the reader with this expectation is disappointed, for Brutus seems to be concerned only with his own personal relationships and reactions to the world about him. "A troubador, I traverse all my land/exploring all her wide-flung parts with zest . . ."

For the African people poetry has little to do with books. It lives in their speech, in their songs, it reflects their attitudes towards life about them, it is common property. Poets, like Oswald Mtshali for example, who have written, have succeeded in transferring the common experiences to paper and have still retained their own personalities as poets. But for Brutus everything, jail, exile, oppression, happiness, despair, happens to himself, the poet, only." . . . The iron monster of the world ingests me in its grinding maw." "What wonder such gingerly menacing claws, they would rend me if they could . . . but I accept their leashed-in power . . ." Even when he turns outward or pays tribute to somebody else, like Lutuli, one has the feeling that it is more a gesture than identification.

It can be argued of course that Brutus comes from a more individualised section of South African society and carries with him the poetic traditions included in the education of that community. Perhaps modern poetry is the product of a more individualised society, and Brutus is a modern poet. But the world is common to the poet and his fellow man, the poetry in which he formulates his experience of it must still evoke a general reaction, touch a chord in every heart, expressing what others feel but cannot express themselves, drawing all into closer communion. The poet, thanks to his talent and inspiration,

can at least express what others feel, and when he expresses himself they recognise his longings as their own. It is difficult to find this with Dennis Brutus. He is more the poet's poet. His imagery satisfies himself and the cognoscenti perhaps, but hardly anybody else. Who but the initiated among us can explain "an ordinary girl" surveying the poet "with Stanislav disdain" or "the diurnal reminders excoriate their souls"?

Then again he is more concerned with geography and the physical world than with people. Robben Island is a "barred existence" and "Cement-grey floors and walls, cement-grey days, cement-grey time. ." The poet is alone there, and only half-hears "the weary tramp of feet as the men came shuffling from the quarry." In fact this is the only line in "On The Island" that is concerned with his fellow-prisoners, out of four verses. Outside of prison, under house-arrest, in exile, travelling, everything seems to be happening to the poet only and to nobody else.

Brutus is also the intellectual poet and words in ink mean more in his book than any that could have been written in human blood. While much of his imagery is derived from the sexual experience, which in itself could profoundly evoke the human spirit, Brutus's simple lust is unfortunately without a simple passion.

GALA

ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE COLOUR BAR

"The Marabi Dance" by Modikwe Dikobe, and *"Robben Island"* by D.M. Zwelonke, both published in Heinemann's African Writers Series, price 45p and 50p respectively (55p and 60p in the United Kingdom).

These two novels, written by Africans from very different viewpoints and with apparently contrasting perspectives, yet fuse to provide a vivid picture of life in South Africa on the wrong side of the colour bar.

Modikwe Dikobe, we are told, "was born in the Northern Transvaal in 1913, and went to Johannesburg at the age of ten. He attended school for some years and afterwards continued his education to Primary Standard 8 level by correspondence. He has worked as a newspaper vendor, a clerk, a book-keeper and a night watchman. He is married and has a grown-up daughter. *The Marabi Dance* is his first book . . ."

Dikobe is both a man of the world and a man of the people, and he paints a picture of township and backyard life in Johannesburg which teems with vitality and humorous detail like a Brueghel painting. The world knows of the cruel apartheid laws and the harsh administration of the police and officials which hound the oppressed black majority from the cradle to the grave. Dikobe's book explains how the African people adjust to and defeat the system over which they have no apparent control, how they contrive to evade the law, to scratch a living in the unpatrolled corridors of powerlessness, to preserve life and hope for the future. Some draw strength by reaching back to their tribal past, invoking the aid of medicine men and bone throwers when confronted by some insoluble dilemma. Others adopt the mores of their White overlords copying in crime the "each man for himself" ruthlessness which is the guarantee of success in the capitalist world. Both triumph and failure are accepted philosophically, no one resents either the winner or the loser, for they are all bound together in their hatred of authority, however much they are compelled to live with it.

Dikobe provides some marvellous character studies – the charlatan priest who learned to "read" the Bible by memorizing what he had heard in church, never made the mistake of "reading" anything that was not written in the Book, changed his name to evade the police, won by trickery a certificate of exemption from the pass laws, and then milked his people until he was found out and forced to flee; the dance band leader who had a way with the girls; the women who brew liquor and run shebeens in their back rooms. Perhaps he is too generous with his rogues' gallery. Certainly, one misses any hint of the existence of the men and women who have not been satisfied to live with the system, but have risen about it and tried to change it.

This shortcoming is to some extent made good by Zwelonke in "Robben Island". Zwelonke, we are told, is "a young South African

who has been imprisoned on Robben Island. He has written for *The New African*. He lives in exile”. And that is all we know of him.

His book, which is partly autobiographical, part fact, part fiction, tells us a little more. He is an intellectual, a member or supporter of the Pan-Africanist Congress, an admirer of Robert Sobukwe whom he describes in a poem as “a ray of light to which we must all look”. But though one may not share his politics, one cannot but respect his assertion in his opening chapter “Why I Write”:

“I am proud of the fact that I am a human being and that I possess a reasoning faculty, and do not let the colour of my skin torment me like a nightmare. I am proud of the man on Robben Island. He rejected a slave-life. He chose to fight.”

His fictional story of Robben Island is based on fact – his own bitter experiences and those recounted to him by others. Robben Island, the maximum security prison for Black political prisoners, is the experimental ground where the agents of apartheid attempt to break the spirit of their captives. Every refinement of humiliation and torture is visited on the inmates – arbitrary punishment of solitary confinement and spare diet for “trouble makers”, alternations of flattery and battery for those from whom the Special Branch thugs seek information. Some break under the strain. The novel is the story of the heroic leader Bekimpi who chose to die under torture rather than break faith with his comrades.

Compared with the earthy prose of “The Marabi Dance”, Zwelonke writes with elegance and sophistication, and his book is undoubtedly the most harrowing revelation of the atrocities perpetrated on Robben Island that has yet appeared in print. But it is more than just a horror story, which chills the blood and fills the heart with despair. It is also a tribute to man’s courage and his determination to resist even when apparently entirely at the mercy of his enemy.

Zwelonke’s politics are naive – he is both a supporter of Black consciousness and anti-communist. “When the African nationalist reacts against this (White oppression), the racial feeling is born in him”, says one of his characters. “Yet what do they want an African leader to do, not to be considered a racialist? He must be either a puppet of the West or a communist”.

Is it un-national to be a Communist?

Perhaps Zwelonke’s main weakness is that his politics is that of the

elite. "I did not know whom I should address", he says in his opening chapter, "the businessman, the intellectuals, the clergy, the students or the masses." But towards the end of this same chapter, it sounds as though he is really addressing himself to the White racists.

"If you do admire the work of a free mind, why do you restrain the mind of the black man in South Africa?", he asks. "You give it inferior institutions of learning. You brainwash it to accept apartheid, the machinery of its own destruction. You lock it up on Robben Island".

Even if the "you" who is intended here is rhetorical and generalised, it is certainly not the black masses Zwelonke is apostrophising. He would write better if he was more sure of his audience.

Peter Mackintosh

TWO LIVES FOR JUSTICE

"AMBROSE REEVES". A biography by John S. Peart-Binns, published by Gollancz, £3.90

"A LIFE FOR AFRICA". The story of Bram Fischer, by Naomi Mitchison, published by Merlin Press, £1.25.

For eleven years, during the period that he was Bishop of Johannesburg, Ambrose Reeves played a remarkable role in the struggles centred around opposition to apartheid and its increasingly oppressive laws. He arrived in South Africa in 1949, a year after the Nationalist Party came to power, and from the first was passionately opposed to racialism and apartheid. Small, spare, with extraordinary energy, he proved himself to be an astute politician whose many activities were motivated by his deep Christian beliefs, but carried out with practical intensity of purpose. He became the close friend of Chief Lutuli and Oliver Tambo, and he was able to unite the most diverse individuals and organisations to fight the Bantu Education Act, to support the Alexandra bus boycott, to try and defend civil liberties, to set up a fund to help the defendants in the big 1956 Treason Trial. The climax came with his role after the shootings at Sharpeville; the truth had to

be dug out; he used every privilege of his position to obtain it (later published in a book, *Shooting at Sharpeville*). Believing he was about to be arrested, he left for Swaziland, and some months later, on his return, was deported.

John Peart-Binns' book traces the life of Ambrose Reeves, of which his eleven years as Bishop of Johannesburg was a central part. (They take up two-thirds of the book). It is a worth-while record of the life of a man who has given so much of his abilities to fight apartheid.

Naomi Mitchison's biography of Bram Fischer suffers from the difficulties of writing about a man now in jail for life, and whose personality and life had to be garnered from a distance. Ambrose Reeves came to South Africa and then identified himself with the struggle for freedom. Bram Fischer was, in one sense, born into that struggle. Son of the Judge President of the Orange Free State, descendant of one of the first whites in Southern Africa, an official of the Dutch East India Company, Bram was like someone endowed by the gods – family, education, intellect and personality enabled him to reach the highest position in his profession or in conventional politics – had he so chosen. Instead, he made an intellectual choice – Marxism – overcoming the prejudices of his upbringing to reject racialism totally and to join the Communist Party. When it was made illegal, in 1950, Bram continued to work in all possible ways, both through his profession as a leading barrister and Queen's Counsel (he was the leading counsel in the Rivonia trial, and many other political trials) and in underground organisations, seeking to achieve justice and liberty in South Africa.

Inevitably the biography is incomplete. Bram Fischer is in a jail in Pretoria. There is a lot that is still to be written – when the free South Africa for which he sacrificed everything, including his own liberty, is finally achieved. Meanwhile, Naomi Mitchison's book is a warm tribute to one of the greatest men South Africa has produced, and one of the kindest and most lovable of human beings.

B.H.

Letters to the Editor

EGYPT – Crisis of the Revolution

The above-mentioned article was written by Ibrahim Abdel Halim, and published in the *African Communist*, No. 54, Third Quarter, 1973. Here I would like to point out my differences with the writer on certain topics mentioned in his article.

On p.85, Ibrahim Abdel Halim says:

“From its inception the July Revolution was firm in its opposition to colonialism in all its forms, and also with the forces allied with colonialism at home, foremost of which was the Monarchy, which stood at the head of the feudalism which placed the big Egyptian-foreign landlords in possession of most of the cultivated land in Egypt, leaving the majority of farmers landless and jobless.”

It is important to emphasize the bourgeois character of the July Revolution, and this leads to my objection of the use of the word ‘firm’ in referring to the opposition to colonialism as exercised by the

leaders of the July Revolution. This so-called firmness is in conflict with the undemocratic measures practised by the Free Officers, especially in the period of 1952–54. Surely the writer must know about the incidents that led to the hanging of Khamis and El Bakary, two leaders of Kafr-el-Dawar workers, and the false hopes which the Free Officers had pinned on American imperialism – a thing Nasser confessed on more than one occasion. Unaware of the imperialist nature of the U.S., particularly in the early years of the revolution, Nasser, more than once, turned to America to ask for help.

This proves the bourgeois nature of the leaders of the July Revolution, shows their negative aspects, and refutes Ibrahim Abdel Halim's allegation of their firmness in opposing colonialism.

The second point on which I radically differ with the writer of the article lies in his sentence:

“It (The popular struggle) also aims at confirming the non-capitalist way of development in Egypt and consolidating relations with the socialist camp, headed by the Soviet Union.” (p.86)

The writer's use of the word 'confirming' means that the non-capitalist way of development has been initiated in Egypt by the bourgeois leaders of the July Revolution, which is a non-marxist conception. The writer is referring here to the nationalization of the banks and major industries in the country in the early sixties while the communists were in jail subjected to brutal atrocities. These nationalizations transferred the ownership of those industries from the old big bourgeoisie to the hands of a new class composed of the military elements and the official technocrats.

The non-capitalist way of development cannot be brought about without the decisive role of the working class and the leadership of its vanguard, the communist party. This is the marxist conception which must be emphasized in order not to lose the right path and not to be led astray.

That wrong conception of 'confirming the non-capitalist way of development in Egypt' led to the liquidation of the Egyptian Communist Party and the 'Democratic Movement for National Liberation' in 1965. The present weakness of the progressive forces in Egypt is precisely due to the fatal mistake made by the 'communist' leaders who liquidated the party at that time.

A third point that must be commented on is found on p.86, where the writer says:

“The July Revolution remains an anti-imperialist force joining the communist and workers’ parties in the common struggle against imperialism.”

To be accurate, the writer should have referred to certain changes that took place in Egypt during the last three years and which have subsequently weakened the anti-imperialist role of Egypt. Some of these changes are:

1. In May, 1971, Ali Sabry, the then Vice-President, and six other cabinet ministers were dismissed and put in jail, partly for opposing Sadat’s readiness to give in to American imperialism under the illusion that America would put pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.

2. In 1972, Sadat, being lured by Americans, ordered the Soviet military advisers to leave Egypt. Soon he was disillusioned when Israel proved adamant and persisted in her expansionist policy.

3. During the first half of 1973, hundreds of students and democratic, leftwing and marxist elements were arrested, tortured and put on trial in Egypt. It suffices here to refer to a message published in London by the ‘Morning Star’, the Communist Party paper, on May 9, 1973, which mentioned the arrest of 320 students, besides some marxists and trade unionists, such as: Nabil Sabhy, Nabil El Hilali, Abdel Aziz Rachwan, Samir Afifi, Mohamed Aly Amer and El Menchawi.

The main task now is to build up a communist party in Egypt and to unite all progressive forces in the country. Without these measures the democratic rights of the working masses cannot be gained and the anti-imperialist character of the July Revolution cannot be maintained.

J.B.

SINN FEIN AND THE I.R.A.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your magazine, particularly a more recent article on the Irish crisis, namely the Northern Ireland conflict ("Ireland: A case-history of Colonialism" by Alan Doyle, African Communist Issue No. 52, first quarter 1973). The points in this article were very sound and the facts were accurate enough. One point, though, needed more clarification. I draw your attention to the words Official I.R.A. (I.R.A. stands for Irish Republican Army). I felt this should have read Official Sinn Fein (meaning the semi-Marxist political party).

Here are some details about the background and origins of Sinn Fein, which I find has puzzled many people outside Ireland, not to mention the Irish themselves. The whole question of Sinn Fein has been made more complicated since the recent split within the organization which resulted in "Two Sinn Feins".

Up till 1969 or thereabouts there was one Sinn Fein organization. Sinn Fein is an Irish term meaning "us" or "ourselves", simply "Irish men and women". The organization has always had two wings – a political wing and a military wing. The political wing was termed "Sinn Fein" and the military wing "I.R.A." The political wing operates quite openly and is legal in the eyes of the Southern State, whereas the military wing is illegal and banned. A certain amount of overlapping occurs in the membership of the organization e.g. a rank and file member of Sinn Fein may also be a member of the I.R.A. and vice versa. However, nowadays the majority of members probably belong to Sinn Fein.

Ever since the civil war in the 1920s, shortly after the promulgation of the infamous Government of Ireland Act, until 1969 Sinn Fein candidates who were of Sinn Fein may also be a member of the I.R.A. and vice versa. However, nowadays the majority of members probably belong to Sinn Fein.

Ever since the civil war in the 1920s, shortly after the promulgation of the infamous Government of Ireland Act, until 1969 Sinn Fein candidates who were elected to the Dail (Parliament) refused to take their seats. This was done as an *abstentionist* policy of refusing to recognize the institutions of the state (courts, parliament, senate, etc.)

on the grounds that these institutions were set up by Britain and did not represent the aspirations of the Irish people as a whole. It may be remembered that the civil war in Ireland centred on whether to accept the treaty or not – the terms of peace which England offered the Irish people. The peace terms were offered to the Irish people under the threat of violence if the Irish people refused to sign.

The Republican forces refused to accept the terms of the treaty, which resulted in the division of Ireland into two states, north and south, while the free-state forces accepted the British terms as being the best that could be hoped for under the circumstances.

The Republican forces ever since then used the abstentionist ticket as a form of protest against the British-imposed settlement. Before the settlement, elections were held in Ireland to decide the future. The Irish people showed they overwhelmingly supported the establishment of an independent all-Ireland Republic by giving a 75 per cent majority to Sinn Fein candidates who fought the elections on a policy of British withdrawal and a united Ireland.

The outcome of the civil war was that the free state forces won, resulting in the free state army being reorganized as the only legal army in the southern state. The hard-core republicans have to this day refused to recognize the institutions functioning in the country.

However, this abstentionist policy has failed down through the years with the result that fewer and fewer candidates have been elected at each subsequent election. As an alternative to political action by Sinn Fein the use of force has been counted on by the I.R.A. as a weapon to break the British connection. The use-of-force policy was employed in the notorious bombing campaigns of the 40s and 50s. This campaign was a complete failure, resulting only in internment, killings of innocent civilians and so on. This campaign is again being employed in the north of Ireland today.

Finally by 1969 the semi-Marxist leadership broke with the old ways and with the men with guns and rosary beads and turned over a new page. So since 1969 there are the Official Sinn Fein Party (semi-Marxist) and the Official I.R.A. (military wing), and the Provisional Sinn Fein Party (abstentionist) and the Provisional I.R.A. (military wing known as the Provos).

BILLY CURTIN
County Cork, Ireland.

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