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EDITORIAL

The Regime Pinned Against the Wall

People's war in South Africa is the people's fierce resistance to the regime, their assault on the power of the state. It had already reached a new stage when the state of emergency was declared in July 1985. The emergency was an effort to intimidate; it was what the regime hoped was a trump card, desperately played, in an attempt to win in a situation it knew it could no longer control.

The emergency was no trump card. Resistance went on growing, and the offensive spread. Recently, the people of Alexandra have demonstrated for an end to police repression, and the whole town became a no-go zone in March, for the funeral of those shot by the police. There have been more demands for satisfactory inquests into the deaths of police victims. Consumer boycotts have been lifted for negotiation, and re-imposed when the demands of the people were not met. Among our people, and at the centre of our people's war, are the cadres of Umkhonto We Sizwe and there have recently been more MK actions. The bombing of police headquarters in Johannesburg can be compared with the bombing of those other closely-guarded installations, Sasol and Koeberg, and has proclaimed yet again that MK is everywhere.

Albertina Sisulu said at the funeral in Alexandra:

"The government is pinned against the wall, as the struggle intensifies."

It is true that the regime has nowhere to go from here. It has lifted the state of emergency, but what does that mean? Botha's statement on the lifting of the emergency was on a par with his other non-statements, like the one about 'power sharing' (which seems to refer to some new version of the tricameral parliament) and the one about 'citizenship for all South Africans' (by which he appears to mean no voting rights for Blacks).

Lifting the emergency meant as little as imposing it. Those detainees who were being held under the emergency regulations have been released, but some have been rearrested, for there are still no less than three clauses in the Internal Security Act providing for detention without trial, and people have been held under this law all along, and tortured in secret. The police and army are still in the townships, and the shooting hasn't stopped. The police have lost some of the powers the emergency gave them, but when were they ever restricted by the law? — they have long behaved as if they were above it. The vast Black majority of South Africans are still living in inferior housing or in cardboard shacks or in the open; are still living on starvation wages, or no wages at all if they are unemployed; are still being deported to die of hunger in bantustans with governments paid by Pretoria and as repressive and brutal as the Pretoria regime itself.

Who is Botha trying to deceive with his empty statements? He is hardly likely to deceive our supporters outside the country — those thousands of people throughout the world, who work and fight for democracy and whose campaigning threatens South Africa's trade, bank loans and supplies of fuel. He certainly hasn't deceived the people of South Africa, who are themselves suffering the shootings and the starvation.

He certainly hasn't deceived the African National Congress. We have pledged that this year will be one when the war is intensified further, and the attack on the regime will spread like fire. We have said we will fight until the aims of the Freedom Charter have become reality. In the words of another speaker at the Alexandra funeral:

"We shall defeat the system. We shall govern the country."

DEATH OF COMRADE MOSES MABHIDA

At the time of our going to press, the sad news reached us of the death of a great freedom fighter and an outstanding leader. Comrade Moses Mabhida, member of the national executives of the ANC and SACTU, and General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, died on the 8th March, at the age of 62

A full obituary will appear in the May issue of *Sechaba*.

"I WILL NOT BE BOUGHT"

Steve Tshwete Speaks to Cassius Mandla

Steve Tshwete

At the head of the valiant popular offensive that has reduced the apartheid regime's ability to misgovern our country for the second year running, marches the United Democratic Front (UDF). It is an organisation that marshals against the regime the most pre-eminent fighters for freedom. Steve Tshwete hails from its regional leadership in a region that decisively etched itself on the map of the fearsome confrontations that have been an ever-present feature of urban and peri-urban life since September 1984. This is the Border region. Included in this region are such areas as East London, Fort Beaufort, Queenstown, King William's Town, Adelaide and others. He led the UDF in this region as its president. Its strength was upwards of 200 affiliated organisations ranging from trade unions to students, civic and woman's organisations.

Graduate of the Isle

Tshwete's political apprenticeship was served in the ranks of the ANC. While studying at secondary school at King William's Town in 1958, he was introduced into the ANC by one of his teachers. He completed his matric after the ANC was banned but got involved in clandestine political activity. It was this activity that ultimately landed him on Robben Island. The charges laid against him when he was arrested in 1963 were split into three: advancing the cause of the ANC, soliciting funds for it and belonging to it. Each of these counts was worth five years in prison. In all he has served fifteen years on Robben Island since 1964.

He recounts his experience on the Isle rather stolidly. The depth of emotion that one expects is not perceptibly manifest. A few incidents are related, even then, casually, though the adjectives used are strong. Some incidents are now well known, after such publications as Albie Sachs' and Indres Naidoo's *Island in Chains*. In Tshwete's words:



"The position, generally, on Robben Island was very, very terrible, particularly from the period 1963-1972. We went through a very bitter period; because, as you will remember, at that time the morale of the fascist clique in our country was very high. They had routed our movement, our underground structures throughout the country. They had dumped a huge number of our people into prison, and they were believing that they were deep-freezing us by giving us long terms of imprisonment; that the people would ultimately forget about us, and that the freedom struggle in the country would ultimately come to an end. They never entertained any idea that the struggle for liberation is the product of the objective situation in our country; it's not something that is directed by certain individuals, by certain leaders, but that is born of the objective situation of brutal oppression and ruthless exploitation of our people inside the country. That is why their morale was so high in that period.

"Secondly, it was high because as you can remember, the nearest African state that was free, the nearest African state to South Africa at that

time was Tanzania. Zambia was still under colonial rule. Similarly with Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. So they were quite convinced that we would never be in a position at all to shake them, particularly from a military angle. That was their point of view. That was why they were so brutal in prison against us, particularly people associated with the ANC."

Death On Robben Island

"I remember, for instance, how one of our dearest comrades, Speedo Ncaphayi from Port Elizabeth, died as a result of deliberate exposure to cold on the Island; a very young comrade. The memory of his death still haunts me right up to the present moment. He was a friend of mine, and I was personally disturbed to see a young comrade being left to die without any medical treatment offered him at all. That was one example of brutal torture that we had to go through whilst serving our sentences on Robben Island.

"The conditions improved in the early seventies not out of change of heart on the part of the prison warders, but because of our own struggle inside the prison itself. We had to mount a number of hunger strikes we had to stage a number of court appearances, challenging the atrocities of the prison authorities. So even right inside prison itself the struggle had to continue. There was no time of resting, and saying okay we have just to allow them to do whatever they would do to us. We would never allow that sort of thing, we were prepared to fight even to death for that matter inside prison itself, for our own rights."

Offered An Olive Branch

It was not until the 22nd of March 1979 that he was released. On release he was presented with a banning order restricting him for two years. The banning order expired on 31 March 1981. He then returned full force to political activism.

After landing outside from the Island, Tshwete had Lennox Sebe, the leader of the Ciskei Bantustan, read the riot act to him. It was not done forthright. Sebe made it appear as a brotherly act of sympathy with one who had sacrificed for the cause of freedom. He offered the olive branch of a high-salaried ministerial post in the bantustan authority. His appeal was that Steve renounce the struggle and reconcile himself to the treachery

of bantustan politics.

"Sebe pointed out to me that he would never turn his back on any person who has been to Robben Island, and that he was urging me to accept a post, a cabinet post, in his so-called government, in recognition of the services that I had done towards the Black man, as he put it. This as he explained further, was a gesture of sympathy on his part, because I had come to find myself being left behind by my colleagues and contemporaries. I was not married, I had no decent house, my mother had passed away whilst I was in prison in 1971, there was absolutely nobody at home except for my ageing and ailing father. He was promising me the moon, that if I accept the position, then I would be provided with a decent house, I would get, as he put it, a White man's salary and would have even to go overseas and sell Ciskei's independence to such countries as Japan and the like.

I Will Never Falter

I had taken a vow, even before I left prison, that no matter how difficult my situation might be, I would never see myself compromising the position of the Congress movement, and the position of my people who have been waging a heroic struggle against the fragmentation of their country into bantustans right up to even that moment in time.

"So I was going to be part and parcel of the entire general mass struggle in our country. I was not going to be bought into positions of relative comfort for purposes of advancing the interests of a clique that has been bought by Pretoria at the expense of our revolution. So I declined the offer outright."

Thus was snubbed a hireling of the Pretoria regime. Out of his over-obsequiousness to his masters, he burnt his fingers. It was a triumph of the revolutionary politics of the Congress Movement over both the junk of the regime's own politics and that of its puppets. He was in all probability acting on behalf of his masters impelled by the belief that the venality characteristic of the hotchpotch of Botha's minions is shared by other Black people.

Standing In The Breach

The conflict of interest between Tshwete and Sebe did not end there. Double-barrelled assaults from both Sebe and his masters were to dog

Tshwete up to the moment he left the country in October 1985.

He was rejected by the Boers as a Ciskei citizen. Since he wanted to have no truck with Sebe, the bantustan leader sent his Security Police to hound him. As he was in an area known in the mumbo-jumbo of apartheid politics as a White corridor, sometimes Pretoria's Security Police would come after him, at others Sebe's. He was given no respite. Neither did he ask for quarter.

At one instance when the Ciskei lackeys were clamping down on the UDF in the border region they came for him but:

"I told them that: 'You have no right to come and arrest me because in terms of your own constitution this part of Peulton does not fall within your jurisdiction. This is South Africa; you are not policemen here. You are just a bunch of robbers and thugs. You have no right at all to come and detain me here.'

"I showed them a copy of the Supreme Court ruling to the effect that that section of Peulton was indeed South African territory. So I told them, 'You have no jurisdiction. Forget about me. If you want to arrest me, wait for me the other side of the railway line, which is Ciskei.'

"All members of the UDF in the region were being persecuted, but Steve stood in the breach with both the South African and Ciskei administrators trying every trick in the book to make life unbearable for him. Persecuting him on the part of the apartheid regime was not only the Department of Law and Order but that of Justice as well. At its most desperate, the regime used its Department of Home Affairs to get its own from an implacable adversary. In 1984 the Director-General of this department served notices on Steve in terms of the Aliens Act. He was thenceforth not to enter South Africa without a valid visa, for he was regarded as a Ciskian foreigner. He relates:

"...the White Security Police in King Williams Town, apparently on a tip-off from their hirelings in the Ciskei, came and visited me. They put the question to me: 'What is your attitude towards obtaining a visa? — because you are not supposed to be here; you are supposed to be outside this particular area; this is South African territory. What is your personal attitude towards obtaining a visa? — because in terms of the banishment order you must be in possession of a visa

to be here and a temporary resident's permit."

"I told them point blank that I am not going to apply for a visa. I am not going to apply for even a resident's permit, for that matter. This is my country. I am not going to be told by any other person that I must be carrying documents to be in the country of my birth".

At this point the discussion comes to centre on the UDF region he was leading, its strength and its activities. Its a subject on which he is very forthcoming, more enthusiastic than when narrating his experiences on the Island.

"In East London alone for instance there are over twenty affiliates of the United Democratic Front the biggest of them being the South African Allied Workers' Union, which carries membership of between 40 000 and 50 000 workers. In addition to SAAWU we have a variety of other equally big organisations, like civic organisations, students' organisations, church organisations, women's organisations youth organisations. And then you go to Queenstown: we have a similar assortment of organisations that belong to us there; from trade union organisations, students' organisations, church organisations. You go to Fort Beaufort, to Adelaide, to Bedford, to Alice, to the rural areas of the border region, the so-called Ciskei Republic. You find that organisations are mushrooming every single day there. Teachers' organisations, students' organisations, inside so-called Ciskei in open defiance of puppet Sebe."

UDF — AZAPO Clashes

How does he see the internecine clashes?

"Azapo wants to assert itself. I remember for instance during the burial of the victims of the (March 21, 1985) unrest at Uitenhage where Azapo came out to claim that United Democratic Front in their region had hijacked, that's the term they used, the funeral at Uitenhage and even gone to the extent of driving away people wearing Azapo T-shirts at the entrance to the stadium. That's the type of propaganda they were selling. "That was agent-provocateuring, certainly, because whatever differences they might have had with the United Democratic Front whatever insults they had felt they had suffered at the hands of the United Democratic Front in that region... they ought to have conducted discussions with the fraternal organisation, the UDF. When they came out openly in the press, attacking the United

Democratic Front certainly they were inviting a similar response from the UDF.

"This, of course, had to express itself in terms of first verbal clashes in Port Elizabeth, and then subsequently physical clashes. And then Azapo came out ultimately to be a factor that was used by the enemy to destabilise the United Democratic Front in that particular area. To destabilise an organisation which alone was engaging the enemy in stirring battles on a number of issues, civic, trade union, church and whatnot.

"Even if initially they had acted of their own free will, in due course the enemy seized the opportunity and used Azapo to mount sorties against the popular leadership of the United Democratic Front, in Port Elizabeth in particular. There are instances, no doubt about that, where Azapo people had to run to the Casspirs of the SADF when chased by our people, in broad daylight. And there are instances in which Azapo people were seen to be in the company of the SADF to launch attacks on properties and houses of our people in the region."

Mass Revolutionary Upsurge

He links the onset of the Azapo sorties against the UDF to the intensity of the mass revolutionary upsurge and the apartheid regime's counter offensive against the masses. The resistance itself he discusses with vehemence. It is of a character such as our country has never seen. Particularly striking, he asserts, is the emergence of what he terms "popular structures" that were not seen during the 1976-1977 bout of resistance.

"It is not the first time for instance, that we have an uprising of this nature. But I personally believe, and this is the view of quite a number of people inside the country, that there is a qualitative change in the present upsurge from what we saw in 1976.

"You take the type of language our people are using today. They talk in terms of liberated zones, which is an important new phenomenon, and which is an indication at the same time of the heavy presence of the influence of the spearhead of our revolution in South Africa, that is the African National Congress and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. You are left with no doubt in your mind when you listen to them singing, when you listen to them speak in buses, in

trains about their engagement with the enemy, that to a very large extent they have been inspired by the leadership of the African National Congress. You hear them talking about the leaders of the ANC, about Umkhonto we Sizwe; you hear them sing about the South Africa of their dreams, and quoting extensively from the Freedom Charter.

"As I have said to you that (there are) talks like — 'liberated zones' where the police, Community Councillors have been flushed out and people have instituted their own power structures, like for instance Peoples Courts which we never saw earlier; but today there are People's Courts and today there are *amabutho*. *Amabutho* are completely a new phenomenon, which originated in Port Elizabeth as organs which were meant to protect the leadership of the United Democratic Front against assaults by Azapo and the police and which ultimately spread to other areas of the country to such places like East London, Fort Beaufort, Adelaide, and Queenstown, Cape Town and even Natal and the Reef.

"Now this is a new phenomenon, which is very important. And even more important is the fact that these *amabutho* are not only attuned to protecting the leadership of the UDF inside the country, but they are propagating the politics of the Front. They are popularising whatever campaigns the Front is mounting like for instance, the consumer boycott. It is the responsibility of the *amabutho* to see to it that the consumer boycott becomes a success in the areas in which it is still operating.

"There are new features which are an indication of People's Power, an expression of People's Power, for instance, in such places like Uitenhage, where people actually have power in their own hands even if the enemy in future might come and reassert itself, but the crux of the issue is that up to the time of my departure from the country (that is in November 1985) there were those areas which were under the full control of our people, where our people had established their own area committees, their own street committees, their own People's Courts (and) they had their own cells. That's why I say that is an indication of the of the qualitative change from 1976 to 1985.



Funeral, Eastern Cape

It was at a funeral like this that Steve Tshwete came out of hiding and urged people to take the struggle into the White areas.

Motive Forces Of The Resistance

"This mass upsurge is born of the objective situation in the country is born of mass unemployment of the rising cost of living, of retrenchments, of repression and exploitation in general. It is not something that is superimposed. It's not something that is wished upon our people by a few agitators, so-called. But it's springing from the incubator of apartheid itself, it's apartheid that has hatched it, and as long as apartheid is still there, that is going to continue, no doubt about that.

"They might succeed perhaps in certain areas to 'quell' it, in their own words, but that is certainly temporary, in a situation where people have actually gone to the extent of erecting organs of popular power, as I've just enumerated.

"When young people, old people, when workers and students and church people, when the people decide to unite in the manner they are, it is because of the intensity of exploitation and oppression; it is because they feel the pangs, they feel the scourge of apartheid on their shoulders. Right enough, that, on its own, is not a condition for the type of resistance that we are witnessing inside the country.

"The people have to be organised, have to be directed; they have to be led. And in order for them to achieve these perspectives, there must

certainly be an organisation which is going to bring them together, which is going to set their immediate goals and their long term goals.

"The coming into being of the United Democratic Front in 1983 was a very important phenomenon. It was the UDF which was able to harness this mass anger, to give it direction, to point to certain targets, immediate targets and ultimate targets. That was the primary responsibility of the Front. So, to a very large extent, the United Democratic Front has played a very important role in giving direction to the present mass upsurge in the country and at the same time the African National Congress and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, together with its allies of course has always played a very important role as the spearhead of our revolution in the country. Because...even with the UDF being there, but without...the certainty that there is the organisation that is the only one that has been able to challenge the fascists in our country today, politically and militarily, quite effectively at that, the people of South Africa today would not be having all the courage they have to challenge the South African government as they are doing. They are doing what they are doing today because they know that they are being led by a politically powerful organisation the ANC and by a mighty military organisation in the MK"

THE CONSUMER BOYCOTT

A PEOPLE'S WEAPON

By Jean Middleton

The consumer boycott movement, which has now lasted since before the middle of 1985, has attracted attention and comment in the press both inside and outside South Africa. It has been remarkable for the inspired simplicity of the idea, for the highly politicised mass action that went into it, and for the response it has evoked from organised White business. Its results were dramatic (in spite of failure in a few regions) but it didn't require ordinary people to make themselves physically conspicuous, or even to go out in the streets more than they otherwise would. It became part of the huge national upsurge now taking place in South Africa, a fight for freedom in which different forms of struggle feed each other and are complementary to each other.

Consumer boycotts are not a new form of protest in South Africa; the tradition has its roots in the potato boycott of the late 1950s (a protest against conditions in the farm gaols of the potato-growing area of Bethel in the Transvaal), and even further back, in the Indian Congress practice of keeping *hartal*, when people made their protest by staying at home and not going to the shops. There have been the Black Christmases of recent years, when people refrained from celebrating and kept their buying to a minimum. Most of the earlier boycotts, though, have been directed against a certain industry — like the red meat boycott of 1979 — or against a certain manufacturer — like the boycott of Fatti's products of about the same period. The great movement of 1985-86 has been directed at shops belonging to people who are perceived as collaborators with the regime.

Pressure on White Voters

The vast majority of boycotted shops were owned by Whites. White businessmen were seen as a

voting constituency, which would be influenced by the drop in trade and would bring pressure to bear on the regime. Murphy Morobe, the UDF publicity secretary, supported the call as "a means of forcing the Botha government to heed our demands," and Jethro Dlalisa of the Transport and General Workers' Union in Johannesburg said, "We want them to feel the pain and do something." *The Sowetan* saw the ensuing negotiations as a way of talking directly to Whites, "not only through their own media."

Black shopkeepers who had collaborated with the regime were boycotted, while Whites who had opposed it were exempted. The Watson brothers of the Eastern Cape, for instance, were exempt because, some years before, they had registered their protest against the unequal facilities in apartheid sport by leaving their Whites-only rugby club and going to play for a Black team in Port Elizabeth. During the boycott their shops did a good trade.

Some Coloured, Indian and African shopkeepers who were community councillors, or who had taken part in the tricameral elections of 1984, were boycotted, and the campaign acted as another deterrent to these businessmen not to participate in the plans of the regime. Some believed that bringing this pressure to bear on them was a way of promoting unity, of drawing them into the struggle on the side of all the oppressed. At the beginning of the boycott, prices in the Black-owned township shops were generally higher than those in the White-owned shops in the cities, and some Black shop owners took advantage of the situation by marking their goods up even further: 40% mark-ups were reported in the Transvaal, and 50% in Port Elizabeth. The organisers of the boycott came to an arrangement with these traders in most areas.

Local and National Demands

In all regions, it was very clear what conditions had to be met before the boycott was to be called off.

Early on, and in country districts, the demands concerned local matters that could be put right by local action, like school buildings, toilets, taps, tarred roads, the right to graze cattle on the commonage. Later, after the declaration of the state of emergency, as police violence continued in the townships and activists were detained or murdered, the demands widened to include those that were becoming general throughout the country — that the state of emergency should be lifted, that the army and police should be withdrawn from the townships and that all political prisoners and detainees should be released. These were still accompanied by local demands in different areas — in East London, that the city council should end the harassment of Black hawkers, that Duncan Village should not be incorporated into the Ciskei, that local amenities should be made available to all sections of the community, and, in Colesburg, for satisfactory inquests into the deaths of those shot by the police.

The first organised boycott seems to have taken place in May, in Adelaide in the Eastern Cape, and it was supported by the Adelaide Youth Congress, COSAS, the Women's Association and the Residents' Association.

The campaign was taken up in other regions, and local consumer boycott committees were set up to organise and publicise it. Local democratic community organisations were represented on these committees — the UDF was in the forefront here — and trade unions. As a result, representatives already elected by the people became leaders of the boycott, and the boycott movement was linked even more firmly with other campaigns. Thousands of leaflets and pamphlets were distributed, and the boycotts were launched at public meetings. The campaign was supported by the ANC in a statement from Radio Freedom.

Drop in Sales

The success of the boycott became apparent in August, when it began to get a good deal of attention in the press. It was said that an estimated R2.2 billion was "at stake."

In Port Elizabeth, the sales of some shops dropped from 30% to 100%; some retailers started offering discounts of up to 50% on clothing.

Some small firms went under. The mayor of the town appealed for help from the State President, to save businessmen from financial ruin. In East London, where White shops had virtually no Black customers after July 29th, badly hit firms spoke of seeking drought aid: "We are suffering from financial drought," said the secretary of the East London Chamber of Commerce at the end of August. By October, sales in some East London shops had dropped by almost 100%.

The boycott was already spreading to the Western Cape, where it took the form of a boycott of major chain stores and large local shops. There it was supported by Allan Boesak; at a meeting in Worcester, just before the state of emergency was declared, he said:

"We can bring Worcester to a standstill within a few days if we refuse to buy from people who cannot treat you decently. Why should we make Worcester rich when these people vote for the National Party and keep P W Botha in power?"

It spread to the Transvaal — a headline in the *Weekly Mail* read, "Boycott Politics Sweep North". However, though it was effective in Pretoria (where, in August, some stores were reported to have suffered a drop of 40%), it did not reach its full effectiveness on the Reef till the end of the year.

Buthelezi Does the Work of the Regime

It spread to Natal. In the Pietermaritzburg area in August it had some success, having become linked with the boycott of BTR Sarmcol products, a protest against the sacking of 1 000 workers from the BTR Sarmcol plant in Howick. It was also successful in Mooi River, Hammarsdale and Pinetown. Nearer the coast, it was sabotaged. Gumede, President of the Inanda branch of National African Chambers of Commerce (NAFCOC), stated that his organisation could not support the boycott, which he said would hurt the South African economy and displease Gatsha Buthelezi. He called on citizens of KwaZulu to co-operate in crushing the boycott, and threatened with expulsion any local NAFCOC branch that entered into negotiations as a result of it. He claimed there had been "intimidation," and offered what he called "protection" to those who wanted to ignore the boycott call. Early in October, the local organisers of the boycott called the action off.

saying:

"We now believe that the continuation of the boycott threatens to divide rather than unify, due to the particular situation that exists in Natal. The Inanda Chamber of Commerce has openly and publicly threatened violence."

There are no prizes for guessing from what quarter violence was threatened; enough has been made public about the attacks made by the hit squads of Inkatha on the UDF, the community organisations and the unions in Natal. It seems clear that, in this act (which was against their financial interests, after all), NAFCOOC was acting as Buthelezi's agent.

Police Persecution

All over the country, and in vain, the regime used intimidation against the campaign, and this became merged in its whole policy of intimidation against the people. Shops were closed and their owners detained under the emergency regulations; in Tembisa, in August, seven shops were closed, and in the Eastern Cape, one shopkeeper was detained for four months. In Pretoria, police urged the public to ignore the call to boycott and to ignore pamphlets distributed by "spineless and nameless people." In the Eastern Cape, trade union spokesmen said police were forcing people to buy at White-owned shops. 'Cheeky' Watson claimed that they were coming into his shop and standing around and had questioned him as to why his shop was not boycotted. Later, the Watson brothers' house was destroyed by fire. In December and January, as the boycott began to bite on the Reef, shoppers at a supermarket in Krugersdorp reported being harassed; members of the General Workers' Union in Krugersdorp reported having been assaulted outside a shop by men arriving in a van.

At the beginning, chambers of commerce used subtler pressures. 40 000 pamphlets were dropped over Duncan Village, appealing to the "proud Xhosa nation" not to allow itself to be "bullied by a radical minority." Some shops that had been hit laid off Black workers, or put them on short time; Emma Mashinini of the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union saw this as intimidation, and an effort to "set Black against Black."

In Colesburg (where one of the demands was

for satisfactory inquests into the deaths of those killed by the police) the local retailers used strong-arm tactics. When they decided on the boycott, the people of the township chose to use two White-owned shops nearby, whose owners, they said, were "sympathetic to our cause." One of these shops was burgled, the other forced to close, and then the White shops in the town refused to serve Blacks. Worst of all, the residents of the township found their water supply was being cut off for five hours each day. When interviewed, the chairman of the local Sakekamer (an organisation of Chambers of Commerce dominated by Afrikaans-speaking businessmen) denied responsibility for the cutting off of water, but admitted that it was "not entirely incorrect" to say that pressure had been brought on the exempted stores to close; he also telephoned the police to come and remove the journalist who was interviewing him. Colesburg is a small, isolated country town and the boycott was crushed there, but the story in other towns was different.

Local Grievances Redressed

Most local chambers of commerce expressed themselves as anxious to redress the grievances of the people and put an end to the boycott.

They began negotiations with the boycott committees. In doing so they were forced to give recognition to the real leaders of the people, and seek them out. Here they found themselves in conflict with the regime, because many organisers active in the UDF were either in gaol or in hiding. The Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce said that the declaration of the state of emergency had "wrecked" its negotiations. When it petitioned Pretoria for an end to the state of emergency and safe conduct for those in hiding, so that negotiations could take place, it met — in the words of a spokesman — a "flat refusal."

This was the general pattern. At a local level the chambers of commerce found it possible to redress grievances, like basic services in townships, recreational facilities and so on; and some notable successes were achieved, as when the plan to give Duncan Village over to the Ciskei was shelved. When, however, they tried to take political action at a higher level, they found themselves frustrated by the regime.

The anxiety felt by White retailers in most regions was demonstrated when they began to

act as a country-wide organisation. As early as August, 80 representatives of chambers of commerce and White retailers from all over South Africa met in Johannesburg, with the president of Assocom (the national organisation of chambers of commerce) in the chair. They

discussed the implications of the emergency, especially boycotts and stayaways, and, according to press reports, "the importance of negotiation and communication." Raymond Ackerman, chairman of a supermarket chain, said he was setting up a committee of 10 businessmen to "use



Lingelihle residents at the Zenzele general store in the township. The boycott of shops in Cradock was launched immediately after the murders of Matthew Goniwe, Sparrow Mkhonto, Fort Calata and Sicelo Mhlawuli.

financial muscle" to "press for reform and to promote dialogue." A spokesman for Assocom said it was imperative for the government to start "meaningful negotiations with effective Black leaders across a broad political spectrum." John Malcomess, a Progressive Federal Party MP, said he had received more telephone calls about this issue than about any other in his political career. All this must have played a very large part in the pressure that finally took representatives of White business to Lusaka to hold 'talks' with the ANC.

Unity in Action

The action did, indeed, promote unity among the oppressed. A high degree of organisation was shown in the negotiations and in the response to them, and so was the enthusiasm, the political consciousness and political discipline of the people. Just as the action had been decided on at public meetings, so public meetings were again held for the negotiators to report back, and at these meetings decisions were usually taken to suspend the boycott and await results. In Lingelihle, the magistrate gave special permission for such a meeting to be held in a hall. The boycott in Port Elizabeth was finally suspended in early December, at a rally attended by 50 000 people; but only after the boycott leaders, released from detention in November, had conducted negotiations.

When results have not been forthcoming, boycotts have been reimposed after a certain period; in the course of such negotiations there have been three periods of boycott in Grahamstown, while the boycott in Pretoria was called off in January 1986, and imposed again in February.

The state of emergency has recently been lifted and those still imprisoned under the emergency regulations have been released, but the people of South Africa are still fighting for the police and army to be pulled out of the townships, and for the release of all political prisoners and detainees.

The White retailers were able to change the policies of local town and city councils, of which many of them are members, but the "flat refusal" they got from Pretoria when they suggested changes in national policy shows the limits of

their influence. It also shows the limitations of a boycott that is directed against retail outlets only. To be sure, this sector includes a number of large concerns, like supermarket chains (and some of them were badly hit), but it is a sector that is largely composed of small businesses. A boycott of this kind does not touch the wholesaler who supplies both township and city and who can increase the supply he sells to the township, if it suits his pocket to do so; nor the manufacturer of those goods, like food and other essentials, which people have been buying in the township shops. We should remember that it doesn't even touch all retailers, for those shops that do not normally depend on the custom of Blacks were left unaffected.

The boycott of retailers inevitably involved a drop in sales of certain commodities — those not generally sold in township stores, such as clothing and liquor. In the Eastern Cape, Coloureds and Africans account for 80% of the cheap wine trade, which dropped sharply as a result of the boycott of White-owned shops. In this way, the campaign moved to another level, in which it affected bigger interests, and it must have gained strength from this. Boycotts of selected commodities are a potentially powerful lever, and this is something we should, perhaps, bear in mind for the future.

Some commentators have seen the boycott of shops as having taken the struggle into the White areas. It has, indeed, taken the struggle on to White doorsteps; it has not yet taken it into the inner corridors of power. And yet, even within these limitations, the results of the boycott have been remarkable.

The buying power of four-fifths of the population — even if it is the poorest four-fifths — is a significant factor in the economy of any country, and to divert it or withdraw it must have significant effects. At a time when the whole country is boiling with protest, when the forces of the regime are using fire power, imprisonment, torture and all forms of intimidation against the people, the boycott is one of the weapons in the people's hands, and one that is all the more powerful because of its flexibility. There is no doubt that we have not seen the end of this present phase of boycott; neither is there any doubt that the boycott weapon will be used again.

UYADELA WENA OSULAPHO!

By Sello Moeti

"Uyadela wena Usolapho!" was a war cry of Zulu warriors during battles. The words literally mean, "happy are you, who are already there!" This article is dedicated to the 80th anniversary of what has come to be known as Bambatha Rebellion of 1906.

The months from April to July in 1906 were to see young African men take spears and rifles again. Old men with grey hair were picking up their old spears and marching hundreds of kilometres again in another battle of the old war, 250 years old it was at the time. This was the war of resistance to foreign, racist, colonial domination. A war many of whose battles we had won and many more had lost. But 1906 was to see the war which sometimes was silent, while one of the sides licked its wounds, break out into open warfare again. This time it was to be fought in Inkandla forest and Mapumulo. The battles in Inkandla and Mapumulo, closed a chapter, burying once and for all the ability of intelezi and the spear against the guns of the Whites. It opened the chapter of the warfare when the majority fight as the minority and the minority as the majority. The Inkandla and Mapumulo battles brought in these times when we, the majority, break into small groups chipping at the enemy's sides, slowly encircling him with our majority, they brought in this face of the war that is now becoming a genuine People's War.

If wars teach anyone anything, these battles showed clearly that without unity we are weak and without action, military action, we remain oppressed. As a befitting tribute to the warriors who 80 years ago stood up to be counted, we need to learn from their effort, make a thoroughgoing post mortem, to assess the damage done by our enemy and our own mistakes. We need to study carefully their experience not because we have any penchant for studying history. The reason is that war is still on. Indeed, now is escalating, deliberately started by us to take the things which were grabbed from us those 80 years ago and before then. So the best tribute to Bambatha, Cakijana, Mehlokazulu, Mtele Siganda and thousands of other warriors is to escalate this war taking their mistakes to heart, vowing never to repeat them.



NATAL AT THE TIME OF BAMBATHA

The Issues of the War

The main issue, the cause of the war of 1906, was the same issue as in the wars fought for more than 250 years before, the same issue that is at the heart of the conflict which has resulted in the Soweto, Uitenhage, Mamelodi massacres. The source of the problem was, as it still is, national oppression. Alien racist colonial domination. True, colonialism has changed in form from what it was in 1906. Today Britain, the original thief, has moved back, leaving kith and kin to pass on the stolen goods. Yet this is still essentially the same armed national struggle against foreign, racist colonial domination. The wars of resistance in the east coast had seen Isandlwana and other epic battles. But also there were the defeats of Income, Ulundi and others. The huge British colonial imperial army had merely won the battles. It wanted now to settle the war in its favour. The high point of colonial achievement is not just the looting of the defeated, the plunder of their economic and human resources, the rape of their culture and dehumanisation, but is above everything, to keep the defeated as loot themselves to generate even more wealth. It was in an attempt to develop us as fully fledged colonial vassals, hopelessly poor, barely managing to survive but able to generate wealth for Britain and its local kith and kin, that the British undertook the measures that provoked the war. This was the second major cause of the war of 1906.

Our Country Under Colonial Rule

The immediate political reality was that half of the world was under British rule. We too; after Ulundi in the East coast, the defeat of Sekhukhune in the North, the annexation of Lesotho, our whole country was finally under colonial rule. The phony Anglo-Boer War, the war of the falling out of the thieves, had just ended. Some Blacks, like Mahatma Gandhi had been loyal to the British empire. Others had helped the Afrikaners. The majority treated that war as the White man's war that it really was.

The White colonists in Natal fell into two categories. They were farmers and townspeople. The townspeople were few, engaged in an embryonic manufacturing industry and the professions. The farmers formed the majority, including the Afrikaner, and dominated the political life, asking for a responsible government

from Britain in 1874. They were given it in 1893. Africans in Natal were governed from Britain until 1897 when we were put under the colony. This was done after the whole country was divided into little chiefdoms, the only criterion for leading them being loyalty to Whites. Even Dinuzulu was declared a chief in charge of a few homesteads under the watchful eye of White magistrates. The leaders of the people to these magistrates were mere children, spies to control their people on behalf of the Whites. The sheer arrogance of the magistrates, the crude political control by the colonial regime, was another reason for the war.

The White population in Natal by the turn of the century was about 100 000 strong. 76% were British, (40% of whom being direct British born), 13% Afrikaner and 11% others with 101 000 strong Indians. With the rising population, the crop farmers among the Whites were taking the land with an amazing speed; in 1875 they cultivated 191 808 acres, in 1893 this had gone up to 519 744 acres and by the turn of the century this had reached about one million acres. In fact the area of White settlement was stretched to the border of Mozambique. While distributing the land at this pace, colonists demanded that not only those areas, which they had taken and announced as their own land, areas which have been populated even during the Difaqane but they wanted the two-thirds of the fertile land declared as Zululand by the colonial office, Inkandla and Nqutu area in particular as it was fertile and a good cattle country. The colonists had clearly not changed from the ways of the Cape Colony of riding a horse half a day and calling the area they had covered as their land. The people who fell under this type of land division were declared tenants and expected to comply with stiff rules of tenancy not to mention working for the farmers free of charge. Land therefore was one of the major issues at the root of the war.

Increasing The Yoke

It was however the stock farmers who were the most hostile to the Blacks whose land they were farming on. Firstly, they hated the existence of the stock farming African with his own herd of cattle. This African would not leave his fields to farm those of the Whites. He would not leave his stock to look after those of the Whites. In no way was he going to agree to control and use of

water, movement of cattle and other restrictions imposed by the newcomers. Besides ordinary competition, the stock farmers, like the tea and sugar growers, depended 100% on African labour. British colonial police records show that their most persistent complaint was that the Africans were not looking after their cattle and tilling the land for them. At first they resolved that Africans can only have a stipulated number of cattle and shot those that were supposedly in excess. Thus at the heart of the causes of the war was an attempt by the colonial regime of Britain through its local colonists to turn the African population into paupers who would work for the farmers and mine owners in the Transvaal.

To compound the already untenable relations of master and servant, colonised and coloniser which were crystallising, when a series of live stock and crop diseases broke out in Natal, they blamed it on the African. Rinderpest, lung-sickness, East Coast fever, scab and mange broke out and were said to be caused by African ownership of cattle and land on which they were farming. The White farmers not only called for heavy taxes on the Africans to increase their poverty so that they must work for them, but they used the outbreak of the diseases to kill many African cattle and to spread the diseases by mixing healthy cattle with sick ones and wholesale shooting of healthy cattle ostensibly as a quarantine measure.

"...Every Farmers' Conference that has taken place for the last ten or twelve years have agitated for an increased Hut Tax, and why? To increase the natives' wants and so bring about a better state of labour" so wrote a minister of Native Affairs of the colony in 1905. The Hut Tax was £2 when the annual income of Africans employed all year round by Whites was estimated at £3. The Master's and Servant's Law was "stiffened" and in 1905 the clamouring from the colonists finally produced the Poll Tax of £1 a year on all African males. It was to be a combination, this taxation and the way it was implemented, that was to light the war in Inkandla and Mapumulo.

The Warriors And Their War

The colonial administration and the local colonists in particular had long been expressing a wish to 'lick the natives into shape' and to 'knock

the hell out of them' as they had become 'insolent' and were 'getting out of hand.' All talk by the Africans of their rights was 'dangerous sedition mongering.' While imposing the heavy taxes on the Africans, openly stating that their aim was to make Africans poor so that they must work for them, on the other hand the Whites were at the same time preparing for war. They organised what was called Militia Reserve, started cadet training, had all men as members of a so-called Rifle Association and formed a Natal Volunteer Force. A Norwegian colonel, a certain Bru-de-Wold, was appointed the commander of their forces. He had written extensively on the "growing insolence of young natives and (their) disrespect for the White man". Not only did he speed up the militia reserve training, but he increased the acquisition of expanding bullets. The Mark V and VI bullets were acquired as "...the importance of dum-dum bullets with their greater stopping power when fighting 'members of savage races (who) it must be remembered are not creatures of nerves' was stressed." It was however another colonist called Duncan McKenzie who was to carry out the most atrocious crimes of that war. He gave Faku, whose people were supposed to be refusing to surrender their spears, the following order:

"I want fifteen head of cattle and all the assegais at Highflats. This is the last chance. (Faku had just brought in eleven assegais in response to a previous demand) He need not come to me with a few assegais; I will go and collect them if he does not bring them all and I will take every beast he has got and burn his kraals if the cattle and assegais are not there. He has to come to the store at Highflats tomorrow at this time"

The great Zulu War had ended to our disadvantage. The White colonial administration was extracting its pound of flesh. They demanded total submission. They were demanding all spears and guns. They had declared the land we stay on as their land. They were shooting and infecting the cattle with diseases. Young men had to be conscripted to do forced labour for the colony free and pay the other taxes and as from January 1906 the Poll Tax. The crops had to be sold to pay rent. Money had to be used to pay for permits to travel out of Natal. All of what remained of economic life was now going to be used for paying taxes to run an economy they open-

ly stated was for Whites only. Now they were demanding that Africans not only wear certain types of clothes but virtually tearing their backs for not showing 'proper respect for the White man.' All Africans resisted the taxes and when the Poll Tax was announced the pressures reached breaking point.

All Africans without exception resisted the Poll Tax. Even those Blacks who had listened to the missionaries telling them that they are sinners by living under their own rulers and 'loyal natives' found the taxes too much. In the beginning the resistance took the form of not paying covered with lots of excuses. But as time went on some communities started throwing away all things of European origin and killing animals with white colour. This would not do. The magistrates were demanding the tax. A state of emergency was declared. Colonial troops started haunting the land. Drumhead court martial was shooting people at random.

Bambatha was from the Zondi. He had been one of the leaders who were resisting the burden of taxes and had had a few brushes with the White man's law. At the end he resolved to fight. He first went to Dinuzulu to raise the necessary support. Failing this he went to the people themselves. Young men joined in their hundreds. They came from as far as the Rand mines to join in the war that was unfolding. The Whites were anxious and wanted to know why they were coming home in such numbers. "We have come to see our women," the men answered. Old men like Sigananda, in his nineties, joined him. Leading men like Ndube, Mpumela, Makubalo, sent many men to join the army.

On April 3rd they ambushed a group of White policemen at Mpanza valley, killing four. It was clear the army of the people was strong enough now. The colonists mobilised detachments of the Natal Police, the Greytown Reserve, the Natal Field Artillery and the Durban Light Infantry and in an elaborate plan encircled Mpanza valley. Bambatha and the African army was by then at Mome Gorge, 40 to 50 miles away. On the way they passed Hlangabeza and Gayede where they were joined by Mangati ka Godide. Mangati had not only been Cetshwayo's induna, but brought with him many men from the Ntulis. He was also the grandson of Ndlela, a warrior who became a legend in his own lifetime, serving under Shaka and Dingane after him.



Sigananda
A warrior in his nineties.

The second major encounter between the Warriors' Army and the more than 5 000 Whites mobilised from as far as London, Johannesburg, Cape Town and other places, paid for by the rich farmers and mine owners, was to be in Bobe Ridge. The White army was reinforced with about 3 000 of what is called "African levies". In all the several hundred strong Warriors' Army was faced with 8 000 well armed troops in 17 columns who converged on Bobe Ridge and Mome Gorge. 60 warriors were killed in this engagement. After this battle Bambatha separated with Sigananda. He, Cakijana, and Mangati headed to Macala Hills. Sigananda with part of the army went to Mome. After clashing with the warriors under Sigananda, forcing them to leave their bases, the White troops under Duncan McKenzie burnt down the grave of Cetshwayo which was in Mome Gorge as they looted the surrounding area, driving away cattle and burning down grain.

With the main forces of the Warriors' Army divided and overwhelmed by superior armed forces, the colonial troops moved down to the south of the Tugela river. Tula, a chief appointed



Pupils proclaim the new name of Clermont High on their school wall.



CHILDREN IN THE FRONT LINE

*Children in the townships use scrap metal as toys today.
Soldiers of Umkhonto we Sizwe tomorrow.*



11-year-old Fanie Kuduka spent 57 days in solitary detention despite two court hearings to secure his release. He was subsequently acquitted of a charge of public violence.

He is now in hiding. The police who assaulted him during detention still constantly hound him.



Released from detention. In spite of it, the struggle continues for these and many other children.



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by the government, was asked to surrender one of his subjects. He brought the man to the magistrate despite opposition from the people. He himself was arrested and the people in the meantime doctored themselves for war. Neighbouring groups jolted by the doubledealing of the British, who ostensibly were supposed to be protecting them, rebelled themselves. Mtele, Manuka were some of the people who took to the mountains in the South of the Tugela river. Mehlokazulu, who had a long history of fighting with the colonial forces, too, joined the war. Mehlokazulu, Mtele, and Nondubela went to the Qudeni mountains. On the second day of their arriving there, Lubuhlungu of the Faku people joined them. By the fourth week some of the people who survived the battles at Macala Hills joined the warriors in Qudeni mountains and were led by Faku's right hand man Babazeleni. Bambatha himself had gone to Usuthu where Dinuzulu was staying.

In the last week of May, the Warriors' Army attacked one of the columns of the colonial army at Mpukinyoni. Again the colonial troops proved superior not only in numbers but also in armament. The attack at Mpukinyoni was unlike the ones at Mome Gorge by Bambatha, where rifles were used and the engagements not long enough to allow the superiority of the colonial columns to come into play. At Mpukinyoni the battle formation was the old traditional type which relied on superior forces. Babazeleni's warriors were only about 800 in all. They were thus by far outnumbered and outclassed in every respect. As a result Babazeleni and about 100 of his men were killed. After this battle, the Warriors' Army moved to Nkonyeni forests near Nkombe.

McKenzie, using his superior forces, searched the whole of Inkandla forest, killing about 60 people there. On the 3rd of June warriors intercepted his troops at Manzipambana and by the 7th the warriors were all leaving the besieged fortress going in the direction of the mountains and hills of Qudeni and Macala. McKenzie, who had in the meantime been promoted to Supreme Command for his services was 'scouring' both sides of the Tugela looking for the Warriors' Army's base. It was only on the 9th that he got wind that Bambatha has been joined by Mehlokazulu and some men from Natal, from Ngobizembe in Nkonyeni forests and were moving back to the east

of Mome Gorge to link up with Sigananda. The information of Duncan McKenzie proved correct and on the night of the 10th he struck at the Warriors' Army's main body which had arrived at the spot only half a day earlier. Bambatha, Mehlokazulu, Nondubela, Mtele and a large number of their soldiers died in the attack. Only Mangati and Cajikana survived the attack and moved northwards into the terrain. The colonial forces cut off Bambatha's head. White historians now say it was for identification purposes. The old man Sigananda, now surrounded and isolated by numerically superior troops, surrendered and was taken prisoner. He died soon thereafter.

War In Mapumulo

After Inkandla, the colonists were overjoyed. Their governor was reporting to London that there was "no chance whatever of the rebellion spreading into Natal." Only the following day, warriors under Ndlovu ka Timuni attacked an army outpost at Thring's Post, Mapumulo, killing the soldier manning it and a Norwegian running a store there. They also ambushed a convoy of Natal's Mounted Rifles trying to cross Otimati River. Mapumulo had seen a series of brushes with the colonial authorities in January in which Ngobizembe, Meseni, Swaimana, Matshwili, Tshingumusi and Ndlovu ka Timuni himself in the jargon of the colonial officials were "severely punished for being disaffected" and allowing men to take ntelezi for war. When more and more troops from Inkandla passed through their areas, looting, plundering and lynching people for not 'showing proper respect for the White man,' Meseni, who himself had been in gaol two months earlier, distributed ntelezi among his men. In other areas of Natal the other leaders were forced to do the same.

The result was that by the end of June there were three main groups armed, and smaller ones too, operating independent of each other. They were "under Meseni, who was joined by some of Swaimana's people, under Ndlovu ka Timuni who was joined by Ngobizembi's followers under Sambela, and under Matshwili, joined by Tshingumusi's people, plus a number of people from a smaller chiefdom under Xegwana." At the same time McKenzie had established himself as strongman of the colonists and had moved his troops from the north to Mapumulo where they were joined by 2 500 White troops. In addition



Prisoners of war: Warriors captured during the Bambatha rebellion.

they were joined by 500 men from the Transvaal Mounted Rifles. Although Meseni sent word to Durban for all his people to come and fight and 1 000 dockworkers, 500 domestic servants and about 40% of the African Borough Police responded, the numbers were too small to overwhelm the huge army of McKenzie and too big for manoeuvre in Mapumulo's open plains.

Hence McKenzie, enjoying numerical superiority and all other factors, ordered his divisions to encircle Mtandeni where Meseni's main base was. Despite his network of agents and spies, McKenzie found only 1 500 'war huts' in Mtandeni. According to his version, his forces were ambushed "half-heartedly" by four groups of warriors later on as they marched to the Mapumulo-Esidumbeni Road going to Isizimba where Matshwili and Tshingumusi were lodged.

Matshwili and Tshingumusi had ambushed another convoy on the 2nd of July at Bond's Rift. On the 8th however the joint forces of McKenzie and his divisions attacked their main base in a surprise attack. Matshwili, his induna and his

sons were killed with about 600 of their soldiers. This battle virtually left Ndlovu ka Timuni as the main warrior leader still commanding large forces. He however dispersed his forces trying to leave Natal going north to Usuthu where they thought they might get support. But one by one Meseni, Macabacaba, and other leaders, leading small skirmishes against the colonial forces, were arrested before reaching Usuthu.

The colonial forces in the meantime unleashed a reign of terror, lynching, looting and plundering the whole area of Mapumulo as they had done in Zululand. Perhaps what they did can be judged from the following by the Bishop of Zululand: they "swept up large numbers of cattle and goats belonging to loyal natives indiscriminately ... They entered kraals of loyal natives and robbed them of clothes, blankets, mats and money ... Some of the women had clothes taken off their backs. Certain natives were found in hiding. They were brought into camp on the 5th (July) and five of them were shot ... The father of three of them was forcibly compelled to look on whilst his sons were shot ..."



The head of Bambatha, after it had been cut off by the colonial forces.

If this was the fate of those who supported the colonial troops, if this was the fate of those who listened to the missionaries, that their rulers were sinners only God of the missionaries knows what happened to the families of those who took part in the war.

Lessons And The Tribute

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the four months starting with April 1906 which have come to be known as Bambatha Rebellion. 80 years after the Bambatha Rebellion South Africa, not just Natal is in the throes of a violent armed liberation struggle. Accordingly, this anniversary is an appropriate tribute to the fighters, those courageous warriors of 1906 and at the same time a reminder that that war of anti-colonial struggle is continuing. Judging by the magnitude and ferocity of the present war, it is clear that the main lesson of the battles in Inkandla and Mapumulo forest have been learned well by the Blacks.

One of the immediate causes of the war was attempts by the colonial regime to impoverish us

so that we can work in the mines of Johannesburg and their farms. We are poor now and are working in the mines and their farms. This year the enemy is accordingly celebrating the centenary of the establishment of Johannesburg. We must be honouring the Bambathas, Mteles, Mehlokazulus, Sigandas and other heroes of 1906 and before then, indeed up till today.

The second most important thing to note and learn from the warriors is bravery. The sheer size of the might they were taking on with their spears and a few rifles is something to be proud of. It's not just an inspiration, it's a warning too to our enemy. Since we are still in the same war, fighting basically the same enemy it's necessary that we show ourselves worthy of their mantle. They took it from Makanda, Shaka, Sekhukhune, Hintsa, Mzilikazi before them. We need to take this standard of bravery to an even higher level. We must part ways with excuses however profound and refined they are and expel fear from our hearts.

The big lesson from the battles in Inkandla forest and Mapumulo, indeed from the war from 1652 to date, is unity. Unity in Action. The Bambatha Rebellion is one big lesson in lack of unity. It is obvious that had all the battles in Inkandla been planned from the same place consciously, the colonial forces would not have had it as easy as they did. It is obvious that the battles in Mapumulo should have been at the same time with those in Inkandla, not after. This applies to each and every battle and every region of the country. That is why we now must protect the unity of the African people, and all the democratic forces like the apple of our eyes. Without unity we are weak and without action we will remain weak and oppressed. Unity not of wishes, intentions, but of purpose, unity of action. It was in order to remedy this disunity that the warriors of old joined in the formation of the African National Congress six years later in 1912. The ANC is therefore the place to push the war to a new level.

Umkhonto we Sizwe? That is the proper place, in 1986, the Year of the People's Army, to wash the spears!



ANC STATEMENTS

Communique of the Meeting between the ANC and Inyandza National Movement

A meeting was held in March between the ANC and the Inyandza National Movement, the ruling party in KaNgwane. Enoch Mabuza, Chief Minister of KaNgwane and leader of the Inyandza delegation, told a press conference after the meeting that Inyandza was urging other bantustan leaders to "be on the side of the ANC." President Tambo of the ANC said that it was the first time the ANC had met a "high powered" delegation from one of the bantustans. At the press conference, the ANC issued the following communique:

Delegations of the Inyandza National Movement and the African National Congress met in Lusaka from the 1st to the 3rd of March, 1986. The delegations, composed of 21 persons each, were led by their respective Presidents, Enos Mabuza and Oliver Tambo.

The meeting took place at the request of Inyandza reflecting the conviction of Inyandza that the fundamental problem facing our country, the question of political power, cannot be resolved without the participation of the ANC, which is recognised by the majority of the people of South Africa as their leader and genuine representative.

The ANC welcomed the decision of Inyandza and saw it as a very important step towards the further consolidation of the unity of our people and of the democratic movement of our country, of which Inyandza is an integral part.

After extensive discussions on the current internal and international situation, characterised by a warm spirit of comradeship, the two delegations agreed on a number of important issues.

They agreed that the solution to the problems facing our country lies in the institution of a system of majority rule in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Accordingly they were united in their opposition to the entire system of 'separate development' as represented by such institutions as the tricameral parliament, the bantustans, the community councils, the

Regional Services Councils, the proposed National Statutory Council and so on.

The delegation of Inyandza explained that the principal task facing their movement is the organisation of the people to be part of the forces fighting for a democratic South Africa. To achieve this task, Inyandza is committed to non-violent means of struggle. The ANC expressed its full understanding and support for these positions.

The delegation of the ANC also reported to the meeting on its policy, its strategy and tactics. The ANC emphasised the need for the greatest possible mobilisation of all the people of our country to join in united political action against the apartheid regime. Equally, and in combination with the mass political struggle, the ANC also stressed the importance of the armed struggle to defend the people against the enemy armed forces and to give the people the possibility to seize power from a White minority regime which holds on to power by the use of force.

Inyandza expressed its understanding of the reasons which forced the ANC to resort to armed struggle and explained that as a result of the meeting it had gained a better understanding of the strategy of the ANC as a whole.

The two delegations agreed that each organisation would continue to act in its own way, in accordance with its own decisions, independently arrived at, in pursuit of the common objective of the birth of a genuinely democratic South Africa. In this regard, the two sides agreed about the need for regular consultations between the two organisations in the interests of the speediest transformation of South Africa into a democratic country.

The two delegations agreed that it was important that other political organisations working within the Pretoria-created institutions should, in the interest of all the people of our country, actively involve themselves in the struggle for the genuine liberation of our country. In this regard,

the two delegations agreed that it is important that these organisations should work in co-operation and not in competition with the rest of the democratic movement of South Africa.

The two delegations agreed that it is of central importance that the campaign for the immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners should develop with even greater intensity. They agreed that both their organisations would do their utmost in pursuit of this goal.

The two delegations further agreed that the obstacle to a negotiated resolution of the South African problem is the Botha regime. They con-

cluded that no negotiations are possible while the leaders of the people are in prison and while the Pretoria regime refuses to accept that our country should be governed by all its people, both Black and White, as equals, brothers and sisters.

The delegations of Inyandza and the ANC expressed great confidence that the victory of the people over the system of White minority rule is not far off. They agreed that both organisations would spare nothing in the struggle to realise this objective.

The two organisations agreed that they would meet again at a time to be agreed upon between them.

ANC Pays Tribute to Olof Palme

Olof Palme, the Prime Minister of Sweden, was murdered in Stockholm on the 28th February, 1986. President Tambo of the ANC sent the following message of condolence to Ingvar Carlsson, the Deputy Prime Minister.

We have received with extreme shock and heartfelt grief news of the death of our very dear brother, the Prime Minister of Sweden, Olof Palme — a death that came as a lightning bolt out of the cloudless skies.

The unspeakable crime of his assassination has sent a stunning shock wave throughout the ranks of the leadership and membership of the African National Congress and the millions of our people. We had come to know him not only as a leader of the Swedish people and an international statesman, but also as one of us, a fellow combatant who has made an inestimable contribution to the struggle for the liberation of South Africa.

The murderer's gun that fired the fatal shot was aimed directly against the ANC and our people as well, because none can benefit from this enormously horrendous crime except the oppressors and exploiters, and first and foremost among them the Pretoria regime. We who saw him only a week ago, drawing strength from his confidence in the proximity of our victory, know it in our hearts that even as he breathed his last, his thoughts were about those who are struggling for their emancipation, for a decent life in conditions of liberty and for a world free of wars. From Vietnam to Nicaragua, from El Salvador

to Palestine, from Sahara to South Africa, across the face of the globe, the flags hang limp and at half mast in loving memory of this giant of justice who had become a citizen of the world, a brother and comrade to all who are downtrodden.

As we march forward towards the accomplishment of Olof Palme's dream of a lifetime, the liberation of South Africa, his name will be on our banners, his memory in our hearts and minds and his example a driving impulse to us who must be prepared to give our lives as he did his own. Standing by his deathbed, to him and the Swedish people who raised for us an outstanding champion of our struggle and a standard bearer of our cause throughout the world, we pledge that we will vindicate his confidence in us by ridding our people of the murderous apartheid system and transform South Africa into a united, democratic, non-racial and peaceful country.

On behalf of the ANC and the people of South Africa, we extend our deepest and heartfelt condolences to the Government and brother people of Sweden as well as the SAP and the Swedish labour movement as whole.

Please also accept my most sincere condolences to you all, dear friends, and to Olof Palme's family, especially his dear wife, Lisbeth. I shall forever cherish his friendship and miss his comradeship with an intensity that defies description.

May he rest in peace.

3rd March, 1986.

ANC INTERNATIONAL

'KATHRADA HOUSE' IN LONDON.

In February, one of the buildings of the Polytechnic of Central London was named 'Kathrada House' in honour of our imprisoned comrade, Ahmed Kathrada, who was one of the accused in the Rivonia trial in 1964, and who has now served nearly 22 years of a life sentence in South Africa.

The main speaker at the ceremony was Comrade Paul Joseph, who knew Comrade Kathrada well in the 1950s. He spoke of Kathrada's loyalty and dedication, of his fighting and campaigning spirit. He told how Kathrada was offered an amnesty in 1973 and refused it; how he was offered conditional release in 1985, and refused again. He quoted a letter Kathrada sent to a friend in 1985:

"To many it may have seemed as if we were a hairsbreadth away from 'freedom.' But in fact, from the very moment the announcement was made it was a non-starter.

"Now I don't want to indulge in any false modesty when I say I have not got that stuff that heroes are made of. But really I did not have to go through any sleepless nights to arrive at a decision. It was so patently designed to humiliate me that there just could be no other decision for me but to reject it."

Paul Joseph added:

"Such is the quality of the man you have today honoured."

ANC AND SACTU SPEAKERS TOUR DENMARK

Three representatives of the South African liberation movement made a speaking tour of Denmark in November and December 1985: Comrades Johnson Makatini, head of the International Department of the ANC, Dennis Goldberg of the ANC (who spent 20 years in gaol in South Africa)

and Bonisile Norushe of SACTU.

Their visit was well covered by the Danish media. Comrade Makatini, who had gone to Denmark to hear a debate in the Danish parliament on the intensifying sanctions against South Africa, held a press conference together with Comrades Aaron Mnisi, ANC representative in Denmark, and Jimmy Joseph, SWAPO representative in Sweden. He told the press:

"We are very encouraged by the attention we are getting in this part of the world ... Sanctions alone don't do it, but they are an important supplement to the struggle."

FINNISH SUPPORT FOR OUR STRUGGLE

The Finnish Transport and General Workers' Union has effectively imposed an embargo on the import and export of all goods to and from South Africa. In many other ways, as well, the democratic people of Finland are joining hands with the oppressed people of South Africa in our common struggle for peace and social justice, and their support is taking a concrete and material form.

Finnish Women Extend Solidarity

At the invitation of the Democratic League of Finnish Women, two representatives of the ANC Women's Section were invited to address the Fourth Working Women's Forum held in Helsinki on the week-end of the 1st and 2nd of March.

This impressive gathering of over 1 700 working women, drawn from all parts of Finland, came together to discuss the problems they faced in the factories and places of work and in their homes and communities as workers.

They called for peace and international co-operation, not simply as the absence of war in

general, but linked it to the necessary conditions of development and the ending of hunger and poverty everywhere. They also declared that as long as such a crime against humanity as apartheid is allowed to exist they could not consider themselves to be living under conditions of peace.

These Finnish women, workers and peace activists, extended their solidarity to the people of South Africa through the ANC, and expressed their resolve to campaign for the total isolation of Pretoria and to step up their support for the ANC.

Through the Democratic League of Finnish Women, the women of Finland have undertaken to fund a project to establish two women's houses for mothers with children and young girls who are forced to flee the ravages of the war that South Africa is wreaking upon them.

Students Support ANC and SWAPO

A resolution adopted by the National Union of Finnish Students at its annual conference in November 1985, condemned the system of apartheid, the illegal occupation of Namibia, and the attacks on Angola. It called for an end to the state of emergency, for the freeing of Nelson Mandela, for freedom of movement for Black citizens of South Africa and for democratic elections. It demanded that Finland cut off all its relations with the South African regime, and support the ANC and SWAPO, and appealed to all states and peoples of the world to work for the total boycott of the Republic of South Africa.

Bus for SOMAFCO

In Helsinki, a couple named Helena and Risto Kekkonen were convinced of the importance of SOMAFCO. They made a film about the school, wrote in a number of journals, and finally raised enough money for the materials needed to build a bus for the complex at Mazimbu. They then persuaded all the workers at the Kutter factory to donate their labour and time, something they willingly did once they had learned something about education under apartheid and what SOMAFCO stands for.

SWEDISH RACEHORSE RACES FOR THE ANC

In 1984, Bengt Nordenbrand of Stockholm in Sweden bought a half share in a young racehorse, which, he says, has grown into a promising

horse, one of the best in Sweden. He has promised to donate all his share of the prize money earned by this horse to the children of South Africa, via the ANC. He has already sent 11 600 Swedish kroner to the ANC, and hopes to send a lot more this year.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

From time to time, in this column, we print extracts from letters we have received in the *Sechaba* office, from friends and supporters in different parts of the world.

Among the letters we have received recently, is one from **Spain**, from the Institute of Political Studies in Africa and Latin America:

"We have ... the possibility of publishing — here in Madrid — a book about Nelson Mandela ... not only to tell the story of his life but the story of his fighting, the story of the ANC, the struggle of the South African Black people, the external alliances of Pretoria, etc ...

"Please write to us your point of view ... and good luck to you."

From **Italy**, Father Sergio Agustoni of the Verona Fathers also asked for information:

"... I want to manifest my deep appreciation for your work, and my solidarity with the struggle South African people are carrying on ... I cooperate with the Italian magazine, *Nigrizia*. ... we would like to present some figures of the South African resistance. We are looking for material on Winnie Mandela, the wife of Nelson, and the Rev. Allan Boesak. We ... hope that a better information will contribute to create greater sensibility and solidarity with your struggle."

From the **United States**, Booker T Evans of Chicago wrote:

"I would like to say that we here in the Afro-American community support the struggle against racist domination in Southern Africa.

"There is a good deal of support here for the end of slavery in South Africa. Everyone, even the children on the street, speak of it!

"Last year, when I was in Brazil, the Afro-Brazilian community was very concerned about the state of affairs in South Africa.

"I buy *Sechaba* on the newsstand."

DUAL POWER AND THE CREATION OF PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES

By Alex Mashinini

South Africa has undoubtedly come to be one of the most volatile of conflict-torn areas in world politics today. The regime has plunged irretrievably into deep social, political and economic crisis. The declaration of the state of emergency is evidence, if any is needed, that the social engineering measures of the regime, presented as reforms, have dismally failed, and is a further acknowledgement on the part of the Botha clique that it has lost control over the government of the country. Apartheid is increasingly becoming unworkable. The level of mass political and military participation in the struggle for liberation has shown us the possibility of revolution.

The economy is in a shambles, and the prospects of recovery are as dim as those of political stability. Foreign investors are quitting the country in large numbers, and the threat of international economic sanctions is looming large.

Yet all these developments — a product of sacrifices, selflessness and determination by our people and their international friends — have brought new complex challenges.

How to Sharpen the Spear?

How, then, do we sharpen the spear to drive back the apartheid monster, and finally defeat it? Which methods and principles for revolutionary action should we employ to deepen the enemy crisis still further, to render the rule of the enemy ineffective and finally to smash him?

So far, much has been written on such strategic aspects of our revolution as protracted people's war, arming of the masses, embryonic forms of self-government and popular power, insurrection and so on — important questions at the present stage, ones which have been subject to much debate and discussion, and which cry for greater clarity.

At such crucial and historic moments as the present one, we need a coherent, clear and unambiguous strategic perspective as regards these questions; not only for the purpose of greater understanding within the liberation movement itself, but also (and this is very important) because we must always strive to impart to our people the course of events in our national democratic revolution. We need to:

*"advance our aims more comprehensively and boldly at such a time, so that our slogans shall always be in advance of the revolutionary initiative of the masses, serve as a beacon, reveal to them our democratic ideals ... and show them the shortest and most direct route to complete, absolute and decisive victory." (V I Lenin, *Two Tactics of Social Democracy*.)*

What do we mean by such concepts and categories as people's war, the arming of the masses, insurrection, embryonic forms of self-government and popular power, and so on, as they are related to South Africa's own set of concrete and historical conditions?

We should guard against a tendency to provide prescriptions and definitions which do not bear the least affinity to the essence of our national democratic revolution, and against amorphous approaches which collapse these concepts and categories into a whole, while failing to distinguish the order of priorities and the likely course and sequence of events in our revolution.

Here, we shall confine ourselves to discussing the issue of **dual power**, and embryonic forms of self-government and popular power.

Colonialism of a Special Type

The South African liberation movement describes the social, political and economic rela-

tionship prevailing in our country as that of colonialism of a special type. Unfortunately, this thesis is mostly understood in geographic terms, in which the coloniser (the White minority state) lives side by side, and coexists, with the colonised (the Black majority), and also in terms of the relations of domination and subjugation.

But in terms of the revolution, this thesis cuts across the whole social fibre of South African society. It exposes and lays bare those conditions in South Africa which make it a reality that the struggle of the oppressed majority has to be waged along two dialectically connected lines.

When the struggle against White domination in South Africa came to a point where peaceful methods of struggle alone proved inadequate, the people became disillusioned with peaceful methods. Despite the enormous sacrifices and hardships it would entail, they were prepared to support the strategy of armed struggle and to participate in it. The first necessity, then, was to embark on armed struggle, as it could be conceived of in conditions of colonialism (see *Strategy and Tactics of the ANC*, adopted at the Morogoro Conference, 1969).

At the same time, the highly developed capitalism of South Africa (a feature not found in any other colonial situation) has given rise to a large Black working class, relatively highly organised and class-conscious, with a political experience and maturity arising from half a century of mass political mobilisation. This brought to the fore of the struggle the issue of insurrection, as it can be conceived of in any highly developed capitalist country.

Mass Political Action and Armed Struggle

The objective existence of these two conditions serves as a material foundation for the strategy of combining mass political action with armed struggle, and gives meaning to it. They also expose those conditions in the South African revolution which make the relationship between armed struggle and insurrection a reality, and not an academic exercise.

Having said this, we should not lose sight of the fact that ours is a national democratic revolution, which seeks, by the application of revolutionary violence, to replace the present White racist minority rule with the rule of the majority, based on the democratic principles of the Freedom Charter.

We accept, not only in principle but also in all its implications, the eventuality of an armed uprising, an insurrection, as a culmination of the combination of mass political action with armed struggle. It then becomes necessary not only to seek to understand this relationship but also to emphasise, always, the particular needs and demands of the struggle that this necessity imposes on every stage of our revolution.

People's War

The liberation movement has adopted the strategy of a people's war. It is a war in which our entire nation is engaged — Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people's army, workers, the rural masses, women, students, intellectuals, the religious community and so on — collectively in groups, and as organised individuals. They use all forms of revolutionary warfare — armed and non-combat, legal and illegal — to attack and destroy all symbols, structures and organs of apartheid power, including all those who man them. The underlying principle here is that all these forms of revolutionary warfare, even those aimed at achieving certain short-term goals, should have as their long-term and fundamental objective, the total destruction of the South African system.

But the nature of our forces and those of the enemy makes it necessary that we protract our war. This, as a guiding principle, will offer us an opportunity to build, consolidate and develop our forces from our present weak position to that of material and moral superiority over the enemy.

Ours, therefore, is a protracted people's war as a means in a revolutionary process towards the ultimate build-up into an insurrectionary overthrow of the South African state.

What, then, are the immediate tasks of the vanguard movement at the present stage of our revolution? In which areas of activity should we put more emphasis in the development of our strategy of a people's war?

The journals and policy statements of the liberation movement have singled out certain areas of activity where we should move with urgency. These include consolidating and extending the underground structures of the ANC, the intensification of the armed struggle, the training and arming of the masses (see the ANC January 8th Message, 1986). We shall confine ourselves here to the issue of the emerging embryonic forms of self-government and popular



Duncan Village, December 1985

power, and the creation of people's committees, in the belief that the other issues have been thoroughly (though not exhaustively) discussed and debated, and have become part of the day-to-day routine work of the vanguard movement in the execution of the struggle.

Dual Power

In executing the strategy of a people's war, the liberation movement, headed by the ANC, has evolved specific and concrete tactical offensive positions for our people to make apartheid unworkable and the country ungovernable. The enthusiasm with which our people carried this out shook, and is still shaking, even the most unconcerned observers both in South Africa and abroad. The campaign is sapping the central power of apartheid rule and stretching it to its limits, by destroying its local organs of administration and control. In most of the areas torn by upsurge, government-instituted community councils have been destroyed, and those who man them have either been killed or forced to resign. Black police and informers have been forced, through mass revolutionary violence, to quit most of the townships.

Thus, in several areas of the country, we have what the press has come to term 'no-go areas.' These are the areas in which the police have maintained a conspicuous absence, except when patrolling in large military convoys. In other areas, the people have not paid rent since September 1984!

Apartheid is increasingly becoming unworkable, and the country is rapidly degenerating into a state of complete ungovernability. How, then, do we appraise these developments? What tactical inroads have been made, what challenges are presented? What strategic shifts is the revolution likely to experience through the cumulative impact of these campaigns?

These are questions to which the vanguard movement must seriously address itself, not only for the purpose of its own inner clarity, but, above all, to give aim, purpose, guidance and leadership to the mass democratic movement.

In South Africa today, the enemy can no longer rule in the same old way. There is a considerable measure of independent action on the part of the masses, who are enforcing their will, both against that of the ruling classes, and parallel with it. As a result, there has emerged (but not yet on a na-

tional scale) a peculiar form of dual power, not in an administrative, but in a political sense.

Let us clarify what we actually mean by this peculiar form of dual power, so as to ward off any unwarranted optimism, which can only lead to a confusion of priorities.

Local Organs of Power Disintegrating

We are far from implying that two governments exist in South Africa today. Quite the contrary! There is still one central government in power, that of the racists, which still kills and maims our people, which taxes and exploits our people, which enacts laws and imposes them on our people. There is this difference: it is the racist government which has lost, and is still losing, control over its local organs of Black administration and law enforcement. It is a central government whose local organs of power are being gradually undermined by the masses, and indeed, are disintegrating. It is therefore a central government which, given the unabated continuity and escalation of these campaigns, will in the end remain a centre without reference co-ordinates, and therefore isolated and irrelevant.

But let us not lose sight of the fact that this is but an aspect (legislative and executive at Black local levels) of the South African apartheid system. Its state, whose purpose it is to protect and sustain by force of arms the rule of the White racist minority over the democratic majority, is still intact.

It is therefore in the light of this that the real power of the majority can only be achieved after the revolution has smashed and dismantled this state power.

"All revolutions are about state power. Ours is no exception." (ANC January 8th Message, 1986)

This, therefore, is the nature of this peculiar form of dual power, which signifies that the 'crisis of power' has already dawned in the South African revolution.

But our analysis of this peculiar form of dual power would indeed be incomplete if we omitted to look into the significance of this development for the entire course of our revolution.

Embryonic Popular Power

First and foremost, this development signifies the emergence, still embryonic, still incipient, of organs of self-government and popular power.

These are organs which have rejected the illegitimate rule of apartheid, which are challenging the apartheid authorities for the control of these areas, emerging, therefore, as the alternative power. They are, and should be seen as, what Lenin in *Letters From Afar* called "organs of insurrection," which, when that moment arrives, will be called upon to rise, arms in hands, and seize power.

Now, given the escalation of these campaigns in which the apartheid system is increasingly becoming unworkable, in which the country is rapidly degenerating into a state of complete ungovernability, and in which "the democratic movement has emerged as the alternative power,"¹ it goes without saying that these embryonic organs of power have to be strengthened, consolidated and developed.

What, then are the immediate and concrete tasks of the vanguard movement in providing leadership and guidance to these new revolutionary developments? Which concrete methods of organisation and slogans of mobilisation should the vanguard movement advance and pursue, to meet these new conditions of struggle?

The urgent task of the vanguard movement in these new conditions of struggle is to "transform these areas (no-go-areas) into mass revolutionary bases,"² through which we can realise our strategy of a people's war. We can do this by, among other things, creating in these areas local Revolutionary People's Committees, as a rallying slogan, and also as organs of self-government and popular power, and as organs of insurrection.

Is the slogan of creating Revolutionary People's Committees an appropriate one to meet the revolutionary demands of our times? Will it serve to show the mass of our people in their present endeavour to make apartheid unworkable and to render the country ungovernable, the aim and likely course of the revolution towards the armed seizure of power and its transfer into the hands of the democratic majority, for the establishment of a people's power? Why not, for example, refer to these organs as local People's Communes? These are questions of topical importance if our slogans, together with our mobilisation and organisational tasks are not to end up in revolutionary phrase-mongering and misguided actions!

A Rallying Slogan

We believe that these local committees, firstly as a rallying slogan, are not only appropriate, but revolutionary as well, precisely because they answer the question: What is to be done in those areas where the local organs of apartheid power have been destroyed by the people?

They are not only appropriate, but revolutionary as well, precisely because in those areas where the democratic movement has emerged as the alternative power, where the popular will has been asserted, the consolidation, strengthening and development of this alternative power can only be organised, created and guided. It is unthinkable that these forms of alternative power could be organised and guided without a clear strategy that maps out their organisation and guidance. Any approach which fails to recognise the need to organise, create and guide these forms of alternative power into Revolutionary People's Committees will not only be sheer idle talk, but will also be noxious to the whole course of the development of our revolution, for such an approach neglects this trend to its own spontaneity.

Should we call them People's Communes? No. What if people ask (as they will, of course, do) what these communes are? The answer will unavoidably have to be provided by way of the historical experiences of the Paris Commune of 1871, which was defeated by counter-revolution. While we value the rich experiences of the Paris Commune, we should, at the same time, not live in the memories of the past. This can only:

*"confuse the minds of the people with the distant echo of sonorous phrases or empty rhetoric. The more we cherish the memory of the Paris Commune, the less permissible it is to refer to it offhand, without analysing its mistakes and the special conditions attending it." (V I Lenin, *Two Tactics of Social Democracy*)*

We will call them Revolutionary People's Committees, precisely because they address themselves to the very essence of the popular and democratic nature of our revolution, which seeks to establish a People's Power.

We will call them Revolutionary People's Committees, precisely because they address themselves to, and seek to implement, the democratic provisions of the People's Charter — the Freedom Charter!

Tasks of the Committees

The urgent tasks of these People's Committees is to seek to implement the provisions of the Freedom Charter, by:

- Organising the masses and transforming the no-go areas into strong mass revolutionary bases to provide the ground for the growth and development of our people's army and for the escalation of our people's war,
- Transforming these areas into strong mass revolutionary bases to serve as organs of insurrection and self-government.
- Ensuring, through action, that the expelled and rejected organs of apartheid power do not return to these areas,
- Escalating, and spreading to yet unaffected areas, the campaign of making apartheid unworkable and rendering the country ungovernable, and other important issues.

It is clear from this that we are far from suggesting that these People's Committees, where they exist, should implement the democratic provisions of the Freedom Charter.

Mind-Defying Miracles of the Revolution

We deliberately used the term, "seek to implement" these provisions through the destruction of the local organs of apartheid power, through the combination of mass political action with armed struggle. To suggest, therefore, that these People's Committees cannot be created, let alone defended, on the basis of arguments that project the superior military power of the apartheid state, is to lapse into the much-discredited 'theory of processes,' is to undermine the revolutionary potential of the masses (who in times of revolution are capable of mind-defying miracles) thereby negating the very essence of our revolutionary war, which is to fight and act, and to act and fight.

As revolutionaries, our duty is not to put obstacles before the revolution, but to surmount them.

"We must use our organised mass strength and, by attacking, consolidate our victorious emergence as the alternative power." (ANC January 8th Message, 1986)

In conclusion, let us dedicate a few words to the strategic benefits and advantages which will accrue from the creation, consolidation and

development of Revolutionary People's Committees.

This becomes an issue of the utmost importance in the light of the present fluidity (this is objective) of the revolutionary upsurge inside the country, and which has opened vast avenues of possibilities. Among other things, there is the likely probability of a sustained nation-wide uprising, with nation-wide industrial and community action, continued students' boycott and upsurges throughout the country. This is not an expression of blind optimism or an attempt at 'revolutionary prophesying,' but, on the contrary, is a realisation that, as Clausewitz said, there is no form of human activity that:

"stands so constantly and so generally in close connection with chance as war."

The calculation of probabilities should, therefore, accompany the execution of war.

The creation, consolidation and development of Revolutionary People's Committees, both as organs of self-government and popular power and of insurrection, will therefore (and in any eventuality) serve as indicators to:

- How loyal the people are to the democratic ideals, programme and leadership of the vanguard movement, the ANC, and
- How organised they are in the townships, villages, districts, regions and finally, therefore, on a national scale.

The initiative is in our hands! Let us cling to it like grim death!

Footnotes:

1. ANC January 8th Message, 1986.
2. Ibid.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Editor
Sechaba

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would be grateful if you would provide space in your magazine for this letter.

On behalf of the Muslim people of the Republic of South Africa and Zimbabwe, I wish to pledge our support for your struggle against oppression in South Africa.

The Muslim freedom movements of South Africa, in particular, wish to reaffirm their support for your struggle against injustice, and to reinforce that your struggle is their struggle. Furthermore, the South African Muslim liberation movements and their representatives express their desire for both your groups, the Muslim and the ANC movements, to reach a mutual understanding, to dismantle the racist apparatus and to bring freedom to the people of South Africa.

Those Muslims fighting in the cause of justice are urged to action not only by the injustice and suffering inflicted on the people, but by the injunctions found in Islam's holiest book, the Holy Quran, to actively struggle against oppression. I quote:

74.

Let those fight
In the cause of God
Who sell the life of this world
For the Hereafter
To him who fighteth
In the cause of God —
Whether he is slain
Or gets victory —
Soon shall We give him
A reward of great (value)

75.

And why should ye not
Fight in the cause of God
And of those who, being weak,
Are ill-treated (and oppressed)?
Men, women and children
Whose cry is: "Our Lord!"
Rescue us from this town,
Whose people are oppressors,

And raise us from Thee
One who will protect;
And raise for us from Thee
One who will help!

76.

Those who believe
Fight in the cause of God
And those who reject faith
Fight in the cause of Evil
So fight ye against the
Friends of Satan: feeble indeed
Is the cunning of Satan.

The ANC and Muslim liberation movements should find unity in their purpose and goal. Undivided, they must strive to defeat the enemy and so achieve justice and order.

May your struggles eventuate in a peaceful solution, and may God continue to assist your groups in this noble and important task.

Yours sincerely,
R Z Ezat (Miss)
(Zimbabwean Muslim woman)

Harare,
12th February, 1986.



*Demonstration at a Moslem funeral,
Athlone in the Cape.*

TO BENJAMIN MOLOISE

O Moloise
With the wrath
Of an ash-strewn mother
Poetry ever vigilant
Receives you tonight.

Standing upright
In the flowing light
Of your verse,
Standing tall
As your people
Dark and slender
As the cypress.

Benjamin, take to heart
That of all the poets
And peoples of your time
You are admired.

Our peoples hearkened,
Startled at the close
Of your verse
Flowing free
As a great river
And surging forth
At the hour of your death.

Like a thunderbolt
Fell the news
Striking the very hearts
Of our peoples.

We heard you speak, O Benjamin,
Of your time
In words glowing and winged,
And saw you bent
Over the list of martyred poets
With your reflective jetstone gaze
Shining down the corridors
Of time.

We saw you harvesting
With your pen
All the tears and bitterness
Of the season.

Saw the pen guided
By those firm fingers
As if they comprised
Your very essence.

Now our words like great fans
Lie screened in the dense foliage
Of the wood
Stirring the motionless air
Of eternity
With midnight octaves.

Moloise, Benjamin
The butterflies of Greece
Small partisans
Would load the lilies
Of your land like gunbarrels
With the sulphurous pollen of the pine.

In these times
Poets
Are closing in
On the gallows of shame,

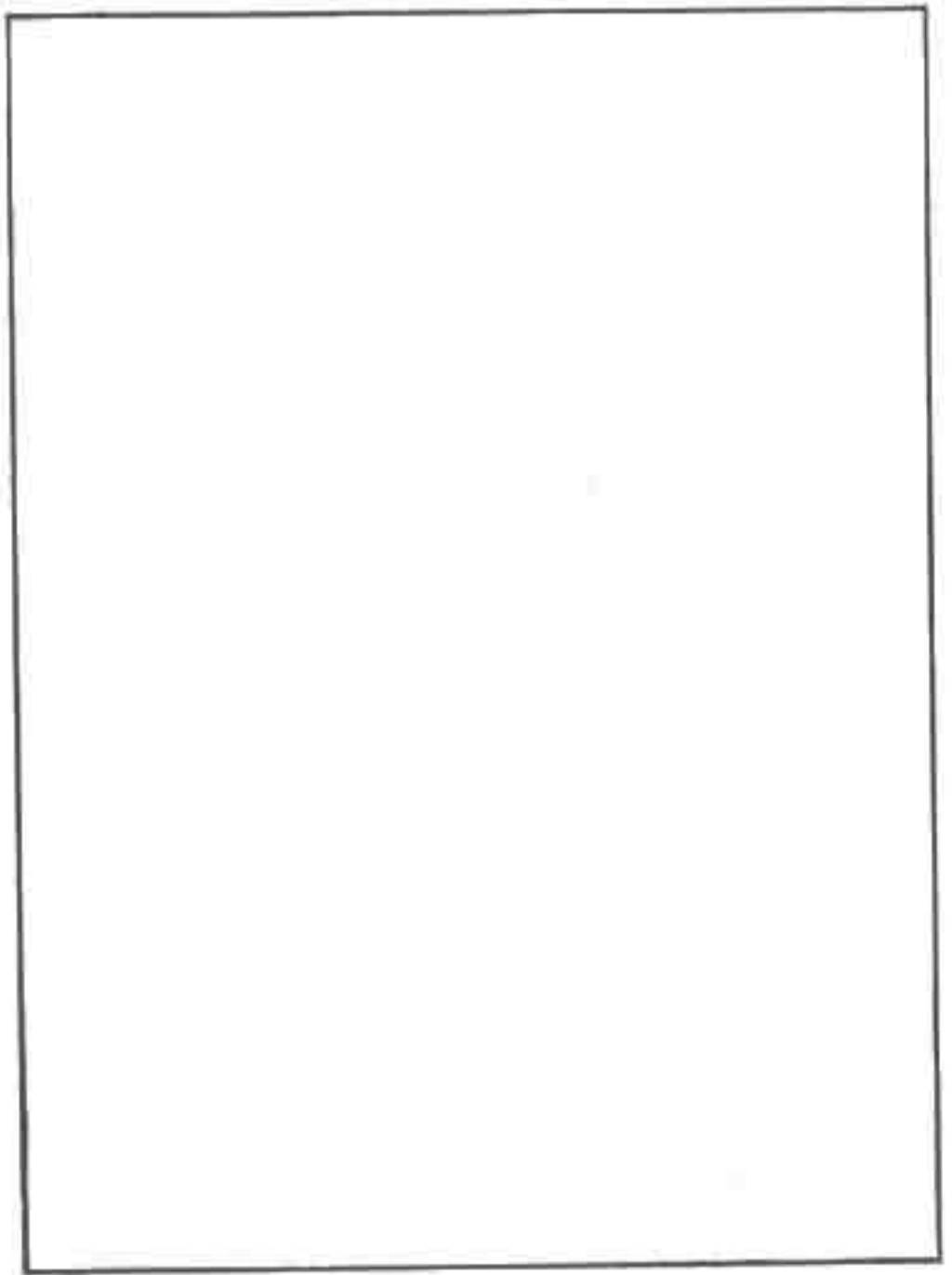
Beholding you, the poet,
Immovable straddling
The wave of frenzied
Twentieth century rage,

Sensing the pungence
Of gunpowder,
Humility
And wrath,

Beholding you, the poet,
Decimating the legions
Of imperialism
With the keen and true sabre
Of your verse.

Christos Karabetsos

(Translated from the Greek by Judy Hogan)





WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE



Federation of South African Women - Founded 17 April 1954