

# UMSEBENZI

VOICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

## NO TO OCTOBER!

With one voice we must say '**NO**' to the October ghetto elections. No patriot must be a candidate. No one must vote. Botha's ballot boxes must remain empty. A cross on the voting paper means signing away our birthright for majority rule in one united democratic South Africa.

Every democratic organisation, every trade union, every women's and youth collective, every community organ, every church group, every underground worker, and every militant of MK, must swing into immediate action. No effort must be spared to defeat this new racist manoeuvre to get blacks to collaborate in continued white domination. **There is no task more urgent in the coming few months.**

### WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Botha is in a real corner. He cannot go back to pre-1984. He cannot stand still. Yet he has, so far, found no way of going forward. Everything the racists have done to try to suck blacks into systems of inferior representation has struck a rock. The bantustans, the community councils, the 'parliament' for coloureds and Indians and other related devices, have failed to lift them out of their crisis. The terror of emergency rule has caused pain but has not led to submission by the people. Their remaining hope of holding back the drive to liberation and democracy is October.

### Fighting for Survival.

This is not just another election. They have already announced that the ghetto Councils will be one of the 'building blocks' for what Botha has called 'The Great Indaba'. This 'Great Indaba' will be nothing more than a Great Talking-Shop under complete white manage-

ment. If the regime's plans fail in October — and we must see to it that they do — the survival strategy for white supremacy once again stands in complete tatters.

They are haunted by the memory of the upsurge which followed the 1984 tri-cameral election farce. They know that a successful

### SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY SAYS

- ★ **fight for trade union freedom!**
- ★ **resist repression!**
- ★ **boycott October ghetto elections!**
- ★ **unite in action to smash apartheid tyranny**



boycott will arouse the spirit of resistance of our masses to even greater heights. It will also shatter whatever illusions remain in the world outside that blacks will accept anything short of real democracy. That is why they are throwing everything they have into preventing a mass stayaway from the polls on the 26th October.

### **The October Offensive.**

The regime has been quite open about its own preparations for October. According to Stoffel van der Merwe, the 18 organisations were banned in order to 'free the people' to vote. For the same reason more and more militants have been harassed, detained and tortured. The JMC's are making more promises to 'upgrade' some services in selected townships to bribe mainly the black upper crust to play ball with racism. The media has been muzzled as never before. It has been made a crime to advocate a boycott of October. Millions are being spent to advertise participation in the elections.

And just in case all this does not work, the door has been left open for falsifying the results through the notorious Prior Votes Law. The authorities can now fill the ballot boxes with 'voting papers' which are 'sent in' by individuals before the date of the elections.

### **Complete Boycott is the Answer.**

The regime is desperate to trap people into participation. It is even prepared to tolerate the so-called participatory boycott. It is ready to allow candidates to campaign on a boycott ticket. And it has offered to lift the ban on the UDF if it were only prepared to take part in October. No patriot will be tempted by this type of trickery. This is

not the moment to be two-voiced about the form of the boycott. The answer must be simple and clear. Nobody must vote. Nobody must stand. We are not in a situation which justifies any other tactic.

**Botha's commitment to making October succeed for white rule is total. We must ensure that the response of the oppressed is also total.**

We hail the wisdom and courage of the Churches who, in defiance of the law, have openly called for a complete and unconditional boycott. This is the kind of spirit which will lead to the end of racism.

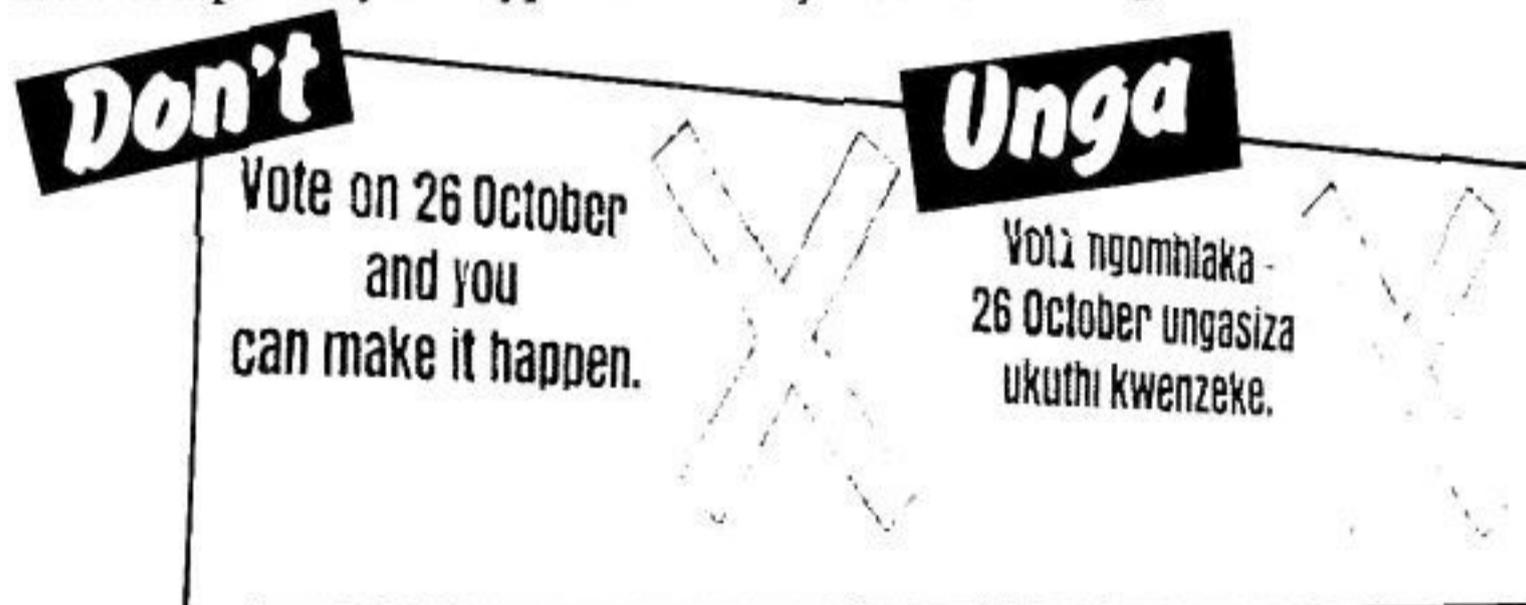
### **We Can Do It**

*Umsebenzi* claimed in March that our oppressed remained ready to take the fight to the enemy. We rejected purely defensive talk which suggested a policy of just holding the line. Since then, the people themselves have given their answer. In their millions they proved their readiness to go forward in actions on March 21, May 1, June 6, 7 and 8, and June 16.

Never before in our history has there been such a monumental response from our working class, supported by all sections of the oppressed communities. Even the regime — convinced that it had done enough through emergency repression — stood by and was visibly shaken by the June response. They must be shaken once again in October to widen the cracks in the very foundations of race rule.

**October is truly a watershed. We have it within our power to defeat the racist plans for ghetto councils. No patriot must vote.**

**No patriot must stand. Forward to October!**



**BOTHA'S BALLOT BOXES  
MUST REMAIN EMPTY!**

# 'SOFT' AND 'HARD' TARGETS



Armed actions and bomb blasts are being stepped up in our country. Combatants of Umkhonto we Sizwe have been ambushing 'hard' targets such as police and army patrols. 'Soft' targets such as in bomb blasts in city centres, as at Ellis Park stadium (whoever has done them) have raised questions about whether the ANC has dropped its policy of avoiding 'soft' or civilian targets. ANC President Oliver Tambo has firmly and continuously reiterated that the ANC's policy has always been and continues to be to avoid hitting innocent civilians.

Of course in all wars there will be errors of judgment by combatants acting under pressure, unfortunate timing or cases where 'civilians get caught in the cross-fire'. It is important, however, that our people should understand the policy of the movement and should see that the movement and its combatants are striving to keep to that policy.

There are two key elements related to the use of revolutionary force: the one concerns strategy and the other revolutionary morality.

Our strategic aim is to concentrate our efforts in such a way as to isolate and weaken the apartheid regime, diminish its social support base, and broaden and unify the popular democratic forces in active struggle for the overthrow of the system. The Freedom Charter provides the basis and the goal of such a strategy.

Our methods of attaining that goal must interrelate with our objectives. We aim to build a South Africa 'where black and white will live together in freedom, peace and equality'. **If indiscriminate violence were used against white civilians as civilians, we would undermine our whole strategy.** This would have the effect of hardening white resolve and making the entire white community prisoners of the racist laager. In fact this is just what the racists desire. A pattern of white civilian violence would obviously play into their hands.

The question of revolutionary morality is just as important as our strategy and in fact cannot be separated from it. We call on our people to support and join our just war of liberation in order to eradicate the evil system of apartheid and the immoral methods used to perpetuate that rule. **Our morality, and therefore our politics, is superior to that of the enemy.** It is precisely this fact that

gives our cause, our struggle, our combatants and our people such strength and certainty of success. It has also won for us the support of the whole world.

## Who are the targets?

In any war the main target must be the enemy personnel. It is when his police and soldiers, and better still his commanding officers, are eliminated, that the enemy is hurt most of all. The biggest weakness of the apartheid system is the shortage of white manpower. The more white soldiers and police we eliminate (including their paramilitary personnel on the white farms) the sooner will we see freedom. And when black soldiers and police see their white 'masters' dying they will be profoundly affected too. The effect will make it easier for us to win them over to the side of the struggle. Of course it is necessary to eliminate the worst elements among those blacks serving in the enemy forces, but we must also try to agitate amongst them so that they turn their guns against apartheid.

Apart from aiming our blows at the apartheid security forces, we strike at the administration, at the economy and the communications system. The aim is to weaken the entire system of apartheid rule, and to drain the enemy's manpower and economic resources.

We must also not forget that the main support base for the racist tyranny comes from the white community as a whole. **Up to now it has not sufficiently felt the sting of conflict.** This conflict has been mainly conducted in the black areas by a regime completely unconcerned for the lives of black civilians. **The selection of more and more targets in the white areas is a necessity.** Those areas are full of the cream of the enemy's armed and police forces, and its key military and economic installations. And we cannot be expected to refuse to act in those areas merely because in such actions white civilians are put at risk. **If, in the process of attacking legitimate targets civilians are hurt, it is the racist tyranny which must be blamed for this, not the combatants of MK.**

Armed struggle is fundamental to the seizure of power. It must relate at all times to our policy and strategy so that it wins the support of the people.

# NO GHETTO ELECTIONS!

# THE ROLE OF BOYCOTT IN STRUGGLE

The decision to call for a boycott of the Local Affairs elections was taken after extensive discussion among democrats on whether or not to participate. **Why did this question arise?**

What was at issue was not whether the Local Affairs structures are reactionary or progressive. There are situations in which it may be right for revolutionaries to try to turn such reactionary institutions, from within, against their creators. The aim of participation would be to win over those who still cling to the illusion that these structures can bring real change. Revolutionaries would also aim to use the legal platform during election campaigns and within these structures to conduct agitation and activate the people, and eventually to render them non-functional.

In a situation where the masses have not mustered the capacity to destroy these structures by means of direct revolutionary action alone, taking part in them could be a correct tactic. This would be a result of a low level of awareness among the people, and/or even battle fatigue. As distinct from opportunism, such participation would advance the aims set out above. Above all, it would be a result of a deliberate decision on the part of the democratic movement to which the individuals involved are accountable. It is from the democratic movement that they would get their guidance.

But the decision to call for a complete boycott of the Local Affairs elections is based on a host of factors. Firstly, the majority of the people in the areas concerned do not look up to these structures as agents of change. Neither do they relate to them with awe and fear. Over the past four years the people have destroyed or weakened many apartheid local structures and set up people's committees. The mass revolt which started around 1983 was about these very structures at national and local levels. It is quite true that state repression has severely weakened the people's committees and damaged democratic organisations. But throughout these areas, efforts are under way to master semi-legal and illegal methods of operation, including the skilful use of those legal avenues still open. Sectors such as the church have decided to defy emergency regulations and call for a boycott.

Therefore the space for organisation and mobilisation has been extended, by the people themselves, beyond the bounds of racist legality. By responding massively to calls for action, such as the general strikes, the people have shown that their spirit is not broken. They are prepared to take decisive action if given the lead. The popular mood among the black people in the areas where October elections are to be held — the PWV area, the Western Cape, Eastern Cape etc — is for direct revolutionary action.

Would participation in the elections not help create the legal space to support and facilitate other forms of organisation and propaganda? Certainly it would. But such participation would sow confusion and also weaken the confidence of the people at a time when they are grappling with the question of reviving active revolt under the very conditions of severe repression.

Obviously, the regime will, by hook or by crook, install its puppets even if the lowest possible percentage poll is registered. In other words, abstention from voting on its own cannot lead to the destruction of these structures. What is also needed is an **active boycott: A campaign that should rouse the people to act on all fronts to render these structures unworkable.** Where possible, we should make the puppets' campaign and elections themselves impossible to conduct. Combined with armed activity, the boycott campaign should lay the foundation for the revival and intensification of revolt on a nationwide scale, and help to strengthen organisation — underground, semi-legal and above-board.



**BOYCOTT OCTOBER!**

# NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

I have been assigned to co-ordinate a new Party unit operating somewhere in South Africa. I would like to share some general experiences, problems and questions as these come up over the next year. There are three of us in this unit, and the other two comrades, a worker and a young intellectual, are quite new Party members. In sharing our experiences I would like to place stress on the crucially important human element in underground work.

Our very first meeting as a unit was a few weeks ago. Now, a Party unit is not just some communists loosely thrown together. Even if it cannot meet very often, the unit is the true heart and soul of the Party. For Party members the unit is the lifeline to our organisation.

Every unit is different. But I think that there are also some general common features. For instance, in all the units in which I have served, there is always some tenseness and uncertainty at the beginning. You are wondering — 'Will I prove capable of fulfilling the tasks that will come up? Who are these other comrades, are they reliable?' etc. Coming together as a unit is a serious step; each one is literally placing his or her life in the hands of the others.

The role of the unit leader is always of great importance, most especially at the beginning. The leader must help to overcome this tenseness and uncertainty. In the first place this means careful planning before each meeting.

At our first meeting, we began by establishing very clear security procedures, the date and time for the next meeting, the legend (that is, the cover-up story for this meeting), fall-back procedures, and personal security reports from each of us. You can read about all of these techniques in other *Umsebenzi* articles, but what I want to underline here is that implementing these procedures is also important for the morale of a new unit. It gives the unit meeting a seriousness, a professional revolutionary character.

While being firm about security, a unit must not become harsh or ultra-critical. I say this because I have been in units where there was sometimes a tendency not just to correct and criticise security errors, but to humiliate the comrade who had made the error. This kind of harshness can actually worsen security. Comrades can become too afraid to admit errors and simply report that 'everything is okay.'

Apart from establishing security procedures, the unit must begin to develop a clear sense of its role. This role will develop with the unit and with the changing situation in our country. Thinking back to the other week, I must admit that as convenor I did not succeed in this aspect. We spent too much time on security and on general, rather vague political discussion. In the next few meetings it will be important to correct this. The comrades in the unit must be given a much clearer understanding of our unit's specific revolutionary tasks, and how these relate to the overall struggle. It will also be important to give each individual unit member an immediate, specific task, maybe a simple task in the mass democratic sector, or the finding of another good meeting place for our unit.

In doing this it is very important to set tasks that are manageable for the individual concerned. There is nothing worse for cadre development than tasks that are vague, unclear, or so enormous that they are impossible to complete properly. The fulfilment of basic tasks builds confidence and establishes an ongoing involvement of members in the unit between meetings.

Another important side to the life of the unit is ideological development. In fact, many units begin basically as study groups — reading and discussing the Party programme, and the classics of Marxism-Leninism. Here too the human angle must always be kept firmly in sight. The purpose of ideological discussion is to sharpen the collective work, trust and understanding of the unit. It is not study for its own sake. In ideological discussion it is especially important not to place non-intellectuals at a disadvantage.

In future meetings of our unit this could be a problem. Our different backgrounds will have to be handled correctly. It is clear that the worker comrade and myself will have much to learn from our third comrade with intellectual skills, even if she is much younger than us. But she, the intellectual, must learn to share her skills, and she must learn to also learn from our political and class experience.

Well, if with skill and seriousness we continue to outwit the enemy, I'll be able to write about the progress of the new unit.

Meanwhile we salute all our comrades, and we leave you with the slogan we have adopted for our first months of work as a unit: **The longest march begins with the first small steps!!**

**SMASH APARTHEID TYRANNY!** 5



**HAPPY 70th!!**

*Eli Weinberg's photo  
of Nelson Mandela  
taken in the  
underground in 1961*

## **FROM POLLSMOOR TO VICTORY!**

implement the campaign against the government's unilateral declaration of a republic.

Mandela is basically a man of peace, but although he is a great national patriot, he is very conscious of the role which a democratic South Africa will have to play internationally. He knows very clearly that apartheid remains a threat internally and externally and that as long as it exists it will by its very nature endanger the peace in southern Africa and consequently remain a threat to all mankind as did its counterpart, the Nazis, before it.

He believes implicitly in the Freedom Charter and that all shall be equal before the law including the Afrikaner. But he has his priorities all in place and is aware that until the poison of racism is eliminated and the majority of oppressed blacks made free in deed as well as in words, South Africa can never be free.

Winnie and Nelson got married on the 14th June 1958 — over thirty years ago — and it is estimated by close friends of the couple that they have spent just over four years of that time together as a normal married couple. And although they are now grandparents several times over, the path which he has chosen enabled him to see his own children only fleetingly as they grew up. In fact their happiest and most stable period of family togetherness was probably spent by the Mandela family at Rivonia when he was underground. This has been the fate of others too. The unsung heroes and heroines are the wives and children torn apart from their husbands and fathers by the vicious, inhuman and genocidal apartheid regime.

But the 18th July has been a momentous day for us all. So let every freedom fighter in our Movement make a pledge to Mandela and our other leaders in gaol with him, for we after all have a special relationship with them; We pledge to carry on the struggle unremittably beside you and your comrades behind bars. We pledge to fight for your release together with all other political prisoners and to continue this campaign until the scourge of apartheid is eradicated forever from our country. And we know what our greetings and this pledge will mean to you because we know for certain what it means to us.

Approximately twenty-seven years ago while Nelson Mandela was underground and being sought by every policeman in South Africa, about half a dozen comrades were involved in smuggling the late Eli Weinberg into the hiding place to take an up-to-date photograph of the man whom the media dubbed the 'Black Pimpernel'. Comrade Nelson had held several meetings in different parts of the country and had eluded capture for several months. It was now necessary to produce an obviously new photograph with which to reassure our followers and raise morale still further. This successful exercise was a very secret affair in 1961.

That same photograph, enlarged many times, appeared as the centrepiece before over eighty thousand cheering spectators at Wembley stadium in London to celebrate Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday. It was also seen by over 80 million television viewers in every land. Mandela is today the most famous political prisoner in the world.

Neither the Movement nor Mandela himself believes in the cult of the individual. We all believe in collective decisions. But there is no doubt about the fact that the leadership of the Movement has selected Mandela to be its spokesman in many crises facing us in the past, and Comrade Nelson has never failed his people in this role. Not even when the choice very clearly, as in the Rivonia case, meant that in so doing he was laying his life on the line. He was a leading member of the ANC Youth League which gave the leadership of the ANC a much more militant direction. He was chosen Volunteer-in-Chief of the great defiance campaign and Commander-in-Chief of MK. When he became temporarily unbanned in 1961, he did not hesitate to call for a three day national strike at the Convention in Pietermaritzburg and then declare that he was going underground to help

**6 RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!**

# SOME GLASNOST ON THE WOMEN'S QUESTION

The permanent state of emergency and increased state repression have placed as urgent the question of more active participation of women at all levels of our liberation struggle. We must reassess our positions regarding women. The situation demands that we deal with this question in openness and determination, with a drive to resolve, educate and eradicate.

Marxist theory teaches that the fight for women's equality is a social one, and that it can be resolved only under socialism. The roots of women's oppression (sexism) are the same as those of exploitation and oppression of the black working people, roots sprouted and entrenched in the capitalist system of apartheid. The struggle for women's liberation is linked with the overall struggle for national and social emancipation of the working people of our country.

The liberation of women cannot be achieved in isolation from the main currents of the anti-racist and class struggle. It is based on the class struggle itself. We must guard against extreme feminist tendencies which regard the women's question as a thing-in-itself, separated from the broad struggle. Such views distort and reduce the specific nature of the women's movement. They vulgarise this movement as a struggle between the sexes, as anti-man and anti-family. These concepts dilute and divide the broad democratic movement.

However, we must also guard against the other extreme. Some see the fight for women's equality as trivial and self-indulgent, and dismiss it as 'feminism'. They regard women's specific needs as attempts to promote women's issues above those of others. And they see women's emancipation as a task to be tackled only after liberation. Karl Marx said '...great social changes are impossible without the feminine ferment.' To ignore issues affecting women, is to distance and isolate ourselves from this important section of the population. **We must address their demands in the factories, farms and kitchens if we want to draw women into active involvement.** This will enhance understanding of the interconnection of women's interests and the broad struggle against apartheid rule.

To dismiss and stigmatise women's needs and demands as 'feminism' is political infantilism.

There is feminism and feminism. Our perspective of feminism seeks to affirm the role and status of women now and after liberation. We regard women as equal and dynamic participants both within the Party and society. Communists do not tolerate the attitudes of male supremacy and female subordination. We strive to combat the tendency of patriarchal contempt for women, and also to fight traditionalist attitudes of subservience and submission on the part of women.

The status of women within an organisation is a sensitive barometer of the level of political maturity and the extent of democracy in that organisation. And the degree to which women's demands are accepted, integrated and implemented in our programmes indicates the nature of commitment to fight discrimination whoever the victim and from whatever quarter.

The time has come to critically examine the vacuum of women's leadership in the democratic and liberation movement. Fallacies and justifications must stop. We need no self-deception. **The militancy of women in shopfloor struggles, in civic and community-based battles of rent, bus, and consumer boycotts do not match the inadequate presence of women on leading bodies.** Catch phrases and paper resolutions of women's equality are worn-out. Window dressing of one or two women on executives cannot be sufficient. The fight ahead demands strong and seasoned women's leadership, a leadership that will play a crucial role in the tough times ahead!

Women have demonstrated a great capacity to resist and confront the regime which robs them of family life, imprisons their husbands, hangs their sons and slaughters their children. This disciplined and decisive force must be harnessed. Their resilience and collective refusal to surrender point the way towards future victories!



*Helen Joseph, awarded  
Isitwalandwe-Seaparankoe  
in 1988*

**LONG LIVE AUGUST 9TH!**

# THE ROLE OF CULTURAL WORKERS

It was not so long ago when the world, on its TV screens, witnessed how our people took the fight for freedom to the enemy. As the world watched this, it also experienced another development. Traditional chants and dances, hymn melodies and street songs were transformed into slogans, revolutionary dances and songs — describing the changes taking place in relationships between masters and slaves, bosses and workers, old and young, men and women and families. The struggle for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa by the masses of our people had once more thrown up a new breed of cultural workers from among youth, women, community and worker organisations, who, through their work, reflected the aspirations of our people for the birth of a new and democratic South Africa.

The world, through the international solidarity movement, received this message, was moved by it, and challenged more vigorously, the support of western governments for the apartheid regime. Our people had, through struggle and the democratic culture we are fighting for, joined world democratic culture against imperialism.

The evidence above is the process which answers the question: What is the role of cultural workers in the national democratic revolution in our country? The 1982 'Culture and Resistance' Festival and Conference held in Gaborone and the 'Culture in Another South Africa' in Amsterdam last year, put high on the agenda, through the resolutions passed at both conferences, that cultural work is 'part and parcel' of the struggle for liberation.

Cultural workers are daily emerging from among the masses. They seek to organise themselves and unite with 'professional artists'. They are becoming part and parcel of the force and energy whose objective is to seize political power and to establish a democratic state. All this serves to isolate apartheid culture. It also opens up space for the participation of cultural groups which may have seen themselves as being non-political or more concerned with 'working class culture' than with so-called 'populist culture.' It is a dynamic struggle which challenges the natural talent of individual cultural workers to produce cultural manifestations which reflect and express the highest ideal of normal people — the quest for liberation and



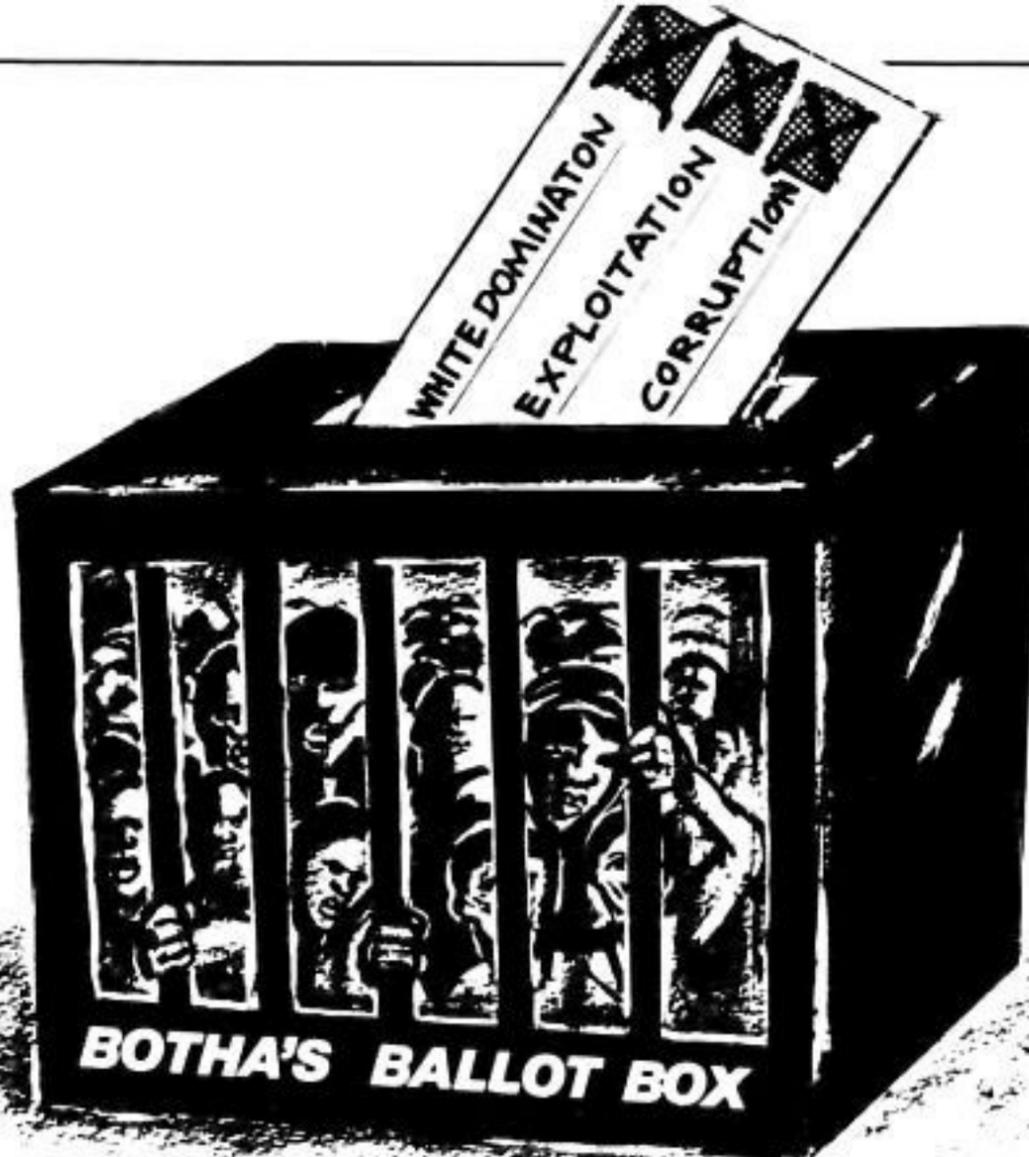
peace. It also inspires a mood of no compromise and no surrender to oppression, exploitation and repression of our people.

Cultural workers must defend and ensure the advancement of democracy within their structures. They must defend the history and objectives of the National Liberation Movement — the ANC and its allies, SACTU and the SACP. They must also know that the survival of MK depends on their protecting it, as it will defend what they stand for. It is on this basis that our cultural workers must defend the national democratic struggle and the ultimate creation of a socialist state.

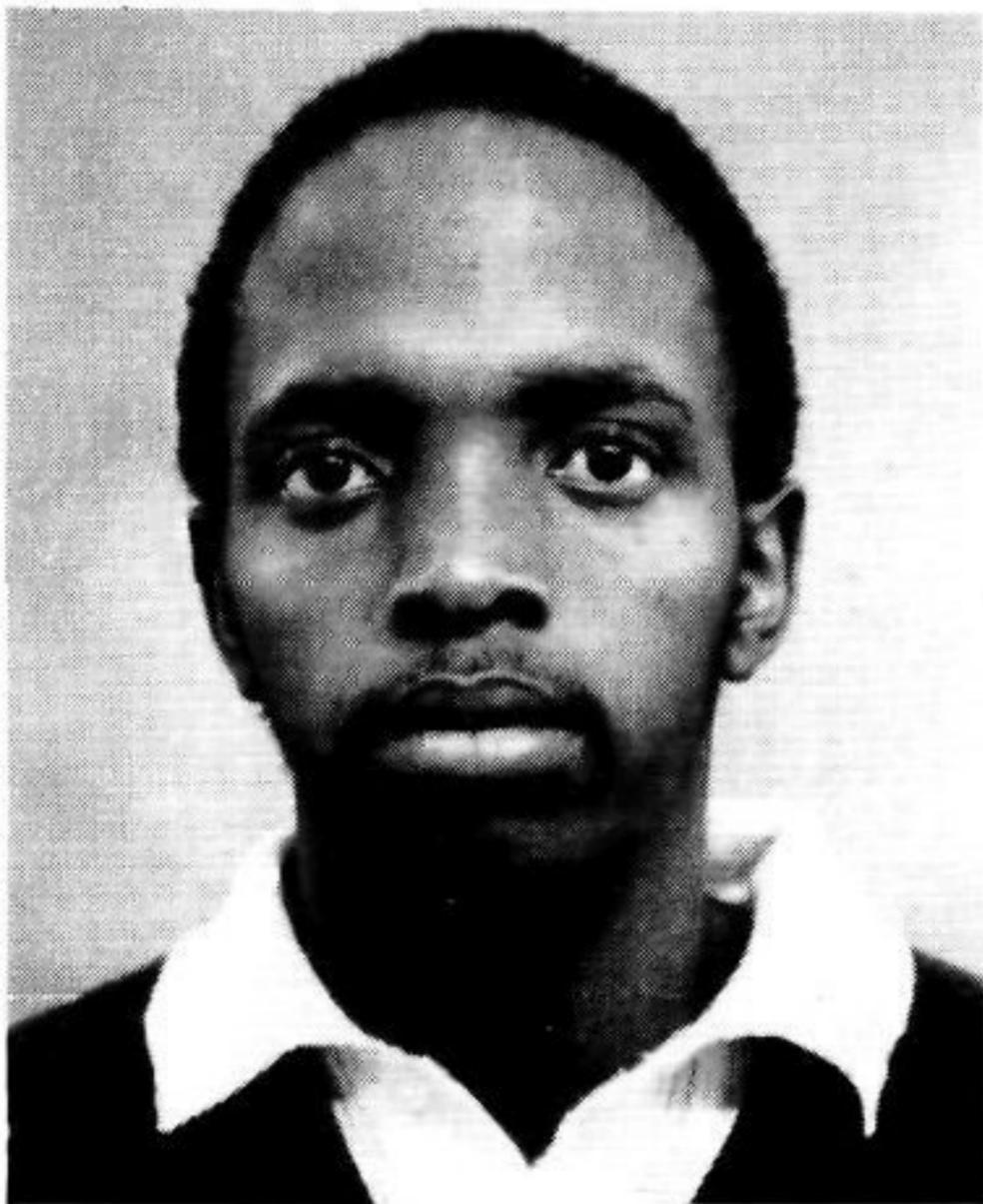
Presently, while defending their own organisation and the objectives of the National Liberation Movement, cultural workers must in practice open 'The Doors of Learning and Culture...' Through their young structures and consultation, they must see themselves as being the ones to implement the cultural boycott.

They must combine cultural and political manifestations, through poetry readings, performances and exhibitions which have as their objective to express the life and aspirations of our people. They must raise funds, both for the cultural structures and for the mass democratic movement. The cultural structures must be the seedbed from which democratic culture will sprout and bloom. They must ensure that 'All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands'.

**8 CULTURE IS A WEAPON OF STRUGGLE!**



## PEN PICTURES OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS



### **MKHOSI LOYISO** (**CEASER BIMMY DAMANE**)

Mkhosi was born in the sprawling dorp of Middelburg in 1955. He showed an early readiness to tread in the footsteps of the great patriots of old. He went to primary and secondary school in Dennilton and later Middelburg. He became a founder member of the Middelburg Students' Organisation. Serving on its executive, he influenced it to affiliate to the national South African Students' Movement.

When he joined the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe he was already a steeled patriot, having undergone solitary confinement and torture at the hands of the enemy. He was, at various times, a commissar, instructor and foot-soldier, impressing all those who worked with him with his modesty, sensitivity, firmness and resolution. These sterling qualities were reinforced by a spell of training at Party School in the Soviet Union.

Mkhosi was a pillar of his Party collective, where he led with great dedication and ability. He was more than just an ordinary leader. He was a listener and a collective operator. He always accepted criticism as the necessary catalyst to development.

Mkhosi's tragic passing in July 1988 has left a gap which it will not be easy to fill.

**FIGHT FOR TRADE UNION FREEDOM!** 9

# PERESTROIKA.

## Reform of the Political System

We are beginning this work not on unbroken ground, not from scratch. We have behind us the unique experience of the world's first socialist democracy. We pioneered many of the democratic beginnings of the 20th century.

Why, then, is the task of radically reforming the political system being put forward today? First and foremost, comrades, it is a fact — and we have to admit this today — that at a certain stage the political system established as a result of the October Revolution underwent serious deformations. This made possible the omnipotence of Stalin and his entourage, and the wave of repressive measures and lawlessness.

The decisions of the 20th Party Congress opened up possibilities of overcoming the violations of Leninist principles in the life of the Party and the state. However, these possibilities were not utilised primarily because the importance of socialist democracy was underestimated and belittled. And this led to relapses of cult-related phenomena.

## Democracy and Government

The process by which the Soviets are formed should ensure the right to nominate an unlimited number of candidates and to discuss them broadly and freely. There must also be strict compliance with the democratic procedure of elections, regular reports by the deputies to their constituencies, and the opportunity to recall deputies.

Generally, comrades, the body of deputies should, from now on, be formed above all through a lively and free expression of the will of the electorate, not according to quotas set down from above.

We may, of course, fail to achieve full unanimity in decision-making on this or that issue. But that is perfectly normal under a democratic process. Generally, it is high time we learned to listen closely to what an opponent is saying and not to regard him with invariable prejudice. Socialist pluralism of views, debate, discussion and comparison of different standpoints are ways of choosing the best possible solutions.

## Party and State

A factor of tremendous importance in the functioning of the Party as a political vanguard in pre-

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at the 19th. 1988 will undoubtedly go down in history as the development of socialist theory and practice. **people have managed to halt the country's spiritual crisis. The creative nature of socialist struggle in the struggle.'**

It is impossible to do full justice to the rich content available to us. But we have selected sentences on some topics. We hope that the reader will be able to find the full text of the speech.



*Oliver Tambo and Mikhail Gorbachev*

sent conditions is the correct solution of the problem of clearly demarcating the functions of the Party and state bodies.

Lenin repeatedly pointed to the harmful nature of the notions that a governing party must directly administer, ignoring or replacing other organisations of working people.

All Party organisations are to act in strict compliance with the USSR Constitution and Soviet laws. We should rule out the practice of Party committees adopting resolutions with direct instructions to government or economic agencies or public organisations.

## Inter-Ethnic Relations

The union of our country's nations and na-

# — THE NEW PATH

All-Union Conference of the CPSU on 28 June as one of the most important steps in the process. In his words: **'The Party and the working class's drift towards an economic, social and scientific and humane socialism is being revived**

Content of comrade Gorbachev's speech in the space of 15 minutes and passages and grouped them under different headings to grasp a flavour of some of the important aspects



Equalities which enjoy equal rights is one of the greatest accomplishments of socialism. Today this enables us to state with profound conviction that in the future, too, consistent implementation of Lenin's ethnic policy will be the only sound basis of our development.

In recent years, democratisation and glasnost have put the spotlight on problems whose importance is not always taken into consideration — issues of language, culture, literature, art, historical heritage and environmental protection.

It is natural for the development of our multi-ethnic state to be accompanied by a growth of ethnic self-awareness. That is a positive development, but since the new requirements arising in this connection were not always treated with the attention they deserved, some issues began to

develop complications and acquire a nationalistic aspect in some cases.

## **Socialist Rule of Law**

The foremost salient feature of a state committed to rule of law is that it effectively ensures the primacy of law. Not a single government body, official, collective, Party organisation, public association or individual can be exempt from abiding by the law. Just as all citizens have obligations to our state of the whole people, the state has obligations to its citizens. Their rights must be firmly protected against any abuse by the authorities.

In renewing our legislation we should unswervingly observe the principle that everything not prohibited by law is allowed. The public demands openness, the ruling out of prejudice or bias against the defendant and absolutely no departures from the principle of 'innocent until proven guilty'.

With a view to upgrading the protection of civil rights, we would be justified in raising the issue of enhancing the role of the Bar as a self-governing association and ensuring more active involvement of the members of the Bar in the consideration of criminal and civil cases.

## **Public Organisations**

Public organisations, which speak for various sections of our society, are a major component of the Soviet political system.

### **(a) Trade Unions:**

Naturally, respecting their independence, we should not give them cut-and-dried recipes telling them how they should remodel their work. The main thing for the trade unions today is to democratise their activities taking due account of the new situation developing as the democratic renewal of society is going on, especially at the level of work collectives.

Self-government by work collectives adds to the significance of such a trade union function as the defence of the democratic rights of working people. By more confident actions in favour of democracy the trade unions can have a greater influence on people's mode of thinking, helping them to overcome inertia, giving them more opportunity to run the affairs of the collective and society.

The role of the trade unions, just like the role played by other public organisations, will grow

if they are directly represented in the supreme body of state power.

**(b) Youth:**

We should display full political confidence in the young people and communicate with them in a new way, so that the lecturing of 'children' by their 'fathers' should give way to dialogue. If we want to regain the young people's trust, we should learn to talk with them openly and honestly as equals, remembering that truth alone can help us. The more truth, the more trust.

As for Party committees, they should respect and observe the YCL's independence as an organisation, its right to decide independently all questions related to its internal activities without exception, and its right to participate in elaborating and effecting the policy of the Party, and they should defend the interests of the youth in Party, government and economic bodies.

**(c) Women:**

It has often been asserted that this question has been resolved in this country once and for all. Indeed, we proclaimed equal rights for women and men, gave women equal access to nearly all trades and professions, fixed equal pay for equal work, and guaranteed other rights for women. This is all very well. But it has turned out that, apart from the undeniable gains, there are still daily cares largely preventing women from enjoying their rights fully. Inadequate living conditions, the shortage of child-care facilities, defects in the services and trade — all these affect women in the first place.

This situation could exist for years also because the women's opinions were not duly reckoned with. Women are not duly represented in governing bodies. And the women's movement as a whole, which gained momentum after the October Revolution, has gradually come to a standstill or has become formal.

We must work to change the situation essentially, so that the door should be open wide for them to governing bodies at all levels.

**International Relations**

A key factor in the new thinking is the concept of freedom of choice. We are convinced that this is a universal principle for international relations at a time when the very survival of civilisation has become the principal problem of the world, its common denominator ... The imposition of a social system, way of life, or policies from outside by any means, let alone military, are dangerous trappings of the past period.

Have the imperialist sources of aggression and war vanished? No. We do not forget about the threat to peace issuing from imperialist militarism and consider that there are no guarantees as yet that the positive processes that have begun are irreversible. The new political thinking, in fact, enables us to see and find new opportunities for opposing policies of strength on a broader political basis than in the past.

We will consistently pursue the course of deepening our relations with developing states and the non-aligned movement ... Our solidarity with the working people of the whole world, with the fighters against colonialism, racism and reaction, is unchanging.

**The Ugly Face of Bureaucracy**

The principle of democratic centralism, which underlies the structure and activity of the CPSU, was at a certain stage largely replaced by bureaucratic centralism.

Many of those who remained in leading posts for years got a false idea of being infallible and irreplaceable. Responsibility declined among a large number of elected persons and in the Party apparatus. They lost contact with the Party masses and working people, which often ended, as we know now, in their political and moral degradation. It is here that we find the causes behind the shameful facts of power abuse and moral degradation exposed in the course of perestroika.

But there is another side, which is very important to us. All these years millions of Party members and thousands of Party officials honestly fulfilled their Party and civic duty in the conditions which were, objectively and subjectively, not easy. They carried the banner of the Revolution with dignity and did all they could for the advance of their country, for socialism.

Look around you: now everyone can say what he thinks and what he wants to say. And this diversity of opinions, judgments and emotions finds an outlet in the life of society on an unprecedented scale and in many different forms. And what has happened? We can say without pretence and affectation that despite the sharpness of the criticism that we have heard of late, the Soviet people have once again, in the course of perestroika, resolutely voted in favour of socialism.

Our aims are more democracy, more socialism, a better life for the working man, and greatness and well-being for the country.



## HOW TO MASTER SECRET WORK

### 14. Emergency and Check Meetings

The leader of an underground unit, comrade A, has arranged **regular** and **reserve** meetings with B and C. This allows for reliability and continuity of contact in the course of their secret work. This has been progressing well. Comrade A decides to organise other forms of meetings with them because of the complexity of work.

#### 1. Emergency Meeting:

The comrades have found that they sometimes need to meet urgently between their regular meetings. An **emergency meeting** is for the rapid establishment of contact should the comrades need to see each other between the set meetings.

There are similar conditions as for a regular meeting such as: Time, Place and Legend. The additional element is a signal for calling the meeting. This signal might be used by either the unit leader A or the other cell members, when they need to convey urgent information. A confirmation signal is also necessary which indicates that the call signal has been seen or understood. This must never be placed at the same location as the call signal.

#### Signals:

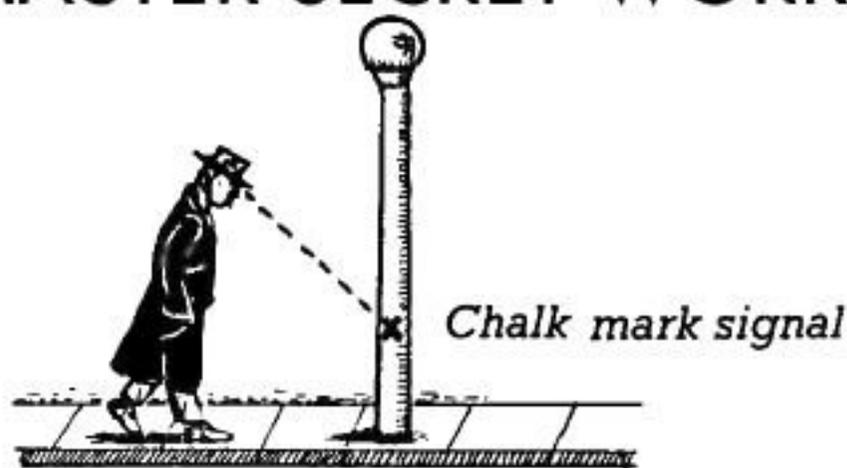
These are pre-arranged signs, phrases, words, marks or objects put in specified places such as on objects in the streets, on buildings etc., or specified phrases in postcards, letters, on the telephone etc.

#### Example of Emergency Meeting:

Comrade A has directed that the venue for the unit's Emergency meeting is a certain park bench beside a lake. The time is for 5.30pm on the same day that the call signal is used. As with Regular meetings he also indicates a Reserve venue for the Emergency meeting. Comrade A arranges different call signals for B and C, which they can also use if they need to summon him.

#### Call and Answer Signal for B:

This signal could be a 'chalk mark' placed by A on a certain lamp-post. Comrade A knows that B walks passed the pole every morning at a certain time on his way to work. B must always be on the look-out for the chalk mark. This could simply be the letter 'X' in red chalk. By 2pm that day B must have responded with the confirmation signal. This could be a piece of coloured string wound round a fence near a bus stop. It could equally be a piece of blue chalk crushed into the pavement by the steps of a building or some graffiti scrawled on a poster (in other words anything clear, visible and innocent-



looking). The two comrades can now expect to meet each other at the park bench later that day.

#### Call and Answer Signal for C:

C has a telephone at home. Before she leaves for work, comrade A phones her from a public call-box. He pretends to dial a wrong number. 'Good morning, is that Express Dairy?' he asks. 'Sorry, wrong number', C replies and adds: 'Not such a good morning, you got me out of the bath'. This is C's innocent way of confirming that she has understood the signal. Obviously such a signal cannot be repeated.

#### 2. Check Meeting

This is a 'meeting' between the unit leader and a subordinate comrade to establish only through **visual** contact whether the comrade is alright. Such a check-up becomes necessary when a comrade has been in some form of danger and where direct physical contact is unsafe to attempt, such as if the comrade has been questioned by the police or been under surveillance.

There are a number of conditions for such a meeting: Date and Time; Place or Route of movement; Actions; Legend; Signals — indicating danger or well-being.

#### Example of Check Meeting:

C has been questioned by the police. As a result contact with her has been cut. After a few days comrade A wants to check how she is and calls her through a signal to a Check meeting.

At 4pm on the day following the call signal C goes shopping. She wears a yellow scarf indicating that she was subject to mild questioning and that everything has appeared normal since. She follows a route which takes her past the Post Office by 4.20pm. She does not know where A is but he has taken up a position which conceals his presence and gives him a good view of C. He is also able to observe whether C is being followed. On passing the Post Office C stops to blow her nose. This is to reinforce her feeling that everything is now normal. It is for A to decide whether to restore contact with C or to leave her on 'ice' for a while longer, subjecting her to further checks.

## PROBLEMS OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD

### The State in the Transitional Period

The nature of the state in a future South Africa is, in many ways, the key question of our revolution. What is the state? It is the means by which one class (in alliance, perhaps, with other classes) is able to establish and maintain its rule. At the core of the state is the repressive machinery — police, army, courts and jails. The state also includes many other institutions for administration, economic planning, and law-making. States almost always control some of the main ideological institutions (TV, radio, schooling).

Our future democratic state will have to fulfil all these functions, and many more. But it is only the repressive apparatus we will consider here.

Our national democratic revolution will be in the interests of the overwhelming majority of South Africans. Our future people's state will be primarily an instrument of liberation, not repression. It will remove the apartheid regime which is the main obstacle to peace, not just in South Africa but throughout our war-torn region.

But we must be under no illusions; the greatest vigilance will still be required after victory. A reactionary bourgeoisie will not disappear overnight, nor will racist counter-revolutionary currents. We can also expect imperialist destabilisation.

Revolutions have been lost because the working masses have sometimes failed to act with decisiveness after victory. They have sometimes allowed a defeated enemy to regroup and counter-attack.

For this reason our new people's state will have to deploy its own people's army and police. These forces will include specialised professionals in their ranks.

But how do we ensure the repressive apparatus we build to defeat the enemies of the revolution does not separate itself from the democratic ideals and practices of our revolution?

Firstly, our future police and army must be thoroughly politicised, imbued with a democratic and internationalist spirit. This is not a task that begins only after the revolution. The political education of our MK cadres, the officer corps of our people's army, is of the greatest impor-

tance now and for the future.

Secondly, the task of guarding the revolution must not fall solely on the shoulders of our army and police. The best defence of our revolution will be the people in arms. In fact, in order to achieve victory in the first place we are having to arm our people — workers, youth, peasants and housewives. In the period of transition a widespread people's militia, a national network of defence committees, must be rapidly developed in every township, village and place of work.

Amongst the armed people, the working class in particular will have a key role in the defence of the revolution. As we move to implement the basic national democratic demands of the Freedom Charter — like the popular control over the monopolies — we can expect some bosses and managers to try to sabotage mines and factories. These things happened in Angola and Mozambique, just as they happened in the early years of the revolution in the Soviet Union. An armed and vigilant working class will be our first line of defence in protecting the people's collective property.

What will we do with former members of the apartheid fascist armed forces? The majority of SADF person-power is white conscripts. They must be disarmed and returned to civilian life. The majority of permanent force members must also be disarmed, re-educated and demobilised. But there is a core within the apartheid forces who have been particularly responsible for war crimes, atrocities and tortures. These must be subjected to democratic justice, and punished accordingly. Racist arrogance must never again show its ugly head in our country.

In struggling for liberation we look forward to a day when all South Africans live in harmony, when South Africa itself is at peace with the world. We also look forward to a world without massive arms stockpiles and large armies.

But we know that to arrive at this point our own revolution, amongst others, must be secured. For that we will need a state machinery and an armed people capable of acting with the maximum revolutionary firmness.



## UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY ECONOMICS

### 9. Taxes

In the last article I looked at the government's budget. The budget weighs up the money the government receives against the money it spends. This time I am looking at the main source of the money it receives: taxes.

In every country the state raises money by taxing people, firms and other bodies. There are two broad types of taxes: direct and indirect.

The best known type of tax is the income tax. It requires people to pay a part of their income to the government. If a person has to pay a fixed proportion of their wages in income tax (for example one tenth) the total sum of money they pay increases proportionately as their income rises. Usually, though, rich people have to pay a higher proportion of their income in income tax than poor people (for example one quarter instead of one tenth). Then, if a person's income rises enough to take them from the 'poor' to the 'rich' category their tax payments rise more than proportionately: if the person's income doubles, the amount they pay as tax more than doubles.

Because income tax usually requires the rich to pay a greater percentage of their income than the poor, it is called progressive tax. When the Tax Inspector calculates what percentage of income a person must pay account is taken of other things as well as the size of their income; if the person has children an allowance (or 'abatement') is calculated which reduces the percentage.

In practice, income taxes are not paid by everyone. The masses in African and other developing countries and the poorest members of the working class in advanced capitalist countries do not have to pay tax. One reason is that their incomes are too low. Another is that it is too difficult and costly to check each person's income and collect the tax. Most people who pay income tax have it taken out of their wages directly by their employer who then pays it to the state. In other words, income tax mainly affects workers earning regular wages and richer people. But rich people employ thousands of accountants and lawyers who find loopholes and tricks to reduce their taxes or avoid them totally.

Taxes like the General Sales Tax are indirect taxes and become due when goods are purchas-

ed. If the tax rate is one tenth, for example, 10 cents is added to the price of an article for every rand charged by the seller, and that extra sum has to be collected and paid to the state by the seller. Another form of indirect taxation is the Value Added Tax (which Pretoria is planning to introduce to replace the General Sales Tax); it also adds to the price of goods but is calculated in a different, more systematic way. Another is Import Duty which is a tax charged on goods bought abroad.

Indirect taxes are not progressive; in fact they are usually the opposite, regressive. In other words they take a higher proportion of a poor person's income than a rich person's. That is because rich people save more because their income is more than enough to provide them with food, clothing, transport and other goods. Poor people, on the other hand, have to spend nearly all their income on basic necessities so if such items are taxed those taxes take a higher proportion of their income than of a rich person's.

In South Africa and other developing countries indirect taxes are a major source of money for the government. They are easier to collect from poor people than direct taxes like income tax for they pay the tax invisibly whenever they buy a taxed article. These taxes enable the government to ensure that everyone is paying tax of some kind. And because they are regressive, capitalists and rich people generally press governments to raise indirect taxes and reduce income tax.

Tax receipts are the lifeblood of governments. In South Africa the taxes paid by the masses are used by the state to pay for apartheid (to pay for police, army, administrators, and to give subsidies to white farmers and firms, for example). Because of this, in all countries, it is against the law to refuse to pay taxes, but a mass refusal can be a highly effective political act. Two centuries ago the settlers in America won their independence from Britain after refusing to pay taxes to a government which did not represent them (and fighting the resulting war). And in Africa there are many examples of rebellions sparked by resistance to taxes imposed by colonialists.



# MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

## 9. Criticism and Self-Criticism

We communists are accustomed to the phrase 'criticism and self-criticism'. It denotes a practice which is an everyday part of our political lives. By means of this practice we soberly, frankly and fearlessly evaluate and re-evaluate our political policies, activities and style of work so as to meet the constantly changing conditions under which we conduct our revolutionary struggle, and in order continually to improve and perfect our Party. In this way communists are constantly looking with critical eyes at the world about them, at the words and deeds of their comrades and at their own individual actions and utterances. So 'criticism and self-criticism' is far more than a slogan. It is a way of life and a way of breathing fresh life into our struggle to change the world.

It should come as no surprise then that this word 'criticism' has a deeper meaning which goes back to the very earliest roots of Marxist philosophy. It refers to a philosophical tradition which predates both Marx and Hegel, but with which they identified. This tradition came to be known as 'critical philosophy'. The term originates with the eighteenth century German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, and the great works he wrote entitled *The Critique of Pure Reason*, *The Critique of Practical Reason* and *The Critique of Judgement*. Now Kant is generally reckoned to be an idealist philosopher but, although this is a perfectly correct description of his work in many respects, it is also true that he saw himself as the critic of a trend in Philosophy known as rationalist metaphysics. These rationalists tried to erect systems of thought in which reality was accounted for by reason alone, unaided by our actual experience of it, on which as we saw previously, the empiricist philosophers, like Locke and Hume, laid so much stress.

Kant set about his criticism by trying to show that reason and experience required one another for genuine knowledge of reality to be possible. He argued that the thoughts or concepts we have about the world were empty without experience, and that such experience was blind unless it was shaped by our concepts. In this way he hoped to show what was true and abolish what was false in both rationalism and empiricism and so to

establish once and for all the limits of all possible experience. In doing all this, Kant made use of a made use of a special way of arguing which is rather pompously called a Transcendental Argument. Such arguments begin with some fact of experience which everyone recognises (that we all have bodies, say), goes on to point out what conditions make this fact possible (the basic laws of physics for instance) and then concludes that these conditions exist in reality (for instance that the laws of physics are part of reality). The aim of these arguments is to make the things we say in philosophy square with the fact that we are saying them. It makes no sense, for example, for someone to use his tongue, voice and brain to deny the laws of physics when those laws are what enable him to use his body to make this false denial.

Hegel and Marx greatly admired Kant's work, although, for very different reasons, they disagreed with a great deal of what he had said. Hegel tried to improve Kant's method of Transcendental Argument and wove it into the much more complex system of dialectical reasoning which he had invented. Marx, as we know, transformed Hegel's dialectics into the philosophical method we now know as Dialectical Materialism, and in doing so he further sharpened the critical tools which Kant had first begun to create.

In Marx's hands, the critical method in philosophy becomes a way of gaining insight into ourselves and our social life together — a path of self-criticism which moves from the most abstract to the most concrete levels of our spiritual and material being. Thus in the Introduction to his *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'* Marx says: 'Thus the critique of heaven is transformed into the critique of earth, the critique of religion into the critique of law, the critique of theology into the critique of politics.'

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Read the **AFRICAN COMMUNIST**  
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## PARTY LIFE

### 4. Higher Party Structures:

#### The Regional Committee and the Units

To date our series has tried to show how the Party builds itself as the fighting organisation of the working class. To do this the Party must make itself a tightly-knit and well-disciplined structure with clear principles of membership.

This membership must be divided into units whose work is clearly defined and accountable to collective and leading structures.

Between these primary party units (cells — whose functions were outlined in a previous issue) and the highest organs of our Party (the Central Committee and the PB) there must, in addition, exist intermediate layers of leadership. The responsibility of these layers is to co-ordinate, direct and organise the units in any particular locality. These are the Regional or District Committees of the Party. They are the executive arm of the PB and CC without which the many units would remain directionless and unco-ordinated.

The identity of the Regional Committee must remain a secret, protected not only by the Regional Members themselves but by all the membership. The Regional Committee (RC) is generally made up of those comrades whose practical contribution to the struggle and whose political maturity has qualified them for positions of leadership in the Party. In present conditions the RC is appointed by the PB and it is accountable to the PB and the Central Committee. Its members are accountable to the Regional Committee collective and their periodic re-appointment is subject to fulfilment of their duties and responsibilities.

The tasks of the RC are many. It must, in the first place, decide upon the make-up of the various units under its authority. In other words it must decide in which unit members should be placed. In doing so it must pay particular attention to the territorial and production principle.

Units must be made up of members who either come from the same locality or the same factory/mine/farm. We must ensure that our strength is built in collectives within the very heart of the people; where they live and work.

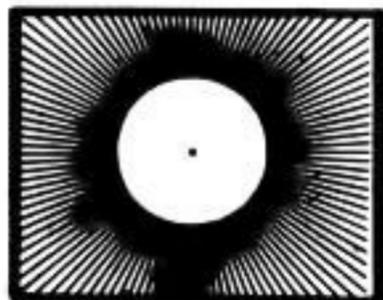
Units must be in tune with the day-to-day issues of struggle. Priority must be given to areas where the Party must concentrate its efforts; the mobilisation of the working people, especially at the point of production.

In our circumstances special attention has to be given to ensuring that the security of units is guaranteed. In other words, factors such as ease of meeting, underground tasks of individual comrades and the experience of such comrades would be taken into account. The unit must account to the RC through its convenor, who, if he/she is not a member of the RC, must account to an individual appointed by the RC for this purpose. Where the regional or district membership grows to a certain size, the RC may have to establish branches — intermediate layers of collective leadership responsible for units under their command and accountable to the Regional Committee.

The RC must decide upon and delegate tasks to each and every unit under its authority. All units must undertake both Party and general assignments in the liberation struggle. Thus each unit is obliged to distribute Party propaganda, build the Party by recruiting suitable candidates as probationers, raise funds for the Party and contribute to inner-Party life and undertake collective and ongoing ideological work. But in addition each unit must be assigned specific Party tasks in keeping with the priorities of that region. Each unit must discuss and plan for the implementation of such tasks and regularly account to the RC on their fulfilment.

Furthermore, the RC must assign other non-Party tasks, of a more general nature, to each unit. These may be to undertake work in the underground units of the ANC and MK, or in the mass formations of the legal struggle. It should, of course, be stressed that at no time should the assigning or carrying out of such tasks be in breach of the democracy or rules operating within these organisations. Party units or structures do not work as caucuses within organisations but seek rather to strengthen democracy and win people to Party positions by participating in the democratic process.

**In the next issue we will deal with the question of accountability and checking up.**



# HISTORY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

## 12. CONCLUDING ARTICLE — 67 YEARS ON THE MARCH

The communist movement in our country has grown from a tiny sect at the beginning of this century to one of the most influential determinants in the South African revolution in the 1980s.

The story of the Communist Party is at once the story of the liberation of South Africa and also the story of the rise of the revolutionary working class. Objectively speaking, the rise of the communist movement in South Africa was linked to the growth of modern industry. The working class — with nothing to sell save its ability to work — was itself new, inexperienced, facing a whole world of new problems without any history of its own from which to learn how to go forward. Yet this class was obliged to create for itself a South African theory of revolution which would enable it to challenge the state of capitalism and move forward purposefully towards socialism.

The foundation of the Communist Party in 1921 made a fundamental break with all political traditions of the country up to that time. The delegates who met at a conference in Johannesburg agreed to unite in the formation of a 'strongly disciplined and centralised Party', and thus established Africa's first Communist Party. The Party drew vitality from its roots among the masses, producing great national and trade union leaders of the calibre of Albert Nzula, Moses Kotane, JB Marks and Moses Mabhida. In addition to such well-known figures, there were hundreds of rank-and-file communists from working class and peasant backgrounds who gave wonderful examples of courage, self-sacrifice and honest leadership in their areas of work.

Side by side with the ANC the Communist Party has clarified many theoretical and practical problems of national liberation. The two organisations have demonstrated beyond doubt that, in the black working class, there is to be found the progressive force of apartheid society — the force which is the grave-digger of the old order and the creator of a democratic country.

The South African Communist Party is small in numbers, but great in influence. Its units operate under clandestine conditions within South Africa, yet their achievements are considerable. It has brought, in several provinces of the country, the advanced and class-conscious elements into the organisation of the Party.

The fact that the Communist Party is the principal target of the apartheid regime's hatred is itself testimony to its work in our factories, plantations, schools and residential areas. Guided in its immediate objectives by the Freedom Charter, the Party has become part of the historic alliance with the African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. But we have an independent constitution and do not hide our political goals. We stand for socialism as a stage towards communism. Socialism means common ownership of the means of production and distribution. Capitalism means private enterprise, each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost.

South African communists see no contradiction between their support of the Freedom Charter and their declared aim to 'end the system of capitalist exploitation and establish a socialist republic based on the common ownership of the means of production.' We maintain that the working class cannot be victorious except through democracy, that is, by winning the national democratic revolution. We do not contrapose the socialist revolution and the resolution of the national question. We combine the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary programme and tactics on all demands: the right to vote and be voted into organs of political power; the right to rear and educate our children in the most civilised fashion; the right to live together with our families wherever we might choose, and the right to live in freedom in one united South Africa.



Moses Kotane



JB Marks



Dora Tamana



Bram Fischer



Michael Harmel  
(Lerumo)



Albert Nzula



Yusuf Dadoo



Moses Mabhida

# WHY THE WHITE WORKER NEEDED THE COLOUR BAR

## Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission 1903

'It is reasonable to suppose that if the use of such labour (white) was economically advantageous the self interest of employers would have discovered these advantages within the period mentioned, and a gradual displacement of black by white labour would have occurred. There are facts indeed which tend to show that an exactly contrary displacement of white by black labour has been in progress; but however this may be, it is certain that the evidence of the past is overwhelmingly and conclusively against the contention that white labourers can successfully compete with blacks in the lower fields of manual industry.'

## Minority Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission 1904

Select Committee on European Employment and Labour Conditions 1913:

'The magnitude of unemployment among Europeans in South Africa is possibly not greater than in other countries but the danger owing to the presence of a preponderating native population is far greater and constitutes a real social danger ... for among the white unemployed are a depressing residue of incompetent and apathetic indigents whose condition forms a grave danger to society. These are people who have sunk into a demoralising and corrupting intercourse with non-Europeans with evil effects on both sections of the population.

... The European minority, occupying as it does, in relation to the non-European majority, the position of a dominant aristocracy ... cannot allow a considerable number of its members to sink into apathetic indigency ... if they do and they manifest an indifference founded on the comfortable doctrine of letting things find their economical level, sooner or later, notwithstanding all our material and intellectual advantages, our race is bound to perish in SA'.

## The Transvaal Indigency Commission Report 1906-8

'This attitude of the white man has greatly af-

ected his efficiency as a labourer. He has never regarded unskilled labour as an ordinary field of employment. When he has had to do unskilled work he has done it grudgingly as being kaf-firs' work, and therefore inefficiently.'

## Report of the Low Grade Mines Commission — Pretoria 1920

'He (white worker) can hardly be considered to be the equal in efficiency of a native who, by experience and practice, has acquired proficiency in his particular class of work. The labour of such a native is therefore clearly of greater value to an employer than that of the unskilled white man, and if there were no artificial restrictions, the latter would be driven to the wall ... The inferior white man will demand a higher rate of pay for the same work, less well done, because he cannot live in decency on this.

It is on this account that the white man looks upon the colour bar restrictions as a protection against what he considers to be unfair competition ... Both sides have given evidence that unless their desires are given effect to, there will be struggles and explosions of a violent character, and there are already sufficient indications in recent happenings on the Witwatersrand that this is only too true.

Statistics for African earnings on the mines show that in 1911 the earnings per shift were one shilling 11.3 pennies and by 1918 these earnings were one shilling 11.5 pennies.

During the past five years the emoluments of white workers have been substantially raised, and they are now more than 40% higher than in 1914, while during the same period their working hours have been reduced.'



# THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION



*Mengistu Haile Mariam*

In the middle of an era which saw the reawakening of Africa, Ethiopia, under Emperor Haile Selassie, was a grotesque leftover from the Middle Ages. It was a theocratic foundation where peasants died in the streets of privation and hunger, swearing the while by Haile Selassie, the Elect of God. In contrast the noblemen and priests lived a life of indolence and irresponsibility. 85% of the people were landless in a country where almost 90% were peasants; 93% were illiterate even though Ethiopia was the only black country which had had an extant script for hundreds of years. 80% of the people had no access to modern health facilities. There was hardly any industry and whatever there was of that, was in the hands of foreign monopolists.

By 1974, Ethiopia was one of the poorest nations in the world with one of the lowest GNPs per capita; the infant mortality rate stood at 20% and the famine of 1973/74 alone claimed no less than 200 000 lives.

It is not altogether a paradox that Addis Ababa was chosen as the capital of emergent Africa. Even as schoolboys we knew something of the glory of Ethiopia, of the epic struggles of its peoples carried out over centuries against foreign aggressors.

The popular uprising which began in February 1974 did not have an organised political leadership; centuries of absolutism and a network of oppressive administrative and security structures had taken care of that. It was the armed forces which stepped into the vacuum. Its members were drawn from the peasants and working people, and their conditions placed them in the category of those who sought social justice.

The radical elements within the armed forces faced a gigantic task to solve the question of power in a revolutionary way, and to effectively transfer it to the toiling masses of Ethiopia and to demolish the archaic feudal political and economic structures.

The foundation of the transformation was laid by the Proclamation to Provide for the Public Ownership of Rural Lands, in March 1975, which was followed in July by the Nationalisation of Urban Lands and Extra Houses. Together these edicts did more than any other to shatter the

feudal superstructure and to mobilise the rural and urban masses behind the revolutionary leadership.

Today, revolutionary Ethiopia has chalked up the following victories: Seven million peasants are organised in some 200 000 associations, and half-a-million serve as officials in the Ethiopian Peasants' Association (EPA). Voluntary but systematic villagisation has ensured that eight million peasants can produce better, and receive social benefits such as schooling, health, clean water and transportation. Three million children now attend primary school, and about one million are at secondary schools. Pre-revolutionary figures were half-a-million and 200 000 respectively. There is 80% literacy in 15 different languages. 50% of the population has access to modern health facilities. Religious freedom is guaranteed. Agriculture is being boosted through a wide distribution of fertilisers, modern tools, and extension work. Socialisation proceeds with peasant associations, 4 000 service co-operatives and 2 000 producer co-operatives. State farms occupy some 300 000 hectares.

The Ethiopian Trade Unions have a membership of 300 000. The Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association (REYA) has an active membership of four million engaged in projects and military service, while the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women (REWA) numbers over eight million, with half-a-million elected representatives. Comrade Ashagri, Deputy Head of the International Department of the WPE, told the writer: 'It is difficult to find today an adult who does not belong to one of these mass organisations of the revolution.'

New Ethiopia can boast new incentives in textiles, cement manufacture, agricultural machinery and hydro-electric schemes.

The Ethiopian Revolution no doubt has many lessons to teach us. One of the most important is in the sphere of the transition from the national democratic revolution to the socialist revolution. The experience of the Ethiopian comrades is especially valuable to South African revolutionaries working for an uninterrupted transition from the national democratic revolution to socialism in the special conditions of colonialism.