

# UMSEBENZI

VOICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY



## PEOPLE'S POWER NOT REFORM

Change is in the air. Even those who sit on top of us are waking up to the truth that there is no going back. And they are forced to splash about trying to find the answer to the question — how do they 'share power' and, at the same time, maintain control?

All these groups — from Botha to Buthelezi — who share a common fear of the revolutionary seizure of people's power, talk their own language of reform and change. **The language they talk is a class language.**

- The Reagans do not really mind if a black man sits at the top as long as he is a Banda, a Muzorewa or a Buthelezi who will protect imperialism and big business.

- Sections of our ruling capitalist class are even prepared to risk allowing a black to put his cross on a ballot paper every five years — so long as there is a guarantee that our country's riches remain in their hands.

- Some black capitalists and sections of the black middle class would prefer a solution which will give them a few crumbs from the white man's business table and enable them to share in the economic exploitation of the mass of their own people.

- Many of the bantustan chiefs and sell-out Coloured and Indian collaborators, dig in to protect their fat salary cheques and Mercedes Benz's with which Botha has corrupted them.

### What the Working People Want

Race domination is not just a political question. At the foundation of race rule is the economic exploitation of the mass of the black working people. This is made possible by white control of nearly all the means of production and the land. This set-up is defended by a state apparatus (parliament, courts, etc) and its institutions of coercion and force (army, police etc).

In the end, there can be no real liberation without social emancipation. If tomorrow every black man had the vote, but the land, mines and big industries remained in the same hands, race domination would continue

to prosper. And to make sure that it does not continue to prosper, political power must, for a start, be placed in the hands of the majority; the whole white state apparatus and its instruments of force must be dismantled and replaced by people's power. Since the other side will never volunteer to hand over its privileges, revolutionary violence is unavoidable.

During the transition period, there will be a continuing role for a certain amount of non-monopoly private capital, but it must be completely cleansed of its racist content and, as the Freedom Charter says, controlled in the interests of the people.

### Armed Struggle, Dialogue and the SACP

In order to defeat the class aims of our black working people, Botha would like the ANC to abandon its policies of revolutionary nationalism, to give up armed struggle, and to break the alliance with the SACP. He has offered to talk to the ANC if it accepts these conditions.

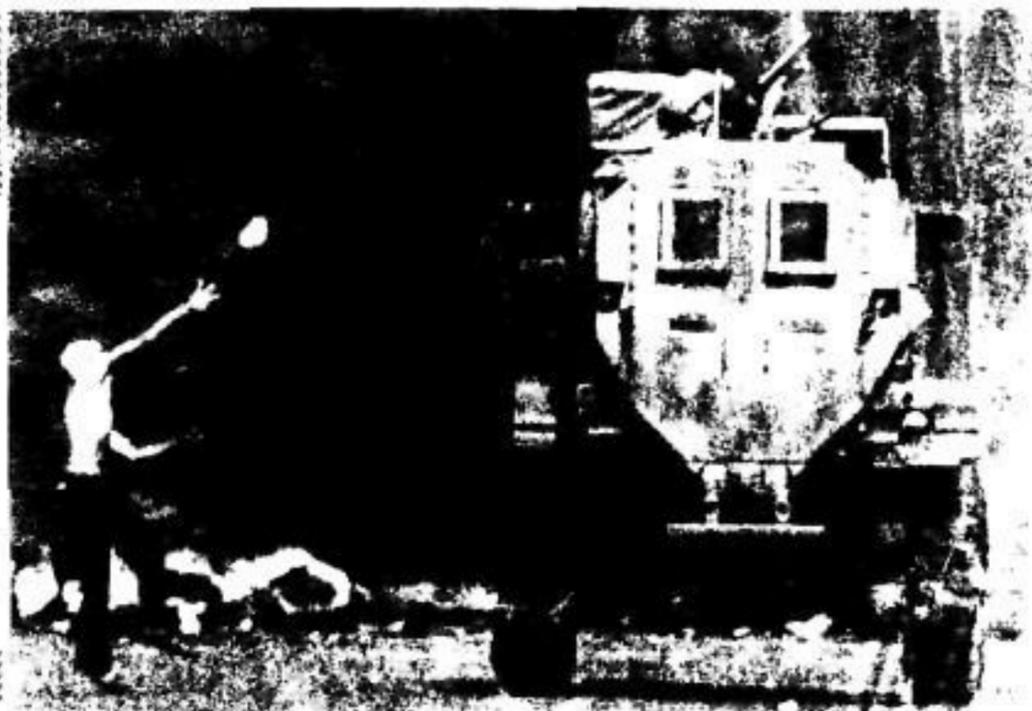
We are not in principle opposed to dialogue, even with an enemy. But Botha wants to talk to an ANC which would no longer be the ANC.

Revolutionary violence will continue so long as there is no other path to real people's power.

Those who dream of breaking the life-giving alliance between the ANC and the SACP will strike a rock. We will continue to march hand in hand in a liberation alliance which is made up of completely independent organisations who share the common immediate aim of destroying racism in all its forms.

**DEFEND THE CLASS POSITION OF OUR WORKING PEOPLE!  
LONG LIVE THE ANC/SACP ALLIANCE!**

# PEOPLE'S WAR AND INSURRECTION



The main objective of our struggle is to seize power from the racist minority regime in Pretoria and transfer it into the hands of the democratic majority. But because of the complete absence of any real democracy for the majority, this power can only be taken by force. Revolutionary violence is the only option. How then do we mobilise the power of the people in order to smash this system? What sort of violence?

## **People's War — An Answer to Apartheid War**

A people's war is a revolutionary war in which our entire nation — our people's army, MK, workers, the rural masses, women, students, intellectuals, the religious community, etc — use all forms of revolutionary violence to attack and destroy apartheid power. This includes a political and military assault on all those who are the main instruments of this power — soldiers, police, informers, puppets etc.

People's war is usually a long, drawn-out struggle. In the course of such a war the opportunity arises to build up, strengthen and develop the people's forces from a weak position to a position of moral and material superiority over the enemy. When this position has been reached the possibility emerges of a general nationwide uprising which will deal a final and decisive blow against the enemy.

## **Protracted People's War and Insurrection**

Insurrection is the highest stage in a revolutionary process. It is the culmination of several objective and subjective factors into a moment of unity which, if properly guided, leads to the seizure of state power. These factors are not the same in all countries. But usually there cannot be a successful insurrection without the existence of a revolutionary situation. What do we mean by a revolutionary situation?

The old system must be in big crises in which:

- (1) The ruling class is unable to continue ruling in the same old way and is beginning to lose control over the people;

- (2) The sufferings of the majority have become intolerable, and;

- (3) The masses are being drawn in larger and larger numbers into independent action.

However, even when there is a revolutionary situation it does not mean that the revolution will succeed. It simply means that the objective conditions for a revolution are ripe. At such moments everything depends upon the readiness and the ability of the vanguard people's organisation to seize the opportunities and to lead the masses to victory.

This victory requires the necessary preparations. Among these are the presence of a political underground, a revolutionary army of armed workers and rural masses and leadership combat cores which, in our case, is represented by Umkhonto we Sizwe. It also usually requires that the morale of the enemy forces be broken and that units of government troops begin to side with the revolution.

In our case the last requirement has a different meaning. The South African army is drawn and run from the ranks of the white minority. As an institution we cannot expect it to support the aspirations of the majority of the people. But the winning over to the side of the revolution of large numbers of black forces is, at the right moment, a real possibility. And even the neutralisation of sections of the white army is not impossible.

In conclusion, it is necessary to emphasise two important points:

- (a) The build-up towards insurrection does not consist only of direct acts of combat. Mass organised political action (defiance of laws, general strikes, etc) must play a vital role.

- (b) Although insurrections are usually the culmination of a long, drawn-out people's war, there is more than one example in history of successful revolutionary uprisings which are not preceded by protracted people's war.

**Readers are asked to comment on these problems (not more than 300 words) in the light of present events in South Africa.**

**DESTROY STATE TERROR  
WITH REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE!**

# THE SADF — WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Revolutionary theory teaches us that the armed forces are the key instrument for maintaining the status quo in a bourgeois state — and that for a revolution to succeed the ruling class must be disarmed and the democratic strata in the armed forces won over to the side of the revolutionary people.

What are the chances of our revolutionary movement winning over the 'democratic strata' in the armed forces? On the surface the chances seem not good. Most whites do not feel a kinship with the people, as the Russian soldiers did in 1917 or as the Iranian troops finally did in 1979, when they refused to shoot any more of their own people. Whites do not feel they are fighting for a cause in a distant land which brings them no benefit, as the Portuguese soldiers began to feel in their colonial African wars, as American troops came to feel in Vietnam. There is no colonial power which can re-assert itself and neutralise the army, as in Zimbabwe.

So what prospects for neutralising the army? Certainly we have built our alternative army — MK — which is growing in strength and daring all the time, contributing greatly to the regime's crisis.

The apartheid regime has always faced the problem of shortage of white manpower and its defence force is no exception. The SADF is now increasingly recruiting blacks into its ranks, after a long period of keeping blacks out. It realises it has no option. Already black numbers are growing. Current approximate strengths are:

- ★ 5 000 Coloured men serve in all branches of the SADF, including the Cape Corps.
- ★ 360 full-time Indian servicemen serve at SAS Jalena at Salisbury Island, Durban. In addition, about 200 young Indian men enter for 22-month voluntary national service each year.
- ★ 2 000 African troops serve in 'ethnic' SADF battalions and the 'multi-ethnic' 21 battalion.
- ★ Several thousand troops in bantustan armies.
- ★ 10 000 plus black Namibian troops.

In terms of total strength these are small numbers. (In the police force, almost half the total force of 45 000 is black). The regime had planned to introduce conscription for Indian and Coloured men with the new constitution, but the massive boycott of the polls forced it to shelve these plans. However, the regime is now planning stepped up recruitment programmes for Africans, field camps for black school children and military and technical training for unqualified Coloured men.

However politically backward these black recruits to the SADF may be when recruited,

they are potential allies of the liberation movement. **It is the duty of our liberation alliance to see that they become the SADF's Achilles' heel — that they organise to turn their guns against their real enemy.**

The white camp provides its own problems for the regime too. In large sectors of white society there is a marked reluctance, and often antipathy, toward fighting for apartheid. Surveys in four English-speaking universities in 1984 showed that nearly two thirds of students at Cape Town, Durban, Witwatersrand and Rhodes were opposed to both conscription and the military occupation of Namibia. In the past year, with troops occupying the townships, serving in the SADF has become unattractive to an even wider range of young whites. The movement to end conscription has grown into a major force.

Early this year, defence chief General Malan revealed in parliament that 7 589 conscripted servicemen had failed to report for duty during the January call-up — a huge increase on previous years.

Several young white men have gone to prison rather than serve in the SADF, explaining their stand in political terms. Young men like Roland Hunter, who secretly exposed apartheid aggression against neighbouring states while serving in the SADF, have shown the potential for undermining the SADF from within. Some white conscription avoiders have crossed sides and joined the liberation movement. Spontaneous protests by white troops over conditions point the way to the possibilities of spreading mass disaffection.

War resistance is of course a response to the continuing all-round political and military struggle led by the ANC. It can never be seen in isolation from this struggle. It is by developing and extending our all-round struggle, including spreading resistance to the SADF, that we send deeper shafts into the white laager which will eventually burst it into smithereens.



**TURN YOUR GUNS AGAINST OUR OPPRESSORS!**

**A Reader Writes On:**

# **POPULAR POWER AND GENERAL UPRISING**

I have seen Issue 2 of *Umsebenzi* and was greatly impressed, especially by the discussion article 'Seeds of Popular Power'. The article puts forward the slogan of 'People's Committees' as embryonic forms of self-government, and also as the initial stages of a process towards the seizure of power. The slogan is just appropriate at this stage; it makes clear the dialectical link between the strategy of making South Africa ungovernable and that of the seizure of power.

I personally feel that this slogan should be vigorously pursued until the seeds of popular power and self-government germinate and grow on a national scale. This will, I think, serve as indicators to:

- (1) How loyal the people are to the liberation movement, and
- (2) How organised they are in the townships, villages, zones, districts, regions and finally nationally.

Above all we should view these people's committees as 'organs of insurrection' (to use Lenin's expression). These are the organs which are going to emerge when the 'last moment' arrives. The discussion of this issue becomes especially imperative in the ranks of the liberation movement as a whole.

The present pace of events inside the country and internationally is very dramatic. The situation is as volatile as never before, and I am presently toying with two probabilities:

(a) Should the present political upsurge continue (including industrial action by workers) and should it result in a defeat of the aims of the state of emergency (which is the last resort of the enemy), the proliferating partial uprisings could lead to a general uprising. We are perhaps moving towards a peculiar form of dual power. Crucial questions arise. Is there the minimum force to move under such conditions, and make a breakthrough to people's power proper, that is, to seize power? I think that one of the urgent tasks at this stage is to take off the ground with the people's committees and strengthen them because for such an eventuality we need, at least, the undivided loyalty of the majority of our people. The other urgent task is to prevent the return of the police to the 'free zones' and 'no go areas' in townships and elsewhere!

(b) Should the enemy succeed (at least to an extent) to 'extinguish' the flame in more highly politicised areas with the imposition of emergency regulations; should he further succeed to suppress any future legal activities such as those of the UDF; and finally, should he succeed to restore economic stability and then growth (the two are not likely, at least in the foreseeable future), then, I think, that the issue of a protracted people's war will make itself the more pressing.

But I strongly feel the first probability (a general uprising) is more likely for the following reasons:

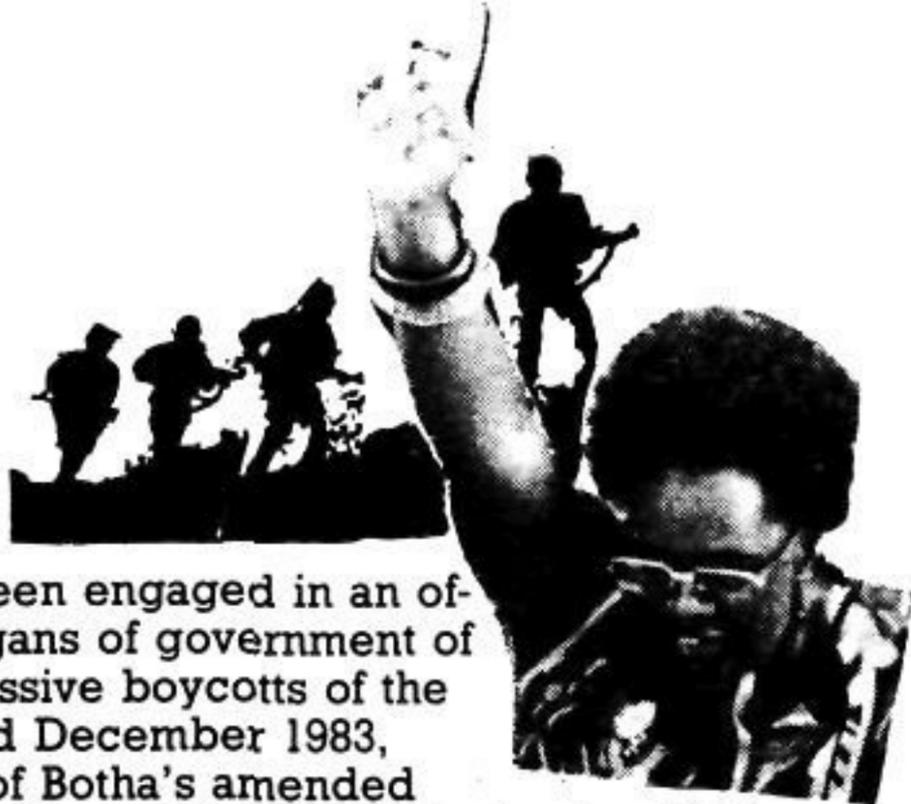
★ The present deepening economic crisis, made worse by quitting capital and the threat of international sanctions, can only mean dramatic increases in the army of the unemployed, and acute suffering to millions. This is likely to draw more and more workers into the street. Now, should this class be drawn into open and independent mass political and industrial action then that system will definitely not survive for long!

★ Economic chaos is threatening. Growing civil disorder and the spread of ungovernability are pulling the country towards a state of stagnation which could perhaps lead to a significant collapse. We are heading for such an eventuality. We are heading for a 'great leap'. **What is to be done?**



**FORWARD TO PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES!**

# DESTROY APARTHEID'S ORGANS!



It is now almost two years that we have been engaged in an offensive aimed at the destruction of the organs of government of the apartheid regime. Starting with the massive boycotts of the 'local authority' elections in November and December 1983, through the related overwhelming rebuff of Botha's amended apartheid constitution with its tri-cameral parliament in August-September 1984, we have stood firm on the demand that **The People Shall Govern!**

This offensive has driven our enemy into a succession of defeats. We have forced the apartheid regime into a defensive posture. Every new 'initiative' it introduces, is in fact a poorly-disguised retreat in the face of our advance towards the victory of the national democratic revolution.

The crisis of the apartheid regime expresses itself in a number of ways. The economy faces enormous problems. The ruling capitalist class is at a loss as to what to do. The Nationalist Party has no credible policy to extricate our country from its problems. Rather, it is facing divisions at its highest levels and contradictions between itself and many of the classes and strata inside our country and its allies abroad.

Confronted with this situation, the ruling circles rely on the use of force against any and everybody, to maintain themselves in power. At the same time, the pursuit of this policy sharpens the contradictions which the extreme repression seeks to resolve.

This situation demands that we maintain the momentum of our forward march. This means that we must orientate the entire struggling masses towards the achievement of the goal of the destruction of the apartheid organs of government, starting at the local level. We have to spread the understanding that this is a deliberate revolutionary act aimed at weakening the fascist state power, as a necessary step towards the fulfilment of the goal of overthrowing the apartheid regime of reaction.

All our people should be geared to the offensive which has already resulted in the abolition, through popular mass struggle, of so many of these organs of government.

The very response of the ruling fascist party, with its campaign of mass murder, large-scale detentions, the brutal suppression of all mass actions and rule by martial law, is itself a challenge and a provocation, which should spur us even further to engage in struggle to rid our country of a regime which can only be one of terror.

Our mass work should, in all its spheres — ideological, political, economic, military and organisational — aim to increase our capacity to weaken the ability of the racist regime to govern our country. The underground must aim to maintain the momentum of our offensive. Through practical revolutionary action we must ensure the destruction of those segments of the repressive apartheid state structure that we can overwhelm today, through the sheer weight of united mass action.

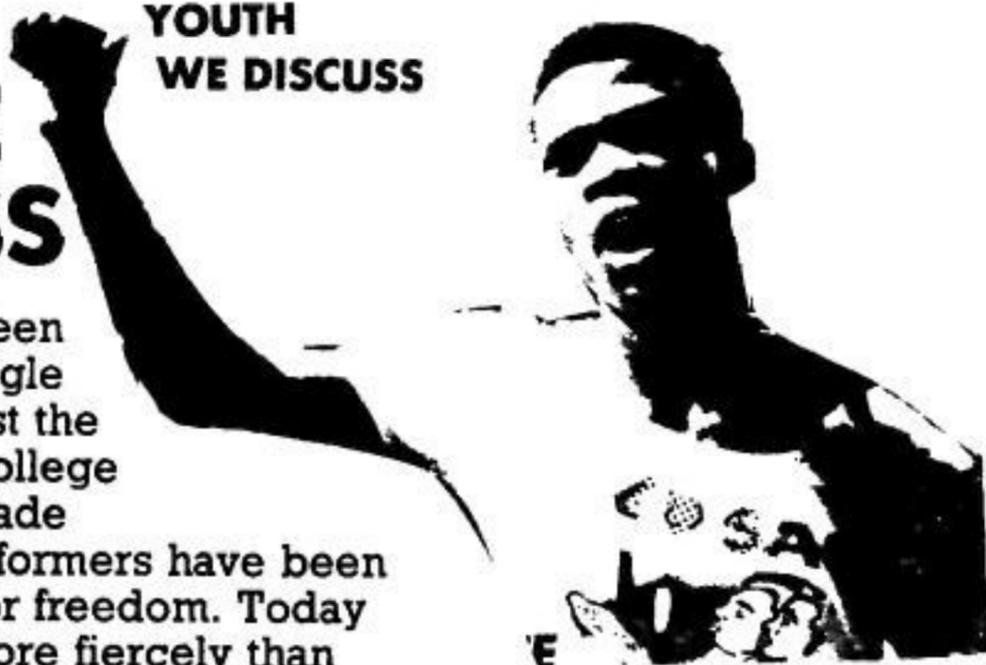
The power of the people in action is our guarantee that we shall achieve people's power!



**RENDER THE COUNTRY  
UNGOVERNABLE!**

# YOUTH AND THE WORKING CLASS

YOUTH  
WE DISCUSS



For almost ten years our country has seen sustained, brave and determined struggle by the black youth and students against the racist regime. Prolonged school and college boycotts, street demonstrations, barricade fighting and attacks on puppets and informers have been the hallmarks of the youth's struggle for freedom. Today the flames of revolution are burning more fiercely than ever with fighting youth better organised and more determined.

South African youth have marked the International Year of the Youth in its own unique way — by mass revolt against oppression and injustice. Today's youth are the wealthy heirs of generations of struggle, from the ANC Youth League to SASO, SSRC, NAYO and other organisations.

What drives the fighting youth? Where do they stand among the classes and groups that make up our national democratic revolution?

It is incorrect to explain the role of the youth by their impatience, idealism and lack of fear — although these qualities do influence them. It is even more wrong to put forward some notion that the youth as a group constitute a unique class, as was suggested in Europe during the 'student rebellion' of the late 1960s.

No, the answer lies in the nature of the crisis of the apartheid system, the educational policies of the government, and the relation between the youth and the working class.

Apartheid is in crisis because the white settler minority can no longer run the state apparatus, manage the economy and carry out the skilled jobs in industry and commerce. It has no choice but to train young blacks to do the menial aspects of these tasks.

But the racist regime cannot risk giving our youth the kind of education that will lead it to challenge white rule. So it perfected Bantu Education — education designed for slaves with skills.

Today that policy lies in ruins. The black youth have firmly allied themselves with the freedom struggle. The youth are rejecting the illusions peddled to them on TV and in movies — they speak of freedom and eagerly discuss the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

To explain this we must remember the close relations between the oppressed youth and the working class. The fighting youth are the sons and daughters of the oppressed and exploited peasants and

workers. Because their parents are poor they have to break their education to work in factories and shops so as to pay their fees. They know what it is like to be exploited and insulted. And they know that this will be their future too — unless the people take the road to freedom and socialism.

The youth in the rural areas know that unless freedom is won their future is to be rightless contract workers in mines, factories and farms. They are rejecting reactionary chiefs and bantustan puppets. Modern communications are drawing the rural youth steadily into the mainstream of struggle.

Further advance of the youth struggle means building a close alliance between the youth and the workers. The leadership of our revolution lies with the working class. Youth and students can initiate events that draw greater numbers of the working people into the struggle. But they are not capable of leading the revolution to a victorious conclusion.

Only the working people can do that because it is on their labour that the whole oppressive system is built.

The youth have their immediate tasks. They are fighting to destroy Bantu Education, spread the ideas of the Education Charter, and build the solidly-based national youth organisation. Further, they are organising and arming themselves in mobile units to harass and kill enemy agents, police and soldiers.

The working youth must join trade unions, take an active role and inspire the workers with their militancy and revolutionary determination. They can help to make the apartheid economy unworkable. They can form combat units for industrial sabotage and workers' defence.

Let the International Year of the Youth become the basis for an ever more determined struggle of the youth, workers and all sections of the oppressed for national liberation, justice and socialism.

**MOBILISE OUR FIGHTING YOUTH!**

## W.H. (BILL) ANDREWS

W.H. (Bill) Andrews, born in England in 1870, emigrated to South Africa in 1893. A railway fitter by profession, he helped form the first Trades and Labour Council and in 1909 was first chairman of the South African Labour Party. Elected to Parliament in 1912, and later to the Provincial Council, he fought to improve the conditions and rights of workers. He introduced the first bill to give the vote to women in South Africa.

He broke with the Labour Party because he refused to support the Botha-Smuts war effort, and in 1915 helped form the International Socialist League, a predecessor of the Communist Party. In 1921 he was elected the first secretary of the Communist Party, and later became its chairman.

He consistently fought for the full participation of Africans within political organisations, and for black and white workers to stand against their common enemy. South African workers were represented at many international conferences by Bill Andrews, and the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in Moscow, November 1922, elected Comrade Bill to its Executive Committee. He died in 1950.



## Pen Pictures of South African Communists

Dora Tamana was a woman of remarkable strength and dignity. She was born in 1901 in Hlobo, Transkei. Her childhood centred around the many tasks demanded of a young girl growing up in rural South Africa. When she was 20, her father and two of her uncles were among the 163 people shot dead by police in the Bulhoek Massacre. She moved to Queenstown, where she tried to eke out a living by collecting thatching grass in the surrounding hills to sell in the location. During this period three of her nine children died. Later, she joined her husband in Cape Town.

Experiences in the squatter community in Blouville aroused her political awareness. She became a member of the Communist Party of South Africa in 1942. She joined the ANC Women's League and in 1954 became a member of the first national executive committee. She was banned under the Suppression of Communism Act and, to the end of her life, suffered constant police harassment.

One of her sons, Bothwell, was captured during the Wankie guerrilla campaigns of 1967 in a skirmish with South African and Rhodesian soldiers. Dora visited him in Khami jail. After 1976 she was told she had to use a Transkei passport. As a disciplined communist, she refused to accept this decision and therefore did not see him on his release after Zimbabwe's independence. She died, aged 83, an example to all who knew her as a communist, a women's leader, and a tireless fighter for liberation.

### DORA TAMANA



**FROM LIBERATION TO SOCIALISM!**

# BOTHA'S PROPAGANDA POP STAR

Many of our people are beginning to call the Chief Minister of the KwaZulu bantustan **Bothalezi**. And who can blame them? On so many of the vital questions of the day he is beginning to sound more and more like Botha himself. During the present upsurge the South African Broadcasting Corporation has, understandably, turned Gatsha into one of its propaganda pop stars. Externally, his anti-liberation performances are highly rated by reactionaries everywhere.

The heroic resistance of our people and the daily massacres of our men, women and children are arousing a cry in every part of the world for effective sanctions against our ruling class. No sooner does the American Congress threaten some kind of sanctions than Buthelezi jets into Washington and does his best to stop them. A 'state' visit to Zionist Israel was also devoted to knocking those who want to respond concretely to the cry of anguish from our people.

When asked by the *Financial Mail* whether his anti-disinvestment campaign brought him closer to the government, Buthelezi replied: 'If KwaZulu interests happen to coincide with the interests of the government, that's sheer coincidence'. Is this the language of an African patriot or an ethnic tribalist? Since when do the interests of Botha's KwaZulu bantustan override those of the African people in whose name the Chief pretends to speak?

Is it still another coincidence that he uses exactly the same language as his paymasters to describe the new and heroic levels which the daily spreading people's struggles have now reached. When asked by the *Financial Mail* how serious he thought the current unrest was, he did not say a word about police massacres and talked only of blacks 'tearing each other apart'. This is exactly the way in which people like Botha, Coetzee and Le Grange try to divert attention away from the daily actions of their murder machines.

It was also no coincidence that Botha and Bothalezi said almost the same thing about the events in Natal which followed the brutal assassination of Victoria Nonyamezelo Mxenge:

'It grieves me that members of certain political organisations, plus the external mission of the African National Congress, are promoting this black on black confrontation. It is hogwash to present this kind of political thuggery as the black political struggle', said Buthelezi.



By accusing the ANC (and not apartheid) for the killings and sufferings of our people, Gatsha Buthelezi revealed his true colours. Even his words, 'black on black confrontation', are taken straight from the dictionary of the racist politicians. But what is even more disgusting is that Buthelezi talks of 'peace' and at the same time unleashes his Inkatha packs to act as SADF auxiliaries to break up people's meetings and kill some of those who attend. This is what happened at the Mxenge protest meeting. This is what has happened so often in Natal where the military wing of Gatsha's Inkatha has been literally terrorising anyone who differs with him, especially the youth and students and their organisations. Students at Ngoye University were killed. Inkatha was incited against the Reverend Mcebisi Xundu, a UDF leader. Who killed Msizi Dube? If Gatsha wants to see the face of political thuggery he must look in his mirror.

Buthelezi is on record as saying that one of the problems in Natal is the presence of 'Xhosa lawyers' who have run away from the miserable conditions in the Transkei and Ciskei. Two of these 'Xhosa lawyers' have since been murdered. Griffiths and Victoria Mxenge. It is not difficult to believe what Steve Tshwete said at the funeral of Victoria Mxenge — that her murder was organised by one of Buthelezi's Inkatha impis.

Gatsha has been beating the drum of 'big tribe' chauvinism for a long time. It is not **Bothalezi** but rather the working people and militant youth of Natal who have inherited the noble Zulu traditions of uncompromising resistance to race domination. The great Cetshwayo must be turning in his grave.

**DOWN WITH BANTUSTANS!**

# THE CURSE OF MIGRANT LABOUR

PW Botha has reacted to the call for sanctions by threatening to send home the 1½ million foreign black contract workers in South Africa. Pretoria sent Pik Botha to warn Lesotho, Mozambique and the puppets Matanzima and Sebe that sanctions would hit them hardest of all.

The threat is an empty one. Everyone knows that without the 108 000 Basotho miners, the 50 000 from Mozambique and the others from Botswana, Swaziland and Malawi, the mines would close down. In the present economic crisis, Pretoria could not afford that.

In fact the South African economy depends on these workers, almost as much as the countries they come from depend on the R550-million they send home each year.

No doubt the sudden ending of migrant labour would be a serious blow to these countries. But in the long run it would be to their good. The migrant labour system is one of the main causes of the poverty and under-development of the states bordering South Africa. And it is one of the main causes of the power and wealth of South African capitalism.

The migrant labour system is proof of the truth of Marx's words — that capitalism means more and more wealth at the top end of the ladder, and more and more misery at the bottom end.

For the mine owners and the Pretoria regime, the migrant labour system means cheap black labour power and huge profits. They suck the miners dry, and spit them out when they are too old or sick to work. For the neighbouring states the effects are disastrous. Their best young men go to work in the mines where their labour does nothing to develop their own countries.

The women and old people left behind cannot work the land properly. They become dependent on the money sent home by the miners. Pretoria uses the system of remitted wages to squeeze the neighbouring states. These states become more and more dependent on South Africa, while the racist regime and its economy become more and more dominant. It is a vicious circle.

That is why it is unlikely that Pretoria will carry out its threat to send home the migrants. The system will continue, at least until the racist regime is destroyed.

And what then? Well, people's power in South Africa would mean an end to the pass laws. Black miners and other contract workers would be free to settle with their families near their work place. But a national democratic revolution would not by itself mean an end to the dependence of the neighbouring states on the strong South African economy.

It is in the nature of capitalism to create unequal development. It is more profitable to build new factories where others already exist. It is less profitable to build them in poor and remote regions. And under capitalism it is profits that rule supreme. Human needs and even sensible planning do not count.

Only a socialist system, where production aims to satisfy needs and not to make profits, can develop the poor and remote regions, so as to spread the wealth to all the people. This is what was done in the USSR.

Only by taking the road to socialism will the peoples of Southern Africa break free of dependence on South Africa. And by taking the same road, the working people of our own country will not only be completing their own social and economic liberation — they will be helping to liberate Southern Africa too.



**WORKERS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA UNITE!**

# HOW TO MASTER SECRET WORK



## 3. SOME RULES OF SECRECY

Carelessness leads to arrests. Loose talk and strange behaviour attracts attention of police and izimpimpi. Secret work needs vigilance and care. **Rules of secrecy** help to mask our actions and overcome difficulties created by the enemy. But first let us study the following situation:

### What Not To Do

X, a trade unionist, also leads a secret cell. He phones Y and Z, his cell members, and arranges to meet outside a cinema. X leaves his office and rushes to the meeting 30 minutes late. Y and Z have been anxiously checking the time and pacing up and down. The three decide to go to a nearby tea-room where they have often met before. They talk over tea in low tones. People from the cinema start coming in. One is a relative of X who greets him. Y and Z are nervous and abruptly leave. When X is asked who they were he hesitates and, wanting to impress his relative, replies: 'They're good guys who like to hear from me what's going on'. This opens the way for a long discussion on politics.

X has made many errors which would soon put the police on the trail of all three. These seem obvious but in practise many people behave just like X. They do not prepare properly; rush about attracting attention; fail to keep time; do not cover the activity with a legend (cover story); talk loosely etc. Others pick up the bad style of work. X should set a good example for Y and Z. To avoid such mistakes **rules of secrecy** must be studied and practised. They might seem obvious but should **never** be taken for granted.

### Things to Remember

1. Always have a 'believable' legend to cover your work! (X could have said Y and Z were workers he vaguely knew whom he had met by chance and had been encouraging to join the union).
2. Underground membership must be secret! (X had no need to refer to Y and Z as 'good guys').
3. Behave naturally and do not draw attention to yourself! 'Be like the people'. Merge with them! (X, Y and Z behaved suspiciously).

4. No loose talk! Guard secrets with your life! Follow the saying: 'Don't trust anyone and talk as little as possible'. (X fails here).

5. Be vigilant against informers! They try to get close to you, using militant talk to 'test' and trap you. (Can X be so sure of his relative?)

6. Be disciplined, efficient, punctual (X was none of these). Only wait ten minutes at a meeting place. The latecomer may have been arrested.

7. Make all preparations beforehand! Avoid a regular pattern of behaviour which makes it easy for the enemy to check on you. (X made poor arrangements for the meeting; rushed there from a sensitive place and could have been followed; used the tea-room too often).

8. Do not try to discover what does not concern you! Know only what you have to know for carrying out your tasks.

9. Be careful what you say on the phone (which may be 'bugged'), or in a public place (where you can be overheard)! Conceal sensitive information such as names etc by using simple codes!

10. Remove all traces of illegal work that can lead to you! Wipe fingerprints off objects. Know that typewriters can be traced. Goods bought from shops can be checked.

11. Hide materials such as leaflets, weapons etc! But not where you live. Memorise sensitive names, addresses etc. Don't write them down!

12. Carry reliable documents of identification!

13. Know your town, its streets, parks, shops etc. like the palm of your hand! This will help you find secret places and enable you to check whether you are being followed.

14. If you are arrested you must deny all secret work and never reveal the names of your comrades even to the point of death!

15. Finally, if any member of your underground cell is arrested, you must immediately act on the assumption that they will be forced to give information. This means taking precautions, such as going into hiding if necessary.

**When the rules of secrecy are practised revolutionaries make good progress. Practise makes perfect and with discipline and vigilance we will outwit the enemy and we will win!**

(Next Issue: How to Check for Surveillance)

**BE VIGILANT AND CAREFUL!**



# POLITICAL ECONOMY

## 3. SURPLUS VALUE AND EXPLOITATION

In the last *Umsebenzi*, we came to the conclusion that to end exploitation and the theft of 'surplus value' from the workers, it is necessary 'to change the whole system'. The system we were speaking of is the system that rules in our country today — the system where many have to sell their working skills for wages to a few who own the factories and farms and mines. That system creates 'surplus value' which is pocketed by the bosses. Why then do we not hear more about surplus value? It is not mentioned in any company accounts. One reads a lot about 'profits', but nothing about surplus value. That is because surplus value is invisible; it is buried in the products made by wage labour. And it is impossible to grab surplus value, to hold it or to measure it, until those products have been sold and converted into money in the bosses' purses. Only then is it possible to count it, and to see that the money coming out of production is more than the costs that went into it.

Well, of course! you will say. That is the whole point of making products for sale — to produce more money at the end of the sale than went into production. That extra money has a simple name in the accounts — profit. What has this to do with surplus value?

I could say that profit is only a visible cash form of invisible surplus value. But — you may argue — surplus value is only created at the point where goods are actually produced for sale. And a lot of profits are made at other places and in different ways — by landlords, bankers, shopkeepers or transport companies, none of whom produce anything. True. How can their profits then also be a form of surplus value?

To understand this, we must look at the case of a farmer or factory owner who decides to market his own products without supplying any shopkeepers, or using transport companies to carry them to market, or banks to finance his purchases or labour and materials. Instead he directly employs all the salesmen and truck drivers and so on he needs to do the whole thing himself. Those workers not actually producing goods cannot therefore be adding any extra value — any new parcel of labour — to the goods. But yet they must be paid; so the boss has to find their wages out of his purse, thus reducing his own profit.

Exactly the same thing happens when a

boss decides not to do it all himself, but to borrow money from the bank, hire transporters to carry his product to market, and give shopkeepers a discount — a 'wholesale price' — to sell the goods for him. All those too must earn a profit out of it, or they will not do it. So the boss must part with some of his profits and pass a share of it to the others — the non-producing bosses.

So all the bosses — the whole class of employers — live off the surplus value which is created in the process of production during the unpaid part of the production workers' day.

To change such a system then is more than just a matter of getting better wages and working conditions. It is more than just a matter of changing the rights of workers to be consulted about working conditions. It means ending the right of the bosses to buy labour power and exploit it for their own profit; and it means ending the compulsion on workers to sell their labour power to those who exploit them.

But what is it that makes this unending process of robbery of one class by another possible? It is not that the workers are too stupid to see that they are being exploited. It is just one simple fact — that the bosses own the mines and factories and farms where production takes place. They own the tools and machines and reserves of money and means of transport which makes it possible for them to buy the labour power of working people, who own none of these things.

The means of production in our society are all privately owned. Their owners we call capitalists. As long as those means of production remain private property, the system of exploitation of labour by bosses will remain. That system is what must be changed! It is the system we call capitalism — the control of society by the capitalist class.

But there is an alternative to it, though not so long as the means of production remains private property. The alternative is to create a system which would make the means of production — like the air we breathe — the common property of all people. Private means of production must be changed to means of production owned by the whole society. That is the system we call socialism. It is the only way out of the system of capitalist exploitation.

**END CAPITALIST WAGE SLAVERY!**



# TRADE UNIONISM

## 3. Industrial Unions and General Workers

The extent to which a trade union can really be a 'school of communism' and a force in support of revolutionary change depends on how the trade union works. Ideology and organisation are two inseparable parts of a whole.

Trade unions which fail to combine different methods of struggle and do not choose those best suited to existing conditions, needlessly exhaust the workers' strength, destroy the discipline of the working class struggle and limit its chances of success.

The structure of a trade union determines the way it functions: whether a trade union is a 'general union' or an 'industrial union' will effect the extent to which the union will be able to function democratically, effectively and truly be an instrument in support of revolutionary change.

Democracy is one of the basic principles of trade union organisation. Workers must be able, **through their actual experience**, to understand that they are the union; that the union is not an office or an individual. Workers must participate fully in the activities of the union, elect representatives and ensure that these representatives are accountable to them. This is especially important in our country where the majority of our workers are denied all democratic rights.

The opinion of the majority of a trade union's members must be reached on the basis of accurate information, open discussion and criticism which revolves around ideas and not around personalities. This demands that the channels of information and communication (meetings, report-backs and publications) function regularly and correctly. Trade union democracy prevents manipulations on the part of those at the top and is the source of working class consciousness.

Trade union democracy means that leadership comes from a single centre which represents and ensures its accountability to the majority. This implies the establishment of a strong militant core which is ready for the struggle and which can easily adapt to changing conditions. It means the ability of a huge organisation to advance **as one** when the leadership gives the signal. Experience has shown that in the day to day struggle an industrial union lends itself more easily to this process. Trade union democracy can be defended more easily when workers are

organised in industrial concentrations.

The ability to link up and maintain the closest contact with an ever increasing number of workers is the cornerstone of the strategy of trade union organisation. 'General unions' and 'industrial unions' have different strengths and weaknesses in this regard. 'General unions' have, from time to time, played an important **temporary** role in spreading an understanding among the workers about the need to be organised and the broader political issues facing the working class as a whole. Yet, the rapid and un-directed expansion of a 'general union', is very often the cause of its downfall.

In most cases, dispersed small groups of workers are recruited from scores of the different sectors of the urban and rural economy. They face completely different immediate struggles against their bosses. We must never forget that workers join a trade union in the first place because they believe that it is an instrument in the struggle for higher wages and better working conditions. This is the starting point for developing workers' consciousness and giving workers the feel of collective strength. The realisation that the whole system of capitalist exploitation needs to be smashed will grow as a result. Experience has proved that the 'general workers union' is a less effective instrument for organised and well directed blows against the bosses in the struggle for higher wages and better working conditions.

The strength of an 'industrial union' lies in the fact that it is able to bring workers together on the basis of common experience on the job, against a common group of bosses who are organised into their own industrial bosses organisation. In this way, workers gain knowledge and understanding of trade union organisation through initially combining around their immediate demands. A struggle in one factory has a direct impact on other factories in the same industry and the capitalists and their government are put more easily in a defensive position. In this way, an 'industrial union' can consolidate its strength enabling it to fulfil its role as a school of class consciousness for the workers and a combat force in the struggle waged against the capitalist class.

**FORWARD TO A UNITED  
TRADE UNION MOVEMENT!**



# LINKS IN A CHAIN OF STRUGGLE

## 2. The Underground and Mass Struggle

The role of the masses is a common and constant thread that runs through all four main links in the chain of the national liberation struggle that we referred to in the first instalment of this series.

South Africa today is the scene of intense and bitter mass struggles which are beginning to spread across the face of our country.

Our rulers, we have said, want to determine for us which form of struggle is legal and which is not. By their actions our people are destroying the boundaries between legality and illegality. In open defiance they align themselves with the ANC, they sing of Umkhonto and they march behind flags of the SACP. All these organisations are banned by the regime.

Increasingly, in the upsurge of the people, revolutionary violence is being used to defend the peoples' leaders and to attack the enemy. This is a direct result of their day to day experience of the inherent structural violence of the Apartheid State and increasing violent repression by the regime. It is fuelled by the armed struggle conducted by Umkhonto. It is a direct political response to the political and propaganda work that have been consistently carried out by the underground networks of the ANC and the SACP which have sought to make the people understand that the Apartheid State cannot be overthrown by peaceful means alone.

There was a time when Jimmy Kruger, the then fascist Minister of Justice, used to shout in public that he had killed the snake each time he arrested an underground activist of the Liberation Front or a combatant of MK. Jimmy Kruger is minister no more but the Liberation Front and MK are alive as ever. So much so that PW Botha and his henchmen today want to illegalise every form of peaceful protest because wherever and whenever our masses rise up they see the hand of the Liberation Front.

In the conditions under which we are fighting it is important that we should preserve the legality of our legal mass organisations. This is not because we accept the ruling classes' definition of what is legal and what is not legal; the action of the masses should constantly strive to extend the boundaries of legality set by the regime.

At the same time, and because mass organisations and their leadership have to function under the direct eye of the regime, they are extremely vulnerable. Our only guarantee for continuity in struggle is the heightened political consciousness of the masses and the existence of the underground political networks of the Liberation Front. Our only assurance that revolutionary violence will live on and triumph is the ever-growing underground network of MK.

The mass struggles of our people are related not only to the increasing repression and worsening conditions of life but to the continuity in existence and actions of the Liberation Front and MK. The stronger these underground formations become, the stronger becomes the action of our masses. And the greater the action of our masses the stronger become our underground networks.

But this does not take place automatically. The underground is the place for the most seasoned and disciplined revolutionaries. It is the place where we guarantee the revolution by employing strict rules of secrecy so that the enemy cannot find us and cannot penetrate our ranks. What needs to be constantly refined and sharpened is the mechanism by which the underground and MK draw into the underground fighters seasoned by the mass struggles. This is a responsibility of all cadres of the revolution irrespective of whether they are deployed in overt mass work or underground political or MK activity.

To underline the extremely close interaction between the overt mass struggles, the underground political network and MK network let us pose this question. Increasingly the possibilities of challenging the Apartheid State successfully by means of a prolonged mass general strike is being seen to be feasible. Can such action be successful if all three factors — overt struggles, MK and underground — do not converge to make such a strike successful? The decision, the timing and the development of such a prolonged general political strike cannot be determined by those in one level of struggle alone and in isolation from the rest. Success depends on whether we can bring together our fingers into a clenched fist to strike at the enemy.

**FACE THE ENEMY WITH A CLENCHED FIST!**



# MARXISM AND VIOLENCE

## 2. The Political Content of People's Guerrilla Struggle

War is essentially a continuation of politics by violent means. This is nowhere more vividly illustrated than when we look at the stages and tasks of People's War.

Guerrilla warfare and people's war are very often taken to mean the same thing. Guerrilla warfare is indeed a very important, if not the major part of any people's war. However people's war involves a lot more than guerrilla warfare. Guerrilla tactics can be used by anybody. What distinguishes one guerrilla unit from another is the politics of that unit. It is only the revolutionary politics of a guerrilla unit that makes it one of the combat arms of people's war. For example, the Boers used guerrilla tactics to confound the British army during the Anglo-Boer War at the turn of the century. Even today the SADF has specialist units like the Reconnaissance Commandos who use guerrilla tactics in their war inside and outside South Africa.

### The War of the Flea

The technique of guerrilla warfare can be understood more easily if we compare it to another form of warfare, regular warfare. Regular warfare is waged by standing armies with expensive and heavy military hardware who engage in head-on battles sometimes lasting days, even weeks. Guerrilla warfare on the other hand is *par excellence*, the weapon of the materially weak against the materially strong. It has been called 'the war of the flea'. It relies on small units of fighters, who use surprise, speed and mobility to their advantage against an enemy which is usually made cumbersome by all the structures of a standing army. Guerrilla fighters must perfect the 'hit-and-run' tactic, which, far from being any kind of cowardice, is a tactic which allows guerrilla forces to continually harass the enemy, slowly weakening and demoralising it without suffering major casualties as guerrillas. It is therefore a war of attrition.

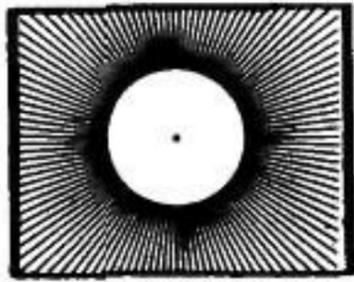
People's war is exactly what it says — a war for, and by the entire people. Communists believe, and rightly so, that the masses are the decisive force in social progress. In times of political conflicts (as in present-day South Africa) this is clearly

seen. In people's war therefore, the fighters are not separate from the people. The masses provide the bases from which attacks are launched against the enemy. They provide the fighters with food, money and information on enemy movements. All the people must be involved irrespective of age or social station.

In many cases the people are workers and peasants by day and soldiers by night. This is what confused the US army and drove them to eventual despair in Vietnam, for every villager was a potential guerrilla as well — and there was no telling who was who. Some of these villagers even worked in US army camps during the day and at night joined guerrilla groups who mortared and attacked the camps.

One of the most important lessons to teach in the early stages of people's war is that a freedom fighter's most simple weapons are very often the most effective weapons. For example, an ordinary box of matches can become a deadly weapon in the hands of a clever arsonist. Workers in the factories must be taught how to sabotage machinery. By simply putting a switch on or off at the wrong time, or throwing something into a machine, the entire works can be blown — without a single bomb in sight. One of the most important tasks at this stage will be the gathering of material — arms, ammunition, explosives, money, medical supplies, etc.

**Arms must be captured from the enemy, making the enemy the main source of supply for the guerrillas.** It also becomes very important in this regard, to organise workers in the arms industry in our country. Another vital task at the early stages of guerrilla war is armed propaganda; acts of sabotage on enemy installations, lightning attacks on police stations and army camps by specially trained guerrilla groups, etc. These acts are intended to show the masses that the enemy can be defeated and is not all-powerful. As one mother commented after the Pretoria car-bomb of 1982 in which nineteen South African air force men died: 'Now I have seen that they too can bleed and die ...'



# THE HISTORY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

## 2. THE 1922 STRIKE

In January 1922, less than six months after the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was born, white miners in the Transvaal came out on strike. They were fighting against a plan by the mine owners to allow black miners to do work reserved for whites.

The mine owners did not put forward the plan out of love for the black workers. They wanted to raise their profits which had fallen because the price of gold had gone down. The easiest way to do this was to replace expensive white workers with cheaper black ones.

The white miners strike developed into a General Strike of white workers on the Rand. The strikers raised the Red Flag and claimed to be fighting for a Soviet republic. But in reality they were fighting to keep their privileges as whites.

The CPSA supported the strikers, though it said the real issue was keeping up wages, not keeping out the black workers. It argued that all jobs should be open to all workers — but at the same rates of pay the white workers were getting.

The strikers made an alliance with Afrikaner Nationalists. Armed commandos clashed with the police. The strike lasted three months. In March, Prime Minister Smuts declared Martial Law (similar to a State of Emergency). He used bombers, tanks and machine guns to force the miners back to work. More than 250 workers died. Two of the strike leaders were murdered by troops and three were hanged.

Why did the CPSA support strikers who marched under a banner calling for a 'White South Africa'?

The main reason was that the party had been born out of the white working class movement. Its leaders and members were mainly white workers who felt they could not betray their fellow workers in a fight against the bosses. They decided to stand by the miners, even though they had doubts about the wisdom and aims of the strike.

The strike was smashed and many white miners lost their jobs. But the bosses did not give the jobs to blacks. Instead they employed fewer whites to supervise the black miners, who had to work harder for the same pay.

In 1924 the white workers and the boers of the platteland joined forces to fight Smuts in a general election. The racist Labour Party and Hertzog's National Party won the election. The white workers did not vote for the Communists, who had made the biggest sacrifices in the strike.

The new government passed laws that guaranteed the privileged position of white workers. The laws confirmed the position of the white workers as an 'aristocracy of labour'. They had sold their vote for a share in the super-profits made out of exploiting black workers.

The CPSA learned a bitter lesson. One of its leaders, Ivon Jones, wrote: 'There is no room for a Communist Party in white South Africa ...'

In South Africa it is first of all the black workers who, in the words of the Communist Manifesto, 'have nothing to lose but their chains'. It is the black workers who are a truly revolutionary force, able to smash the shackles of white domination and go on to build a socialist South Africa.

By the end of 1924 the CPSA had changed its direction. Declaring that 'the problems of the working class can only be solved by a United Front of all workers irrespective of colour', it began to organise trade unions of black workers.

The party reaped a rich reward. Its ranks were swelled by black workers who were to become leaders of both the party and the African National Congress. Among them were famous names such as Albert Nzula, JB Marks, Moses Kotane and Johannes Nkosi.

**READ THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST**  
Theoretical quarterly journal of the  
South African Communist Party.  
Available from Inkululeko Publications  
39 Goodge Street, London W1P 1FD, UK

**BUILD THE PARTY!**

# NICARAGUA: LESSONS FOR OUR REVOLUTION



Augusto Sandino

The Nicaraguan Revolution, which the USA is seeking to crush, will survive and advance. This is because it is a truly people's revolution with a tradition of heroic resistance.

## **Sandino — The Anti-Imperialist Fighter**

It is not the first time that Nicaraguan patriots have had to face US aggression. At the turn of the century American marines landed in Nicaragua and other Central American countries. Military intervention lasted 25 years in Nicaragua until US troops were fought to a standstill. Their opponent was Augusto Sandino who led a guerrilla army of workers and peasants. Forced to switch from direct intervention the US sought a local instrument of domination. Sandino was assassinated in 1934, his followers massacred and the Somoza family installed in power. For 45 years the people were to suffer under this brutal regime. But Sandino's brave resistance gave birth to a tradition of popular revolt. His example inspired the Sandinista National Liberation Front, which was formed in 1961 and took his name.

## **The Vanguard — How It Grew**

The Sandinistas grew from small study circles into underground cells. Small guerrilla groups began operating in the mountains. The going was slow and hard. Many activists were captured, imprisoned, murdered. For years a handful survived in the mountains, keeping alive the spirit of armed resistance. Differences of approach arose within the Sandinistas as they struggled to gain the people's active support. Some wished to concentrate effort on organising within the urban workers. Others believed that only through protracted war waged by rurally-based guerrillas could Somoza be toppled. Conditions for mass struggle, however, were ripening. Contradictions within the regime and bold armed actions were contributing to a rise in the people's willingness to act. Strikes, demonstrations and street battles between the people and the security forces became common. The people showed contempt for death, displayed the Sandinista flag, became skilled in building barricades and arming themselves with homemade bombs and improvised weapons. **The similarity with many recent events in our country is striking!**

## **Strategy for Insurrection**

Learning from the masses and their often spontaneous revolts, the Sandinistas came to devise a strategy based on an 'insurrectionist' approach. This was in 1977. By July 1979

Somoza was overthrown by a remarkable succession of local and general uprisings. This strategy, which so accelerated the pace of the armed struggle, consisted of a meshing of guerrilla warfare and the new phenomenon of popular uprisings in the towns. In the past the armed activists of town and countryside had been relatively isolated from the people. Military and political work were poles apart. Experience taught the Sandinistas that the mass uprisings could place the actions of the people themselves in the forefront of the armed struggle. The task was to transform the aroused political force into a people's army. What Lenin called transforming the 'political army of the revolution' into the 'Revolutionary Armed Forces' or 'the people in arms'. Taking advantage of the favourable situation the Sandinistas grew within one year (1977-78) from a few hundred guerrillas into a fighting force of thousands. They had found the practical way of arming the masses and moulding them into an effective insurrectionary force. 'There could be no triumph without the massive participation of the people', stated Humberto Ortega, a Sandinista leader. **'We thought mass action would be a prop to help the guerrillas strike some blows at the National Guard. The reality is that the guerrilla campaign became the prop for the people to overthrow the Somoza regime through insurrection'**.

A further important element of Sandinista strategy was the creation of tactical class alliances. This involved the building of a broad popular front including the middle classes and liberal bourgeoisie which were alienated by Somoza's rule. The Sandinistas were confident that the radical basis of their platform, together with the ascendant mass movement, would help guard against the bourgeoisie gaining control of the revolution. The outcome was the isolation and disintegration of the Somoza regime and the triumph of people's power. It is the same mass force which overthrew Somoza and opened the way for social progress that now defends the Nicaraguan revolution against US-backed bandits and the possibility of direct American invasion. The three million people of this small but courageous country are enthusiastically constructing a new society, and fired by the example of the legendary Sandino, are ready to defend Nicaragua with their last breath.