

OCTOBER 1982



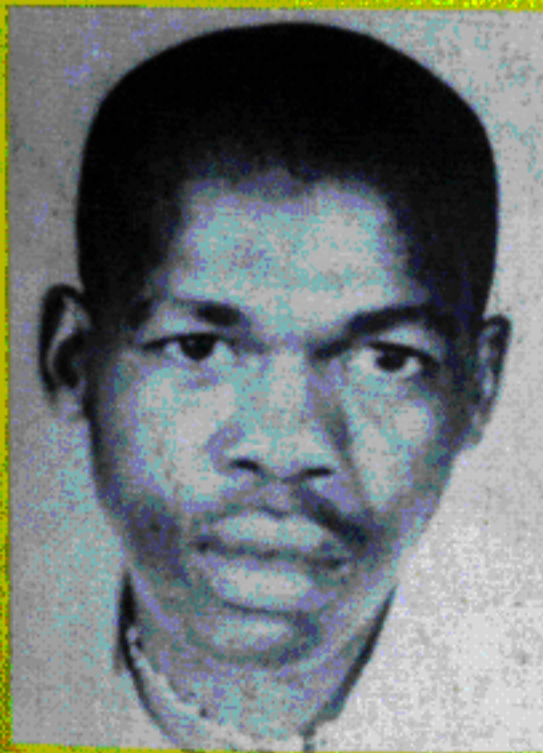
SECHABH

official organ of the african
national congress south africa

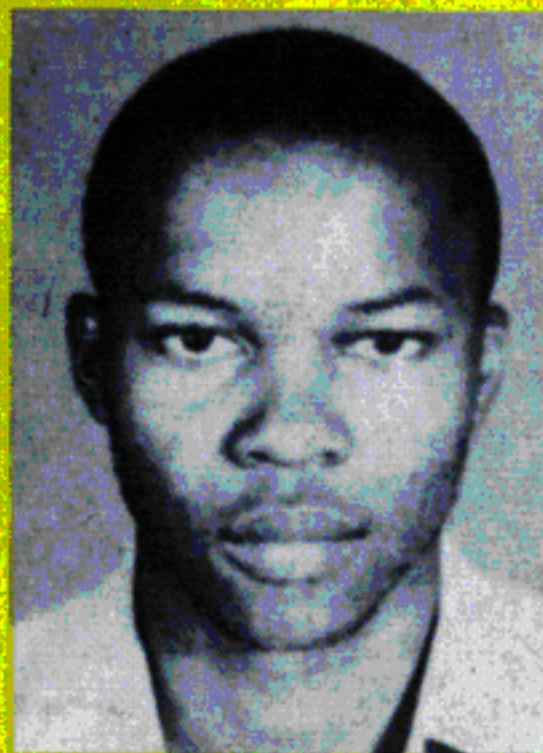


FIGHT TO SAVE

THE "MOROKA THREE"



Mosololi



Mogoerane



Motaung

SECHABA

OKTOBER ISSUE, 1982



P. O. BOX 38, 28 PENTON STREET
LONDON N1 9PR UNITED KINGDOM
TELEGRAMS: MAYIBUYE · TELEX: 299555ANCSAG · TELEPHONE: 01-837-2012

**SEND YOUR ORDERS NOW TO
SECHABA PUBLICATIONS**
P.O. Box 38, 28 Penton Street, London N1 9PR

CONTENTS

ALL ORDERS OF TEN OR MORE COPIES –
50% DISCOUNT
KINDLY INCLUDE A DONATION WITH YOUR
ORDER IF POSSIBLE
SAMPLE COPIES OF SECHABA AVAILABLE ON
REQUEST IF ACCOMPANIED BY A POSTAL ORDER
(OR IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WITH STAMPS)
TO DEFRAY POSTAL COSTS

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

USA and CANADA (airmail only) \$12,00
ELSEWHERE £ 6,00
SINGLE COPIES
USA and CANADA (airmail only) \$ 3,00
ELSEWHERE £ 0,50

**LISTEN TO
RADIO FREEDOM
VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL
CONGRESS AND UMKHONTO WE
SIZWE, THE PEOPLE'S ARMY**

RADIO LUANDA
shortwave, 40 & 30 m bands;
medium wave 27,6 m band–7,30 pm daily

RADIO LUSAKA
shortwave 31 m band, 9580 KHz, 7,15–8 pm,
Monday – Friday
10,05–10,35 pm Wednesday, 10,30–11 pm Friday
7–8 pm Saturday + Sunday, 8–8,45 pm, 19 mb,
17895 KHz

RADIO MADAGASCAR
shortwave 49 m band, 6135 KHz–8-9 pm daily

RADIO ETHIOPIA
shortwave 31 m band, 9545 KHz · 9,30–10,00 pm
daily

RADIO TANZANIA
shortwave 19 m band, 15.435 KHz
8,15 pm – Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Friday;
31 m band–6,15 am Tuesday, Thursday and
Saturday

EDITORIAL:	
No to Bantustan Recognition	1
ALFRED NZO:	
Message to ANC Youth Conference	2
DISCUSSION ARTICLE:	
The national democratic revolution	11
WE REMEMBER:	
Sekhukhune I	17
OBITUARY:	
Comrade Ruth First	24
RUTH FIRST:	
And New Age	29

Cover pic: The 'Maroka Three' sentenced to death in August 1982 for whom the ANC has called an emergency campaign to prevent their imminent execution.



EDITORIAL

NO TO BANTUSTAN RECOGNITION!

South Africa consists of many islands of territory. Seven of these were declared "independent" in 1977 and christened Bophuthatswana and Lucas Mangope was made in charge of them.

Even before that, during the Soweto uprisings of 1976 in which over 1000 school children were massacred by the police, Mangope said:

"I have told the police even to shoot my own child".

This sadistic mentality of Mangope became more obvious later when his army helped the South African Defence Force to track down and kill ANC activists and guerrillas in South Africa. Sun City, the entertainment den for gambling and prostitution, has gained notoriety and is now known as Sin City.

Now Bophuthatswana wants to contaminate the whole world. Bophuthatswana National Commercial Corporation, which was set up last October and deals through the Shenley Trust Services — a public relations firm which handles its affairs in Britain, has bought a R500 000 house in London ostensibly to be used for receptions and seminars. This is happening when thousands of our people are dying of starvation, malnutrition and disease.

This house is now called Bophuthatswana House. Mangope came specially to open it. He travelled on a special identity document issued by the British Consulate-General in Johannesburg.

This kind of Bantustan presence in London is disturbing. Bophuthatswana is recognised by no state in the world. It is what it has always been — one of those racist tricks to fool the world that "changes are taking place in South Africa".

The British Government stands accused for allowing Mangope to come to Britain with a specially arranged document. This is a de facto recognition of the Bantustans. The opening of the Bophuthatswana House in London is a violation of OAU and UN resolution on the non-recognition of the Bantustans. It is a clear case of British collaboration in strengthening racist South Africa and an example of British double standards on the campaign for sanctions against racist South Africa.

But the "other Britain", the ordinary people who oppose their government's support of apartheid gave Mangope a fitting welcome. The Anti Apartheid Movement organised a large militant demonstration outside Bophuthatswana House and voiced its total opposition to the racists and their puppets.

As for Mangope and his ilk, he has completely renounced his South African citizenship. They call themselves "Bophuthatswana citizens" oblivious of the fact that by so doing they are perpetuating their own degradation, delaying our liberation and enforcing our oppression.

LET US STRENGTHEN EACH DETACHMENT OF OUR MOVEMENT

Below SECHABA publishes the message of the National Executive Committee to the ANC Youth Conference, held in August 1982 in Tanzania. The message was delivered by ANC Secretary General, Comrade A. Nzo

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of the National Executive Committee, all our members, our gallant combatants in Umkhonto we Sizwe and indeed on behalf of our entire fighting people, we bring you all warm and revolutionary greetings. Allow us to especially extend our sincerest greetings and gratitude to the CCM and the brotherly people of Tanzania for permitting us to hold our Conference in their hospitable country. This gesture on the part of the leadership of Tanzania further strengthens friendship and solidarity between the ANC and the CCM and between our peoples.

It is appropriate that this Conference of our Youth is taking place here at our Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, because

it is the devotion, bravery and commitment of heroes like Solomon Mahlangu that towers always as a shining example of the potential and calibre of our Youth. Likewise, allow us on your behalf to commend the administration, staff and students here in SOMAFSCO for the excellent preparations they have made for this Conference.

Comrades, this historic Youth Conference takes place in the course of the 70th Anniversary of the African National Congress, during which we had vowed to strengthen each detachment and each section of our movement, so that by the end of the year we can say we have a strong vanguard, ready to face up to all the challenges of our struggle. The decision to hold this Conference in this Year of Unity in Action was taken at an NEC meeting in December of 1981 at the close of the Year of the Youth. This was due partly to the realisation that the convening of this conference, which was one of our main

objectives for declaring 1981 as the Year of the Youth, needed maximum preparations to involve all sectors of our youth, both at home and abroad, in order to achieve the goal of the strengthening of the revolutionary Youth Section of our movement. Much still needs to be done to this end. The holding of the Conference and the decisions you will reach should, therefore, be regarded as the necessary first step in response to the call of the NEC at the beginning of the year contained in the 70th Anniversary statement. We reiterate that call: 'We call upon our Youth and Students to heighten their spirit of resistance. You have already demonstrated that you are a detachment of greatest courage and heroism. Now, more than ever before, our struggle demands that you act with supreme dedication and vigour under the banner of our fighting movement.' We are confident that this call will echo during your deliberations as this is an expression of our expectations from you.

Given this background, therefore, the 70th Anniversary of our movement finds all of us better placed than we have been before to carry out the historic mission to destroy the apartheid monster and realise the demands of our people enshrined in the Freedom Charter. We are saying this boldly and confidently, for our forces of national liberation have never been better poised for the final onslaught to eradicate the evil system of colonial and racial oppression and exploitation.

The situation in our country today is characterised by a massive upsurge of our people in all their formations against all instruments of oppression and exploitation. The black workers, the leading forces in our revolutionary struggle, are in the forefront of the ever-growing upsurge of mass struggles in our country. Many years of struggle and experience have taught them the importance of unity in action in the struggle against the oppressive and exploitative apartheid system. The whole country and practically all industries, including the mining industry, are engulfed by crippling and widening waves of

strikes. These frequent and well-organised industrial actions, aimed at improving working conditions and living standards of the workers, often assume a political character. The political strike called in protest at Dr Neil Aggett's murder by the fascist police is the most recent and striking example. The ability to link up various forms of struggles, ie economic and political, constitutes an effective weapon in the hands of our working people. All attempts by the fascist regime to split their ranks have been met with tenacious resistance and a heightened spirit of defiance. We are confident that the unity talks now taking place amongst the various trade union centres will bear fruit, thus further enhancing their capacity to deliver even more deadly blows.

The education crisis is again assuming alarming proportions. There is a continuing and escalating resistance by students against inferior education and apartheid in all its forms. This includes the resistance by students at the Fort Hare University against the incorporation of this historic institution within the hated and rejected so-called Ciskei Bantustan. The solidarity actions by other students, including white students, is further testimony to the understanding by our students of the need for unity in action in the struggle against apartheid. All manner of solutions to the educational system by the regime, short of the demands of the students for a unified, democratic system of education for all racial groups, have met with dismal failure. Thanks to the consistent resistance by our students and people.

Ministers of religion, church leaders and other religious circles, including ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church, are increasingly identifying themselves with the just cause of the oppressed majority and are challenging the fascist regime and its machinery of terror.

The cultural workers of our country, those at home and abroad, have laid a firm basis for opening a new front. In a recent conference and festival held in Gaborone, under the theme 'Culture and Resistance',

artists, poets, musicians, actors, writers, etc, from all parts of our country, representing all generations and races, met to consider their role in the struggle. The basis for their discussion being that there is no culture or art and therefore no artist outside society. But the most striking victory scored in this field was when a collection of soccer mercenaries descended on our fields like vultures, after blood-money. Our football teams, viz Orlando Pirates, Kaiser Chiefs and Moroka Swallows, imposed the cultural embargo when they refused to play with the sanctions-busting XI. Backed by their supporters, our teams and players dealt a heavy blow to enemy ploys of attempting to buy their way back into international soccer at the expense of our people. The bunch of mercenaries, with their heads bowed in shame, left our country having failed to fulfil their treacherous mission.

This organised political confrontation has grown immeasurably over the recent years. The underground forces of our movement are now entrenched deeper and are multiplying among the people more than at any other stage since the outlawing of our organisation. The mass actions taking place in our country are reinforced by armed operations of Umkhonto we Sizwe. This has become a permanent feature of the political reality of South Africa. The military blows are widespread. No part of our country remains unaffected. The growing sophistication and precision of these blows, their frequency and their high level of organisation have inspired our people, reinforcing their confidence that our victory is inevitable.

Umkhonto we Sizwe has spread its assaults across a variety of targets. No economic or military installation, anywhere, cannot be successfully and effectively dealt with. All this is possible because our people have now come to accept Umkhonto we Sizwe. This enables our combatants to survive in their midst. We have reached a stage where the people have opted for and are joining the armed struggle as one of the most

effective ways to dislodge the racist rulers from power.

The masses of our people are today rallying in their thousands to the call of our movement to unite in actions against the apartheid system, to resist it at every point, at every level, in every part of the country and to fight injustice wherever they confront it. This is adding to the gradual tilting of the balance of forces in our favour. As we said in our 70th Anniversary statement: 'The voice of the mass democratic movement headed by the ANC and its allies is winning the hearts and minds of growing numbers from amongst all the oppressed, pushing into growing isolation the diehard racists and fascists. This movement is not only an opponent of the apartheid regime, but has actually emerged as an alternative power, enjoying the actual allegiance of the overwhelming majority of our people. Increasing numbers from the white-oppressor group are steadily joining the stream for political and social change.' Alongside this process is one of the unbanning of the ANC by the masses of our people. The Freedom Charter is a rallying force in all the struggles waged by our people. The ANC flag is openly held at the head of all forms of protests and demonstrations. These are often in support of the African National Congress. Our combatants who fell in battle have been given Heroes' funerals and those captured enjoy the open support and solidarity of our people when they appear in fascist courts. The enemy and its allies have been forced to admit this reality.

To score further advances, it is necessary now and in the future as in the past to defend and strengthen the revolutionary vanguard organisation of our people, the ANC. To quote once again the National Executive Committee —

'Through our sacrifices, and in the face of brutal enemy repression and persecution, we have stubbornly and persistently defended our great creation, the African National Congress, against frantic and desperate efforts by the enemy to blot it out.



The Youth – guardians of our future

We have defended it because we knew that without it the prospects of our capturing power would fade into the distant future. Twenty years after the oppressor regime declared it illegal, the ANC today, 70th Anniversary, is openly acclaimed as the leader of our people, thanks to the imposition by the masses of a new popular concept of legality which the enemy guns cannot shoot out of existence, and which his courts cannot imprison. By 'lifting' the ban in this manner we have asserted ourselves as the alternative power of our land, the only legitimate power, because we are the people, the democratic majority, whose will must triumph in the end.'

The fascist regime's response to this

revolutionary upsurge has been typical. The regime has sharpened its machinery of repression and has become even more desperate in its attempts to prolong its inevitable defeat. There has been a series of waves of arrests, bannings, banishments, harassments, torture in police cells, deaths in detention and raids by the army and police. All these acts aimed at cowing our people to submission have not succeeded. Frustration reigns supreme within the ranks of the enemy. The failure to contain the floods of our revolutionary onslaught has resulted in a split in the ranks of the enemy. The white laager is crumbling as class interests have become priority over Afrikanerdom. The bantustans, the South African Indian

Council, the Coloured Persons Representative Council and of late the community councils, have failed as 'solutions' to the problems of our country. The President's Council is also under heavy attack and will soon give in, because it is a political stillborn baby. These have been and are still being defeated by the capacity of our people to resist and attack. The fascist beast is being cornered and pounded with heavy blows as all its schemes, including mass removals, are being fiercely resisted by the people. Unity in Action has been and still remains our people's battle-cry!

Faced with this situation, the regime has resorted to new and dangerous tactics. It is now ceding tracts of land and populations in an effort to win new allies. Millions of our people are robbed of their citizenship and given away to a neighbouring state as in the case of Ingwavuma and KwaNgwane. This new element in the destabilisation activities of the regime in pursuit of its neo-colonial 'constellation of states' strategy must and will be defeated. Already such offers have been refused in certain cases where, through mutual discussions, we were able to ensure that the people of Southern Africa remain active supporters of the just cause of our people. In the case of the land deal with Swaziland we hope and should ensure that this carrot and stick policy of the fascists is defeated. The illegal regime that is ruling and ruining our country has no right whatsoever to enter into any agreements involving the lives of our people. The regime's economic power and military might cannot insulate fascist rule from the revolutionary wave currently sweeping the region.

The determination of the countries of Southern Africa to resist and dislodge racist economic domination through the formation of SADCC has enraged the fascist beast. This failure of the constellation of states strategy on the regional level has turned the fascist regime to more aggressive military action and economic sabotage as instruments of regional policy. Coupled with direct military aggression by the South African Defence Force is the regime's

recruitment, training and arming of mercenaries and traitors from these countries as an extension of the regime's aggressive military machinery. At the same time as supporting the operations of these counter-revolutionary puppet groups, trade and transport links are disrupted in the hope of provoking internal discontent. These counter-revolutionary bands have stepped up their attacks in Lesotho, Angola and Mozambique in particular. The regime has its own forces, trained, equipped for short-term hit and run type operations in neighbouring states such as the Matola raid and other terrorist acts as in Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Botswana, where they have assassinated and injured our people. This is done in gross violation of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of these countries.

The enemy has also resorted to longer-term aggression as in the case of its operations in Angola. Here the regime has committed its land and air striking capacity, huge bands of mercenaries and Unita puppets. The result is pillage. Yet the world still manages to ignore this gross violation of all international norms. We welcome the continued and unswerving commitment of countries like Socialist Cuba and the Soviet Union to the defence of the People's Republic of Angola. If Israeli aggression in Lebanon signals new adventures on the part of imperialism's regional policemen, then the Israel of Southern Africa, the fascist regime, must be nipped in the bud and destroyed. The world must stop looking on idly by, pretending to be helpless. As part of the solution, the speedy resolution of the Namibian situation becomes more urgent. The Reagan and Botha sabotage attempts must be defeated. The linkage of the solution of the Namibian problem to the withdrawal of the friendly internationalist Cuban forces must be combated. Imperialism does not want to give way to the liberation forces in Namibia and uses irrelevant issues to buy time and complicate the situation.

We are convinced that the people of

Namibia, their striking arm PLAN and their authentic vanguard movement SWAPO will defeat imperialist's neo-colonial ploys. Their victory is certain. The African National Congress on behalf of our people hail SWAPO, for the statesmanship and revolutionary vigilance they have displayed throughout the negotiation process, whilst intensifying the armed revolutionary struggle. In pledging our full solidarity with SWAPO and the people of Namibia, the African National Congress calls on all sections of the oppressed and democratic forces in our country to intensify the struggle for people's power to new heights.

The aggressive and destabilisation activities of the racist regime are an integral part of the global destabilisation policies of imperialism. Faced with the growing strength of the Socialist countries, new advances by the democratic forces in the capitalist world and the victories scored by the national liberation movements, the enemies of peace and progress have resorted to unwanton aggression. They are haunted by the advances scored by the revolutionary movement and the loss of more ground as the revolutionary process intensifies. All this, coupled with the inability to defend their decaying and dying system which is plagued by one crisis after another, the most aggressive circles in the imperialist camp have resorted to undermining world peace in an attempt to roll back the advance of history.

This aggressive posture of imperialism has been given added impetus and assumed new qualitatively dangerous dimensions with the coming into office of the Reagan administration. The US and NATO ruling circles opted for an unprecedented military build-up aimed at achieving military superiority over the Soviet Union, and from such a position of strength they hope to 'control Soviet behaviour'. In essence, this policy of the warmongers reduces itself to an all-out drive for world domination. In pursuit of this drive, the imperialists have evolved a programme of transforming all continents into a galaxy of military bases

and to creating hot-beds of tension all over the world. They are working round the clock to form regional military alliances composed of the most reactionary and unpopular regimes – SATO is one such example. The intention to deploy new weapons of mass annihilation in Western Europe whilst strengthening NATO by increasing its membership and the creation of rapid deployment forces for destabilisation purposes constitutes a grave danger to peace.

It is in this context that we must understand the training, arming and recruitment of reactionaries from Grenada, Nicaragua and Cuba, the US intervention in El Salvador and Guatemala whose purposes are for destabilising the revolutionary governments and robbing the liberation forces of victory in the region. The strategic alliance between the forces of imperialism and the reactionary Chinese leadership in South East Asia poses a grave danger to the revolutionary gains of the people of Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea and Afghanistan. The imperialist backed counter-revolution in Poland is an integral that we must also understand imperialist activities in our own region and the Middle East in particular.

The barbaric Zionist attack against Lebanon is yet another attempt by the forces of imperialism and reaction to strangle liberation movements and threaten world peace. The killing and maiming of hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese people including women and children, the occupation of over half of Lebanon by the Israeli army, could not have taken place without the full support the Zionist regime enjoys from Washington. The Reagan administration has blatantly exposed its cynical face and disregarded the fate of the Arab peoples in the region by fully standing on the side of the aggressor, by vetoing the Security Council resolution calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces. The same atrocities are committed by the racist South Africa in Southern Africa and enjoy the same patronage from the Reagan warmongers.

It is against this background that 7

we declare our unswerving solidarity with all the people locked in battles against the forces of imperialism and its regional outposts in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the Middle East, South East Asia, Europe, North America and Africa. Our solidarity goes to the people of Namibia and their authentic liberation movement SWAPO. We greet the people of the Southern African front line states and their governments and call for their defence against Pretoria's imperialist-inspired attacks. We express our full support for the people of Palestine under the leadership of the PLO in their difficult struggle for self-determination. Our revolutionary greetings to the people of El Salvador and their vanguard the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, the people of East Timor led by the Fretilin, and the people of Western Sahara under the leadership of the Polisario Front, whose just cause is the object to imperialism's subversive activities aimed at undermining African unity.

We greet the people of the rest of independent Africa and pledge that together with them the ANC and our people and united in action will do everything to defend African unity and the cause of African liberation.

We greet the people of the countries of the Socialist Community, in particular the Soviet Union, and affirm our steadfast support to their peace proposals aimed at reducing the threat of thermo-nuclear war and maintaining the current strategic military balance.

We greet all our friends in the solidarity movement in the capitalist countries and all friendly western governments who are supporting our just cause.

We call upon all our Youth in their various formations to respond to the tasks defined below for the advance of our struggle.

The Youth inside the country must continue being an active contingent in the democratic movement and to be always in the forefront in all the people's struggles.

You must seek and find Umkhonto we Sizwe and swell the ranks of the people's army.

- The working Youth are called upon to take an active part in the building of strong trade unions and to be in the forefront in the strike movement and community struggles.
- The students must strengthen their organisations, step up the struggle against the fascist education system and intensify their participation in all struggles of the community and those of the working people against the bosses and for trade unionism.
- Those of our Youth, both black and white, who are in the racist army and police must join the war resistance effort by refusing to lay down their lives in defence of apartheid. We urge young combatants in the people's army - Umkhonto we Sizwe - to continue the onslaught against all instruments of oppression and exploitation which constitute the power base of the fascist regime.

The ANC urges the Youth within its ranks, outside our country, to contribute selflessly and tirelessly to the strengthening of our movement by ensuring that all structures of Youth organisation and programmes of activities to be discussed and adopted in this conference must be adhered to.

We call for maximum political and organisational unity. We must maintain our vigilance at a high level to defend the African National Congress from infiltration by enemy agents and spies. The enemy is intensifying and broadening its onslaught on the ANC on this front and it is the duty of all of us to engage him in a continuous battle for the survival of our revolution. Understanding of ANC policy, strategy and tactics and the overall development of political consciousness is a task you must all fulfil to be worthy members of our revolutionary vanguard. Organise and participate in all cultural and sporting activities.



Demonstration by our youth at the onset of the 1976 uprisings

To the Youth working in various ANC structures:

- Perfect the knowledge required for the fulfilment of your task in order to improve the quality of your contribution;
- To work in a comradely manner with every member of your department and ensure that the collective remains strong through your participation in efforts to improve the work of your collective;
- To display a high sense of discipline and a revolutionary attitude to work;
- To fulfil all tasks given you by the movement.

To the Students:

- Study seriously and honour all your academic requirements;
- Must participate in all regulations

governing your studies and your presence in the host country and show respect for the people and laws of that country. Study their history.

- Conform to all policy statements of the ANC regulating the conduct of students;
- Participate in solidarity activities for the promotion of our struggle and those of other people and students bearing in mind always our strategic objective of isolating the racist regime and winning new friends and supporters;
- Those who complete their various courses and disciplines should be ready to assume their new organisational tasks.

The Youth in MK:

- Perfect your military skills to

- increase qualitatively the already sophisticated attacks on various types of targets;
- Grasp all other non-military but related studies and programmes necessary for the task ahead;
 - Consolidate your readiness to perform any other tasks the movement assigns you, with devotion and commitment;
 - Be an honest and reliable soldier of the people, always ready to defend the people's cause and our movement.



Youth in the forefront of the mass political struggles in South Africa

Our Representatives in international organisations:

- Must be able, exemplary and worthy representatives for our people;
- Learn to adjust and work in comradeship and harmony with other people in the organisations you are seconded to;

- Safeguard the interest of our struggle and movement whilst promoting the causes of other people engaged in the anti-imperialist struggle;
- To be accountable whenever appropriate, both to the ANC and to the organisation you are representatives of.

You are, all of you, at all times and wherever you are, ambassadors of our people. Remember that our people's cause will be judged through your conduct.

Dear Comrades,

In focusing our sights on the revolutionary tasks of this conference and confident that as you disperse to your respective areas of operations at the end of your deliberations you will interpret to life all the decisions that will be adopted here, the National Executive Committee cannot do better than remind you of the words of one of the outstanding leaders of our revolutionary movement, former member of the NEC of the ANC and former General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, the late Comrade Moses Kotane —

'I should like to issue this appeal to the Youth of South Africa: At this hour of destiny, your country and your people need you. The future of South Africa is yours and it will be what you make of it.

'Remember our heroes who are today sacrificing their lives for the freedom of persecuted, terrorised and tortured people. Our gallant and heroic fighters expect every young South African to join the struggle for the freedom of our fatherland and our people... It is only through a grim and bitter armed struggle that the system of apartheid can be overthrown by the oppressed people of South Africa. We must fight.'

AMANDLA!
MAATLA!
POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

DISCUSSION ARTICLE—

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

BY B.N.

The strategic objective of a social revolution is the capture of state political power. The South African revolution is not unique in this. No less, and perhaps more important, is the question: in whose interests will state power be exercised? The people as a whole, or some narrow interest group? You see then that we cannot separate strategy from policy; armed struggle from the political line of the revolution.

Aims define strategy. And more. What we fight for determines who we fight with and against; who are the people's allies, who the enemy. It goes deeper. It focusses on "the people" — the main and allied forces comprising the national components making up "the people". The theory of our revolution, of which policy is a programmatic extract, gives character and direction to the struggle. At the same time we cannot really talk about the theory of a social revolution without at the same time defining the character of the social, economic and political set-up of the country. This is how the "Strategy and Tactics" document of the ANC states the latter point:

"South Africa's social and economic structures and the relationships which it generates are perhaps unique. It is not a colony, yet it has, in regard to the overwhelming majority of its people, most of the features of the classical colonial structures."

It follows from this characterisation of the socio-economic structure of present-day South Africa that our struggle has as one of its main features a deep anti-colonial content. This is important, because there are forces, even in Africa, who would argue that the South African question does not fall within the ambit of the United Nations Decolonisation demands.

This apart, how do we characterise the revolution in South Africa? We will attempt to restate the fundamentals of this question by reference to the two basic documents of our movement — the Freedom Charter and the Strategy, Tactics and Programme of the African National Congress of South Africa. We will try and do more to analyse their implications for our struggle.

Political and ideological clarity are the 11



120 Organisations and over 300 delegates

ANTI-SAIC COMMITTEE – NATAL
TRANSVAAL ANTI-SAIC COMMITTEE

P.O. BOX 48008, QUALBERT

Meeting of the anti-SAIC committees carrying forward the unity in action of the oppressed and democratic forces.

prerequisites of correct strategy. At a time when the revolutionary struggle within our country is maturing rapidly the enemy has chosen precisely these areas as part of the battleground. This is what Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, had in mind when he said:

“We must take into account the aspirations of our different population groups. We must gain and keep their trust. Bullets kill bodies, not beliefs ... The insurgent forces have no hope of success without the aid of the local population.”

The battle for the “hearts and minds” of the people requires from us a clear understanding of our goals and perspectives. We cannot assume that the fact of national oppression automatically drives the people to revolutionary positions. Our ideas have to be taken to the people and explained. Only when our ideas “capture the

imagination of the masses” can we speak of them as a material force for the revolution.

The 1949 Programme of Action

Our starting point must be that of our movement – with the Programme of Action adopted by the ANC in 1949. Without going into detail we can summarise the significance of this programme in the liberation movement’s search for a revolutionary theory with which to confront white domination. The Action Programme, inspired by the Youth League in which Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Anton Lembede and Ashby P. Mda, amongst others, played a leading role, broke with past traditions and methods of struggle in a number of important ways.

First, it placed on the agenda of black liberation mass political mobilisation and mass action as the basis of resistance and

confrontation against white supremacy rule;

Secondly, it postulated a programme of "immediate and active boycott, strike, civil disobedience and non-cooperation" (with the racist regime — ed) instead of petitions of grievances and demands by the leaders on behalf of the people;

Thirdly, it defined the goal of the struggle as "National Freedom" meaning "freedom from white domination and the attainment of political independence".

To this must be added a fourth and key element of future struggles, not referred to specifically in the Programme: solidarity and cooperation between the various oppressed national groups. Whatever the imperfections and limitations of the 1949 Programme, it sketched the core perspectives for revolutionary nationalism in South Africa. The Programme reflected the understanding by the ANC that the South African state, far from being impartial and above class interests, was indeed a source and instrument of national and class oppression. Nelson Mandela explained during the Treason Trial:

"Up to 1949 the leaders of the ANC had always acted in the hope that by merely pleading their cause, placing it before the authorities, they — the authorities — would change their hearts and extend to them all the rights that they were demanding ... the Programme of Action meant that the ANC was not going to rely on a change of heart. It was going to exert pressure (by the forms and methods of political action set out in the Programme — ed) to compel the authorities to grant its demands".

The ideas on cooperation and solidarity, made real by the Pact of Cooperation between the ANC and SAIC (the Xuma-Dadoo-Naicker Pact) in 1947 foreshadowed the formation of the Congress Alliance and set in motion the stirring mass campaigns of the 1950s.

In short, the Programme impelled the struggle in the direction of a national democratic revolution.

The Freedom Charter & Strategy and Tactics

Precisely the mass struggles of the fifties began posing the questions about the nature and goals of struggle which were to crystallise in the above policy documents. Clarification of means and ends became imperative as millions of people from all ethnic and national groups, social strata and classes, with diverse political and ideological positions joined in struggle against the apartheid system as a whole. The Freedom Charter grew out of the magnificent resistance and confrontations of the times. It encapsulated the deepest aspirations of the people and reflected these in a way never seen before. It was an organised attempt by people, organisation and leaders to answer the burning questions of the South African struggle.

Space does not permit to treat of every aspect of the Charter. We will confine ourselves only to those aspects which essentially underwrite the character and direction of our struggle.

Who are "the people", who the enemy?
The preamble to the Charter contains the key to our understanding of the politics of the South African struggle.

(1) *"... South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people ..."*

White supremacy rule has no legitimacy, because it is not based on the "will of all the people". Whatever status it enjoys amongst its international allies, it is a criminal authority imposed on the black majority and enforced by the rule of violence. The justness of our cause, including the means to attain it, relies precisely on the universally-held doctrine that no government can claim legitimacy unless it is a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people".

The statement also identifies a funda- 13



mental fact of South Africa's special-type colonialism – that the colonising “nation”, the white national groups, are only aliens in a historical sense. This point is further elaborated in “Strategy and Tactics”:

“What makes the structure unique and adds to its complexity is that the exploiting nation is not, as in the classical imperialist relationships, situated in a geographically distinct mother country, but is settled within the borders. What is more, the roots of the dominant nation have been embedded in our country by more than three centuries of presence. It is thus an alien body only in the historical sense”.

By refusing to define “the people” in skin terms the Charter strikes a blow at all reactionary approaches to the solution of the South African question. This has relevance not only to a free South Africa, but revolutionary strategy. All anti-racist and democratic forces have a place and role in the national democratic revolution. It also enables us to correctly define the enemy “under hidden colours”. As President Samora Machel of Mozambique said:

“In Mozambique the correct political line won over to the cause of national independence all races and social strata. We believe that no nation, no people can be defined on the basis of false and reactionary criteria such as the colour of the skin, tribal or regional origin ...”

It is precisely this approach that enables us to welcome within our ranks white revolutionaries and brand as reactionaries the Bantustan and President's Council placemen.

(ii) “... our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality ...”

Consistent with identifying “the people” the preamble defines the enemy, not as the white people, but “a form of government” – that is, the apartheid system and white supremacy rule.

(iii) "... only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief."

The only solution possible, the only alternative to race-capitalist rule is **complete democracy**. And this means black majority rule based on non-racialism and democracy. This goes to the heart of our revolution, because this perspective, this demand cannot be accommodated within the existing social order. Apartheid has to be defeated and destroyed for its complete realisation. It is this which distinguishes the non-racialism of the ANC from that of white liberals, who are prepared to concede black majority rule, but not the revolutionary means for its fulfilment.

The People – class & national aspects

Earlier, we spoke of the main and allied forces in the camp of the revolutionaries. No revolutionary can afford to obscure this distinction. The notion of "the people" must not allow of vagueness. We have to identify the main revolutionary force. Because of the operations and consequences of race-class oppression in South Africa our struggle has both a national and a class basis. These two aspects are inseparably bound, because black workers are oppressed both as members of a national group and as a class. It is this dual oppression which imparts to our struggle both class and national aspects simultaneously.

How then does the national democratic revolution view the relationship between the people and classes? The key elaboration is to be found in the "Strategy and Tactics" document. The main thrust of the present stage of the revolution lies in the "national liberation of the largest and most oppressed group – the African people". This therefore requires:

"the maximum mobilisation of the African people as a dispossessed and racially oppressed nation. This is the mainspring and it must not be weakened".

We see from this that it is the national struggle which dominates our approach to the struggle. However, this struggle is taking place in a country in which there is:

"a large and well developed working class whose class consciousness complements national consciousness and in which the independent expression of the working people – their political organs and trade unions – are very much part of the liberation front."

This is what Nelson Mandela had in mind when, as far back as 1953, in the aftermath of the Defiance Campaign, he wrote:

"The ties between the working people and Congress have been greatly strengthened. This is a development of the highest importance, because in a country such as ours a political organisation that does not receive the support of the workers (our emphasis - ed) is in fact paralysed on the very ground on which it has chosen to wage battle."

We seen then that our notion of "the people" identifies the African people as the main revolutionary force and the African working people as a decisive component within it.

Economic Emancipation

Politics cannot be separated from economics. It is "the concentrated expression of economics". Apart from our desire to do away with the inequality and injustice of race-rule what is the material basis of our struggle? Put in another way: will our drive for national liberation stop short of economic emancipation? Clearly the Freedom Charter says no to this. Our drive for national emancipation and economic liberation forms a single process. In an article written in Liberation after the adoption of the Freedom Charter, Nelson Mandela explained:

"The Charter is more than just a mere list of demands for democratic reforms. It is a revolutionary document precisely because the changes it envisages cannot be won without breaking up the *economic and political set-up (our emphasis - ed)* of present day South Africa."

and further on:

"It is true that in demanding the nationalisation of the banks, the gold mines, and the land, the Charter strikes a fatal blow at the financial and gold-mining monopolies and farming interests that have for centuries plundered the country and condemned its people to servitude. But such a step is imperative because the realisation of the Charter is inconceivable, in fact impossible, unless and until these monopolies are smashed and the national wealth of the country turned over to the people. To destroy these monopolies means the

termination of the exploitation of vast sections of the populace by mining kings and land barons and there will be a general rise in the living standards of the people."

For our revolution therefore no neo-colonial solution can be contemplated.

The national democratic revolution in South Africa we see rests on the twin pillars of political and economic emancipation. And because South African capitalism is inextricably bound up with international capitalism, because the South African economy is deeply penetrated by international multinational corporations our revolution has a deep-going anti-imperialist content.

In the final analysis the national democratic revolution in South Africa is a People's Revolution, for, by, and on behalf of the people. It is against racism, colonialism, and imperialism





REMEMBER HUKHUNE

This year, as the African National Congress commemorates its 70th anniversary, we also look back beyond the generation of the founding fathers of the ANC; to that generation which laid the foundation for later resistance, a generation which fought throughout the breadth and length of our country, arms in hand against the invaders. Surely, Sekhukhune I is an honourable representative of this generation.

In this year we also remember the centenary of his death on August 13, 1882. His name ranks high in the roll call of our fallen heroes. In his honour and remembrance we dedicate this article.

Sekhukhune's Empire

Sekhukhune was king of the Marota people (commonly called Bapedi) who originated from the Bakgatla of the Western Transvaal. He built his empire by entering into diplomatic marriages with various "dichabas", by admitting "refugees" into his empire and by military conquest. By the middle of the 19th century the Marota empire had grown to unite all the disparate people in the area under a common loyalty. Externally Sekhukhune laboured incessantly to join forces with other peoples – Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa, Tswana and Mozambicans – in a common struggle to defend their land

and liberty against the colonialists. Internally he allowed the door to the top of the Marota society to remain open to the best, even "outsiders" e.g. Swazi nationals.

The Marota lived in the land between the Vaal and Limpopo rivers. They regarded this territory as their country and admitted or excluded all comers to it.

The political landscape has, of course, changed greatly since those far-off days. After Sekhukhune's death, Pretoria divided Sekhukhuneland into small "tribal" units that owed allegiance not to one central Marota Authority but to "Native Commissioners". This effectively destroyed the Marota Empire. Thereafter all the Bapedis were forced to seek employment on white farms, in factories and mines as migrant labourers. Politically they were diverted into barren Bantustan politics. In a curious sort of way this fulfilled Sekhukhune's prophecy of December, 1879, that after him no other chief would be able to stand up to Pretoria since they would all be its tools.

Wars of Resistance

When Hendrick Potgieter and the Voortrekkers arrived in the Marota Empire in the middle of the 19th century, Sekhukhune's father, Sekwati (1775-1861), resisted them. In a famous battle at Phsiring in 1838 Sekwati defeated the Voortrekkers

by the simple tactic of establishing his stronghold on a hill and rolling stones down to push back the advancing invaders.

But Phsiring was insecure and so Sekwati moved his headquarters to Thaba Mosega (the fighting koppie) in the Lulu Mountains of the Eastern Transvaal from which his people were dislodged only by a series of bitter wars ending in December, 1879.

In 1846 the Boers, claiming to have purchased the land from the Swazis, sought to expel the Marota from the land east of the Tubatse (the so-called Steelpoort) River. They were rebuffed.

In 1865, Rev. Dr. Alexander Merensky (1837-1917), Superintendent of the Berlin Missionary Society and who had been welcomed among the Marota first by Sekwati and later by Sekhukhune, was expelled for activities that were deemed to be subversive of Sekhukhune's authority and favourable to the Pretoria Boers. He took refuge in Bochabelo, near Middleburg, where he established a Mission station and a school of that name. Merensky continued to play a double game, hunting with the hounds and running with the hares, until Sekhukhune disappeared from the scene in 1879 when the Boers rewarded him (Merensky) by granting him land in Maandagshoek from which he carried on his dubious activities under the cloak of religion.

Johannes Dinkoanyane, Sekhukhune's half-brother, at first supported Merensky and became a Lutheran convert. His stay in Bochabelo was short-lived and soon he was back with his followers in Spekboom Hills, in the Tubatse Valley. He assumed a very independent demeanour which Sekhukhune by no means discouraged. On March 7, 1876, Dinkoanyane detained a wagon load of wood belonging to one Jankowitz, a Boer farmer who had trespassed on Dinkoanyane's land to cut wood. At the same time false rumours of cattle theft spread — also false rumours to the effect that Dinkoanyane had burnt down Rev.

Nachtigal's German mission.

When the news reached Pretoria, an enraged President Thomas Francois Burgers decided to set out "to deal with the Sekhukhune menace" himself. Burgers quickly assembled an army of over 14,000 men, armed with 7 pounder Krupp guns and marched on Thaba Mosega, which he reached on August 1, 1876. He was supported by 2,500 African troops — these Africans fought in the hope that the land under Sekhukhune would be given to them after Sekhukhune was defeated.

Sekhukhune came to Dinkoanyane's rescue and, although Dinkoanyane himself was killed in action, Sekhukhune inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Boers and President Burgers.

When the heat was on, the Boers retreated pell-mell and did not stop till they had recrossed the Tubatse and then dispersed to their homes. In a word, the Boers literally ran away helter-skelter from the battle-field to their wives and children — "Huis toe" became their common cry!

They have not yet recovered fully from the charge of cowardice as a result of that performance. Burgers returned to Pretoria with his tail between his legs. He too never recovered. The prestige such as he ever possessed suffered and in due course he lost his position to Paul Kruger — an illiterate backwoodsman whose ugly monument dominates and disfigures Church Square in Pretoria to this day.

In response to the humiliating defeat suffered by President Burgers, the Boers sponsored an army of mercenaries (sometimes called the falstaffian gang of filibusters or free booters) styled the Lydenburg Volunteer Corps. Their leader was "a reckless adventurer of Diamond notoriety" named Conrad Hans von Schlieckmann, a German ex-officer and soldier of fortune who was closely connected with the German Establishment and who had fought under Otto von Bismarck in the Franco-German War of 1870-71. Other mercenaries were



Sekhukhune I

Gunn of Gunn, Alfred Aylward, Knapp, Woodford, Rubus, Adolf Kuhneisen, Dr. James Edward Ashton, Otto von Streitencron, George Eckersley, Bailey, Captain Reidel and others from America, Britain, Ireland, France, Germany, Austria and other European countries. They committed the grossest atrocities in the Tubatse Valley. All acted in total disregard of the British Foreign Enlistment Act, 1870; the American Neutrality or Foreign Enlistment Act, 1818 and similar laws.

They also acted with the connivance of their home countries. Many of these soldiers of fortune were recruited from the diamond diggings in Kimberley where they had gone in a vain search for diamonds. The Lydenburg area attracted them because it was said to hold large deposits of gold, diamonds and other precious minerals. So when Pretoria established the Lydenburg Volunteers Corps, von Schlieckmann's men fell for it. They fought fiercely from behind the rampart to avenge the defeat of President Burgers. They lost. Von Schlieckmann himself was killed in battle on November 17, 1876 and was succeeded by Alfred Aylward, an Irishman.

But this was not the end of the war — only of a battle, albeit an important one.

Sekhukhune versus the British

On April 12, 1877, Sir Theophilus Shepstone annexed the Transvaal on the pretext, inter alia, that a Boer Republic that failed to "pacify" the Bapedi threatened, by its very existence and weakness, to destabilise the British colonies of the Cape and Natal. Up to 1877 the British had "supported" Sekhukhune's attitude to the Boers.

Sekhukhune's attitude was that his Empire fell outside the jurisdiction of Pretoria; that the land between the Vaal and the Limpopo rivers belonged to him. that although he would never accept Boer rule, he might as a last resort, like Moshoeshe, accept Protectorate status under the British Crown.

However, after the British Annexation

of the Transvaal (April, 1877) British attitudes changed. James Grant, a Briton, confirmed:

"... the view taken by our government was that Sekhukhune was not a real rebel against the Transvaal, in-as-much as his territory formed no part of that dominion (Transvaal Republic), and that the war waged against him was an unjustifiable aggression against an independent ruler; but when, in 1877, the Transvaal was annexed, Sekhukhune's country was included without any question, in the new territory added to Britain's possessions".

Sekhukhune rejected this new British position scornfully. By March, 1878 drums of war were beating again in Sekhukhune-land — this time it was against the British.

Captain Clarke who was sent to subdue Sekhukhune, was routed with heavy loss of life and barely escaped with his life at Magnet Heights. Immediately after this first British failure to subdue Sekhukhune, a fully equipped force of 1,800 men under Colonel Rowlands made another attempt from August until October, 1878, to reduce Sekhukhune to submission. The mission failed (again with much loss of life on both sides) and had to be abandoned on October 6, 1878.

The British made a third attempt at subduing Sekhukhune in June/July 1879, under the command of Colonel Lanyon. This too failed to achieve the purpose.

There was little more the British could do at that time since they had on their hands colonial wars in the Eastern Cape Colony, in the Colony of Natal, in Lesotho (the Gun war), in Ashanti (Ghana), Afghanistan and Cyprus military logic forced them to await the outcome of these wars before challenging Sekhukhune again. This stage was reached after the Battle of Ulundi and the exile of King Cetshwayo to Britain.

Thereafter Sir Garnet Wolseley moved his motley troops of Britons, Boers and

Africans (10,000 Swazi troops) to bring down Sekhukhune.

This was the fourth British attempt to reduce Sekhukhune to submission. Wolseley chose November, 1879, for his move. It was a major military operation. Sir Wolseley's men moved in a pincer movement from Fort Kruger, Fort MacMac, Fort Weeber, Jane Furse, Bebo, Schoonoord, Lydenburg, Mphahlele, Nkoana, Steelpoort, Nchabeleng, Swaziland — literally from all sides — to Thaba Mosega. The battle raged furiously from November 28 to December 2, 1879.

Sekhukhune fought bravely with muskets obtained from Lesotho where he had royal support and French Missionaries as friends; from Kimberley Diamond fields where his people worked; from Delagoa Bay (Mozambique) with which he had close trade and other links.

The British used their more modern Mausers. Much life was lost. Sekhukhune himself lost his brave son and heir, Moroamoche, and fourteen other members of his immediate family. As the battle raged, Sekhukhune was taken by surprise in the form of an attack from behind by 10,000 African troops in the service of the British. These had been recruited on direct British instructions by Captain Macleod of Macleod (British political agent in Swaziland) and his Lieutenant Alister Campbell, R.N.. This surprise attack virtually brought the war to a close. Sekhukhune took refuge in Mamatamageng, the cave on Groot-vygenboom (high up in the Lulu Mountain), some 15 miles from Thaba Mosega. There he was cut off from all sources of food and water. So when on December 2, 1879, Captain Clarke and Commandant Ferreira were led to the cave and called him out, Sekhukhune had no choice but to comply. He was accompanied by his wife and children, his half-brother, Nkwemasogana, Makoropetse, Mphahle (a Swazi national) and a few attendants.

Commandant Ferreira, who was obsessed with the myth that Sekhukhune owned





large quantities of gold and diamonds, searched diligently but, alas, there was nothing.

So ended the colonial war against Sekhukhune. On December 9, 1879, Sekhukhune (then 65 years old), his wife, a baby, a child, Nkwemasogana, Mphahle, Makoropetse and a few generals were led to prison in Pretoria. He remained there until 1881.

In 1881, under article 23 of the Pretoria Convention which was signed between Britian and the Boers after the so-called First Boer War of Independence (the Boers had never accepted the British Annexation of the Transvaal) provided that Sekhukhune be set free and returned home. He could not return to Thaba Mosega, which had been burnt down in the war and which had fresh military associations, but to a nearby place called Manoge.

Sekhukhune Murdered

There on the night of August 13, 1882, he was murdered by his half-brother, Mampuru, who claimed that he was the lawful king of the Marota and that Sekhukhune had usurped the throne on Sep. 21, 1861, when their father Sekwati, died. Thereafter Mampuru, fearing arrest escaped and sought refuge first with Chief Marishane (Masemola) and later with Nyabela, king of the Ndebeles.

The Pretoria Boers asked Nyabela to surrender Mampuru for trial on a charge of murder. Nyabela refused, saying that Mampuru was in his (Nyabela's) stomach. Another war thus broke out between Nyabela and the Boers. It raged for almost a year — nine months to be precise. Ultimately Nyabela surrendered and gave up Mampuru to the Pretoria Boers. Marishane, Nyabela and Mampuru were tried in the Pretoria Supreme Court. On January 23, 1884 Marishane was sentenced to seven years imprisonment for having granted Mampuru temporary refuge and for "causing a tumult". He returned to his village Marishane (Mooifontein) thereafter to die.

Nyabela was sentenced to death (later commuted to life imprisonment) on September 22, 1883. Mampuru was sentenced to death for murder and rebellion and was hanged in Pretoria prison on November 22, 1883.

Thus ended one of the stormiest politico-military careers in our country. And thus too ended the great Marota Empire. It had been defended bravely against great odds.

.....

The death of Sekhukhune did not pass unnoticed. The London Times Newspaper of August 30, 1882, announced his death to the world and paid reluctant tribute to him in a long editorial. It, inter alia, said:

"...There is yet no sign of permanent peace among the native races of South Africa. We hear this morning from Durban of the death of one of the bravest of our former enemies, the Chief Sekhukhune. He with his son and fourteen followers, has been killed ... The news carries us some years back to the time when the name of Sekhukhune was a name of dread, first to the Dutch and then to the English Colonists of the Transvaal and Natal ... It was, indeed to a great extent the danger caused by the neighbourhood of this formidable chief that led to the annexation of the Transvaal by England. When war was declared against the Zulu king, operation went on simultaneously against Sekhukhune and early in 1879 his stronghold was attacked ... Obstacles stood in the way of these operations, and when after Ulundi, Sir Garnet Wolseley entered the Transvaal, he endeavoured to humiliate the Chief.

But Sekhukhune was safe, as he imagined, in an impregnable mountain fortress, and scornfully rejected the terms offered by the British General. It became necessary to attack him in force. A combined movement of columns, containing 2,000 English and 10,000 Swazis and other native troops was planned and carried out with great



skill, and on the 28th November, 1879, the kraal was taken by assault. Still the Chief and a great number of his men held the "koppie" and from the caves and cracks in the rock they poured an incessant fire upon their assailants. At last the Summit was gained, and after a desperate and sanguinary struggle, the enemy was subdued. Sekhukhune however, like Cetewayo, succeeded in escaping and was only captured a few days later. He was treated for a time as a State prisoner and his land was settled somewhat after the Zulu manner ... If, however, the death of Sekhukhune portends anything, it means that the displaced Chief in these Savage and warlike regions still retain some power, and that on occasion they are able to rise successfully against him who has superseded them ..."

This tribute, however, reluctant, is significant because it was paid at all – in the 19th century the Times Newspaper was not in the habit of devoting columns of editorial space to the passing of African kings. If that was the tribute of the British Establishment and a foe, we, Sekhukhune's heirs, can do no less. We must do more and pay proper tribute to Sekhukhune by continuing his struggle for land, liberty and our sacred honour. Such a struggle cannot fail. It shall succeed and so vindicate the heroic life of King Sekhukhune I, 1814-1882, whose just struggle we commemorated on August 13, the 100th anniversary of his death in 1882.

OBITUARY

COMRADE RUTH FIRST



Comrade Ruth First

The assassination of Comrade Ruth First has been greeted with outrage and sorrow by our people and the world democratic community at large. In Mozambique more than 2,000 people attended her funeral which was addressed by President Samora

Machel of Mozambique. In London a packed meeting of more than 600 heard tributes to Ruth First's life. Below SECHABA publishes an obituary for our Comrade Ruth First whose life's work was an outstanding contribution to our struggle.



Protest meeting against the threatened ban of the liberation paper 'The Guardian'

Our Comrade Ruth First was killed by a letter bomb on Tuesday, August 17th, in the office of Mozambique's Centre for African Studies. With her were the Centre's director, Aquino de Braganca, a lecturer at the Centre Bridget O'Laughlin, and a visiting ANC activist Pallo Jordan. All were injured. All were victims of the spawning South African state terrorism, which is spreading like a blood-poison throughout Southern Africa.

Ruth's murder is the latest — but surely not the last — in that long trail of murder and assassination which South Africa has made into its first line of defence of apartheid. It is a trail which stretches from murders carried out in Security Police establishments like those of Babla Saloojee and Steve Biko, to those done in prison cells, like Neil Aggett's and Tshifwiwa Muofhe's; to assassinations in South Africa's streets, as with lawyer Griffiths Mxenge, and assassinations abroad, as with Joe Gqabi in Zimbabwe and Petrus Nzima and his

wife in Swaziland; and to the slaughter by South African military 'kill and destroy' missions abroad, at Matola, Mozambique, in Namibia, in southern Angola, and in allegedly "unauthorised" ventures into Zimbabwe and the Seychelles.

It is sometimes claimed by armchair philosophers that, inevitably, terrorism begets counter-terror. Perhaps so. To date, South African experience is different; the acts of individual terror and assassination have all been by one side, all by the state against its opponents; their opponents, though their fighting wing Umkhonto we Sizwe have replied without assassinations, car bombs, letter bombs or murder, but with open para-military assaults on the centres of state power — police stations, army establishments, defence industries — from which the assassinations and assaults on neighbouring territories spring.

There may yet well come a time when the murders and assassinations of the 25

opponents of apartheid will provoke similar assassinations of establishment politicians, police and military chiefs. But that time has not yet come. This is not yet a time for blind revenge; it is still a time of sorrow and of anger for those who have been killed, of learning from their lives and from their deaths the way to a better South African tomorrow.

The first lesson that must be learnt is underlined bold and clear by the killing of Ruth First. It is that, for South African fighters against apartheid, eternal vigilance is the price of life as well as of liberty! The disease of apartheid terrorism is spreading like a mortal infection everywhere; and everywhere vigilance is the first essential for defence.

There is too the lesson that the apartheid state's appetite for terrorism and brutality does not diminish, but grows stronger with every setback it suffers. There was a time, not far back in recent history, when white supremacy was maintained by a low-keyed combination of white political power, operating a code of repressive laws and a regime of petty police brutality. Through successive regimes of Botha, Hertzog, Smuts and even Malan, the white state thus maintained a semblance of peace and order without recourse to assassination or institutionalised torture. No longer. White supremacy is under challenge from the South African people and their liberation movement headed by the African National Congress. In a single generation, the defence of the white state has passed from the low-keyed oppression through a spate of ever more draconian laws, to the present abrogation of law and the enthronement of torture and murder.

And still the old equation of white supremacy and black oppression can not be kept in equilibrium. There will be more resort to violence, and worse brutality to come. The reign of terror spreads beyond South Africa's frontiers to the places where liberation fighters have moved abroad; now to those who harbour them; and

finally -- if the incursions into Zimbabwe and the Seychelles are to be understood -- to the supporters of those who support them.

It is not necessary to ask whose was the hand that placed the bomb? Who made and posted the letter that killed Ruth First? Who kidnapped the Bulgarian engineers working to develop Mozambique's economy? Or who placed the dynamite that destroyed a bridge in Angola? Terrorism in Southern Africa is South African terrorism; it is prepared, planned, organised and paid for from Pretoria, wherever it occurs and whoever sets the final fuse. This too is a lesson learnt again from Ruth's death, as it has been from many that have gone before.

But there are lessons also from her life and her life's work. Ruth was a Communist, born of communist parents who were amongst the earliest members of the Party in South Africa. The main thread of her adult life -- which drew to her the fierce enmity of the South African state and finally their decision to eliminate her -- came from that communist matrix. Ruth's work for which she will be long remembered and whose legacy will remain -- united two sides of South African communism; the one, total dedication to the cause of black liberation as an essential preparation for South African socialism; the other, a belief in the abilities of the ordinary people to liberate themselves when roused to collective decision taking and collective action. If the Communist Party was a small, specially dedicated, specially active detachment of the people, its function was never to go-it-alone, but to serve as the kernel, the raising agent of collective mass action. The important passages of Ruth's life illustrate the point completely...

Consider her years as the Johannesburg reporter for the weekly 'Guardian'. The Guardian voice for the radical left -- for the Communist Party, for the trade unions, and for radical black nationalists. The left founded, financed, wrote and finally sold



Comrade Ruth First at a protest meeting in London

the journal on the city streets, making of it an organiser of the masses, a raising agent. Between the journalists and the whole liberation movement there was a two-way exchange: the journal built the movement, and the movement built the journal.

So too Ruth's most important and memorable journalistic exercise -- the expose of the farm labour scandal, in which black pass-law offenders in the

cities were being literally sold off. (see following article - ed) The Bethal farm labour scandal was more than a news scoop. It was in fact part of the whole two-way exchange between the Guardian and the liberation movement, begun long before, continued in the research of the story, and carried on into the potatoe boycott campaign which was its aftermath.

Ruth's greatest journalistic expose triggered the boycott campaign; but the 27

boycott campaign magnified the expose beyond a journalist's wildest dreams. It was perhaps the most powerful illustration of the symbiosis between her own work and the mass people's movement which characterised all Ruth's best and most memorable activities.

It was to be seen also in her editorship of the radical literary-political review 'Fighting Talk', in the 1950s. Again a journal directed, financed and circulated by the movement; informed by the critiques and opinions of the movement's spokesmen and thinkers, and in turn informing and educating a new generation of movement activists; sponsoring the new generation of young black writers who could find no other outlets in white South Africa for their talents - Alfred Hutchinson, Richard Rive and others; who in turn helped the remarkable move of the black intelligentsia towards the ANC in that period.

The symbiosis between Ruth and the mass movement in the mutual exchange in collective work led also to the success of her pioneering study of South West Africa - now Namibia - published by Penguin in 1963. Here she brought an acute analytical mind to bear on a systematic examination of that troubled territory not from the standpoint of the colonists and imperial administrators, but from the standpoint of the subject people. It was a book derived more from close fraternal contact with SWAPO activists than from the archives. Ruth's links with SWAPO were built on her credentials as an activist of the South African liberation movement; then provided the unique understanding and insights into Namibia's people's struggle which gave the book its significance and strength. And, in continuing the pattern of all Ruth's work, the book in turn reinforced that struggle, providing a comprehensive overview and analysis of Namibia.

For the period of her life in exile in Britain - 1964 -80, that close intimate link between her own work and the mass

movement and mass struggles of the South African people became stretched, the symbiotic links of her political life attenuated. Remote from the main centres of the South African struggle, cut off by vast distance from the daily process of mass development and growth, she devoted her formidable intellect and considerable energies to the British anti-apartheid movement and to the ANC mission in Britain.

But the powerful impulse was to be rediscovered, and to assert itself anew in Mozambique, in Maputo on what was intended to be a "temporary" assignment to the Centre for African Studies. Here she found again that great capacity for two-way interchange and mutual strengthening between her own special qualities and those of the masses. In this case, it was no longer in South Africa but in Mozambique - not with the ANC but with FRELIMO.

The motive springs were the same - to provide a people with information and strengths to enable it to carry through its own liberation, and pass from the colonial heritage to the socialist future. In her work in the Centre of African studies, guiding the research and investigation vital to Frelimo's decision-making on the tasks of the new state, all Ruth's experiences and skills combined; - her academic skills as sociologist and teacher, her journalistic skills as investigator and researcher, her political skills as organiser and raising agent for the masses. Again it was a two-way exchange, so characteristic of her life - Ruth and the Centre feeding Frelimo with the material for growth; Frelimo, and its activists and its mass contacts amongst the people feeding the Centre with the personnel, the inspiration and incentive for its growth.

It is in this profound inter-change between her own political work and the mass movement of the peoples towards socialism that Ruth made so deep and important an impress, and left so crucial an example for other activists in the movement to emulate. It is through this inter-

change that a part of her life has been left behind, living and growing in the people's movement, even after the assassins have done their work. And it is through this legacy she has left behind her for the whole of our movement that the final lesson may be drawn even in the time for mourning and of sorrow, even in the time of anger

and of loss. Ruth's life has helped to build and thus to leave behind her a movement strong in the certainty that, in the end of ends, it is not the assassins who will destroy our movement, but our movement for people's freedom which will destroy the assassins and their bombs.

RUTH FIRST AND NEW AGE

BY WOLFIE KODESH

I was sitting in my office at "New Age" when in walked an ill clad, gaunt looking man. He said he had a message to convey from a friend who was working on Potgieter's potato farm in the Heidelberg district of the Transvaal.

I quickly ushered him into Ruth's empty office and started furiously reporting the remarkable story he had to tell. It transpired that he had miraculously escaped from the farm and avoided the manhunt by lying doggo throughout the daytime and only moving about at night.

Half way through the interview, Ruth First appeared and immediately took over the story. It was a harrowing one. He told of starvation and of deaths from exhaustion and whippings on the farm; of work, bent

over from sunrise to sunset in long rows, picking up the potatoes while behind them were sjambok-carrying "baas boys" whipping anyone who straightened up through sheer exhaustion. All of these slave workers had been "bought" at the detention centres for pass offences. Immediately they arrived at the farm, their clothing was confiscated and they were issued with dusty hessian sacks which became their official dress for the whole period of their employment.

We were horrified by this story. It seemed incredible and unreal. But the purpose of his visit, he said, was to inform us about one of the labourers who had given him the name and address of his wife in Alexandra township. He had already 29

contacted her and she had directed him to our newspaper office for help. Her husband had been arrested within a stone's throw of their home but had not been allowed to produce his pass. He was fearful about the fate of his family who did not and could not know what had happened to him. As far as they were concerned he had virtually disappeared into outer space. Could we please help his unfortunate friend?

We certainly could. We immediately called in Comrade Joe Gqabi and devised a plan of action. Joe was a boxer and a very fit athlete at the time. He had joined the staff and already shown his fearless qualities.

Journey to Heidelberg

We would drive out to Heidelberg and find out the exact location of the farm. Joe would act as a docile, meek and ignorant person who was making enquiries about his cousin who, he had been informed by the police in Johannesburg, was working on this farm. All he wanted to do was to tell him that his family were well and could the "baas" just allow him to greet his relative. Then he could go back and tell the wife that the "baas" was looking well after her husband.

It had to sound plausible and he had to wheedle his way into the confidence of the farmer to allow him to identify the man as names did not mean a thing to the Boers. "A kaffer was a kaffer" and they were all alike.

I drove and after a few hours we arrived at our destination. It was a large farm bisected by a wide, asphalt road. Joe got out and without hesitation started walking down a sort of lane towards a farmhouse.

There were quite thick bushes along the length of the road, but by carefully peering through these, we could see the long rows of hessian-covered figures bent over at their labours in the fields. It was a clear, hot, close day and must have been torture for them.

Raised shallow mounds

While waiting for Joe to reappear, I chatted with Ruth and looked across at the opposite, open side of the farm and noticed a row of about a dozen corrugated type of raised, shallow mounds.

It brought back to me the memory of our landing in Berbera in British Somaliland during the "Abyssinian Campaign" in the Second World War. Our landing ship — virtually a rowing boat — had been forced by a strong wind far down the beach. When we landed, we had to make our way at the double, back to the position on the beach which was our correct point of landing. On the way we noticed that some parts of the beach had several bumpy patches. We were curious about this and with a few heavy kicks with our army boots, displaced the sand to reveal dead Italian soldiers underneath.

I mentioned this to Ruth and she agreed it could be a possibility that these were also shallow graves, if we were to believe the terrible story of murders and deaths from sheer exhaustion that we had recorded. In any case it was worth investigating she said.

After a short while, Joe came tearing out of the gateway. He bellowed for us to open the back door and dived in head first and shouted for me to "hurry up and go, man, go!"

My black chevrolet tore down that road at breakneck speed and after regaining his breath, Joe related what had happened.

He had succeeded in convincing the huge old Potgieter to "maak gou kaffer, praat met hom en dan hardloop vinnig uit die plaas uit", (Hurry up, kaffir, speak to him and then run quickly off the farm). He had started walking submissively towards the rows of men in the distance, when he heard a van draw up with a skid and saw an even bigger and younger giant of a man asking his father who the "kaffer" was walking down towards the field. Joe slowed up, sensing danger and heard the younger man saying "nee Vader" (no

Father) and starting up the engine of the van. Joe beat a hasty retreat and only because of his athleticism managed to avoid being run over by the van which skidded to a stop. But by the time the younger Potgieter could move out of the vehicle, Joe had sprinted up the the gate and got into the car.

We decided after a while to return, not only because it was the direction back to Johannesburg, but also to view the scene at the Potgieter farm. Joe would duck down as we passed by and sure enough as we drew level with the farm, there were three "baas boys" with sjamboks emerging on bicycles, obviously to search for Comrade Joe.

New Age leads investigation

Comrade Ruth immediately got our lawyer to clap an injunction of habeas corpus on Potgieter to produce the one man we were looking for and briefed all the national English papers about conditions on the farm and whetted their morbid appetites still more by suggesting the possibility of exhuming bodies to determine the cause of their deaths. They all took the bait as expected and as was necessary for our purposes.

Potgieter in his utter boorish ignorance duly produced the wanted man still clad in his hessian garments. At first the wife burst into tears because she said as she saw him alighting from the distant van, that this was not her husband. Ruth was dumbstruck. How could this be? But as he practically staggered towards them and eventually stood smiling at her, the wife acknowledged that this scarecrow of a man was indeed her husband. He was literally skin and bones.

They were duly reunited in a heart-rending and emotional scene.

Back at the farm in spite of all the latest advances in science, it was impossible



for the pathologists of both sides to determine the exact causes of death of the decomposed bodies which were unearthed and whom Potgieter contended had died from natural causes.

But because of the original story published by "New Age" through the pen of Ruth First and photographs by Joe Gqabi and taken up later by the national press, the ANC decided to launch the historic Potato Boycott which is now written into the history of our movement.

It is sad to relate that both Cdes. Ruth First and Joe Gqabi have perished at the hands of the racist assassins and terrorists.

But we should all be proud of the magnificent work they have accomplished in the intervening years as members of the ANC.

Long may their memory bring honour and inspiration to our revolution. They are two of the leading makers of our history. We must build our country on the basis of the Freedom Charter which both Ruth and Joe so strongly espoused and gave their lives to accomplish.

New Age leads investigation

SECHABA
and other
ANC Publications
are obtainable
from the following
ANC Addresses:



ALGERIA

5 rue Ben M'hidi Larbi
ALGIERS

ANGOLA

PO Box 3523,
LUANDA

BELGIUM

9c Rue de Russie, 1060
BRUXELLES

CANADA

PO Box 302, Adelaide Postal
Station, TORONTO,
Ontario M5C-2J4

CUBA

Calle 21a NR 20617
Esquina 214 Atabey,
HAVANA

EGYPT

5 Ahmad Hishmat Street,
Zamalek,
CAIRO

ETHIOPIA

PO Box 7483,
ADDIS ABABA

GERMAN DEM. REP.

Angerweg 2, Wilhelmsruh, 1106
BERLIN

GERMAN FED. REP.

Postfach 190140
5300 BONN 1

INDIA

Flat 68 – Bhagat Singh Market,
NEW DELHI – 1

ITALY

Via Capo d'Africa 47,
00184 ROME

MADAGASCAR

PO Box 80
TANANARIVE

NIGERIA

Federal Government Special
Guest House, Victoria Island,
LAGOS

SENEGAL

26 Avenue Albert Sarraut,
DAKAR

SWEDEN

PO Box 2073, S – 103 12,
STOCKHOLM 2

TANZANIA

PO Box 2239 DAR ES SALAAM
PO Box 680 MOROGORO

UNITED KINGDOM

PO Box 38, 28 Penton Street,
LONDON N19PR

UNITED STATES

801 Second Avenue, Apt. 405
NEW YORK, NYC 10017

ZAMBIA

PO Box 31791, LUSAKA

AMANDLA NGAWETHU MATLA KE A RONA

RUTH FIRST WILL BE AVENGED



THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES!