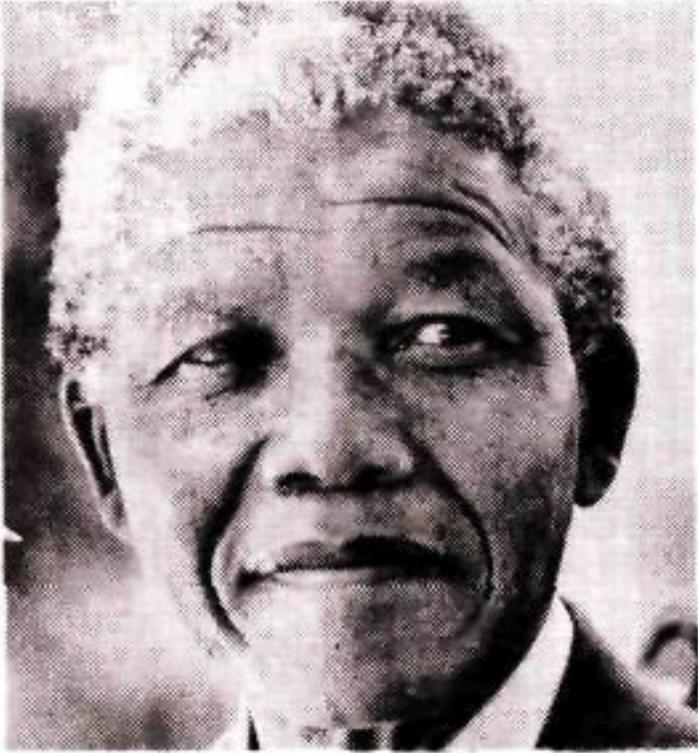


UMSEBENZI



VOICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

NELSON MANDELA



THE SACP GREETES YOU!

BUILD THE PARTY!

We address:

All the working people in our land in town and countryside. Through your struggle and sacrifice you have brought us to the dawn of a new non-racial democratic South Africa. It is your united action which will guarantee the achievement and consolidation of the liberation objectives and provide the main foundation for the ultimate winning of socialism.

We pledge, in everything we do, to put your interests first.

We address:

Our comrades, brothers and sisters in the trade union movement. You have built an organised force of inordinate strength which has stood effective guard over the workers' interests at the point of production. As an independent force, as part of the liberation alliance headed by the ANC and in fraternal co-operation with our workers' party, you constitute one of the main pillars of working class power in the coming struggles.

We pledge to resist any attempts to undermine your organisational integrity or independence either now or in the future.

We address:

The new working-class leaders who have been thrown up by the struggle on the shop floor and at other levels.

The thousands of radical youth, tested in political battle, who are defiantly raising our banner of socialism.

The scores of revolutionary intelligentsia who are searching for a future without exploitation of person by person.

All of you have a home in our party. We stand ready to welcome you in our ranks.

TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION!

We address:

All our members in the underground and in exile. In the face of persecution and suffering you have kept high the flag of our party. It is through your commitment and hard work, during 40 years of illegality, that the support and following for socialism and our party are at an all-time high.

Now the challenge is even greater. This is not a moment for rest. We must muster all the strength we have to build our party in the new conditions.

- We must attract the thousands of militants of quality who support our political vision and policies. We must not fear a mass party.
- We must be more vigilant than ever against all remains of sectarianism, arrogance or élitism.
- We must not mechanically reject those socialists who, in the past, expressed genuine reservations about some of our policies or practices.
- Above all we must, in the new period, make a clean break with those limitations on inner-democracy and accountability which underground life and the drawbacks of exile imposed upon us.
- Our role as vanguard of the working class must be won in democratic mobilisation and not imposed.

THE ROLE OF THE SACP

Our party has earned an honoured place as a vital constituent of the liberation alliance headed by the ANC and has played an independent role to pursue the aspirations of the working class. **In the developing situation our role at both levels is becoming more crucial than ever before.**

The ANC will undoubtedly remain the overall head of the broad liberation front. The need to consolidate and advance the liberation process in the immediate aftermath of the people's victory may also justify a widening of the democratic camp in a variety of alliances.

We can look forward to an ANC of massive strength and every militant must help to make this

a reality. In the process, some strata with their own agenda will undoubtedly find it self-serving to flock into its ranks and try to steer it away from its working-class bias.

All in all we should be ready for an inevitable sharpening of inter-class ideological contest in the run-up to victory and in its immediate aftermath. It follows that the consolidation and growth of our party and the trade union movement — as independent contingents and as part of the liberation alliance — is more imperative than ever. Equally, our attempts to create conditions for an advance towards socialism in the post-apartheid phase will be frustrated without the organised political and industrial power of our working class.

ESTABLISHING OUR LEGAL PARTY

Steps are under way to establish our legal party, beginning with the creation of an internal leadership core. The whole process requires careful preparation and its implementation must be guided by priorities. We are by no means yet in a secure and free political climate and long-term survival continues to demand a role for the underground.

In the meanwhile, we call upon all our active supporters not to sit back and wait for formal contact. You should take your own initiatives and create *Umsebenzi Discussion Circles* in factories, townships and other places. These circles should begin studying and discussing our programme, policies and other party literature, as well as socialist theory.

Let *Umsebenzi* know what you are doing and what help you need.

**THE FUTURE DEMANDS
A STRONG WORKERS' PARTY.
LET US ALL GET DOWN
TO THE JOB!**

DEFEND THE WORKING CLASS!

DEMOCRACY BEGINS AT HOME

New space has been opened for the building of both the ANC and the Party. Our years of illegality, and the drawbacks of exile, have taken their toll on some of the principles of democracy and accountability. **The special conditions made certain departures unavoidable. But the important thing is not to allow practices which were warranted in old conditions to become a habit in the new conditions.** The democratic life-blood of our type of organisation is democracy, criticism, self-criticism and collectivity. Let us say a few words on each of these categories.

Criticism

Criticism is not only a right, it is also a duty. If members fear to criticise, or act like 'yes persons' they are helping to entrench a bureaucratic style of leadership from the top. The same would happen if those who are at the top resented criticism or ignored it.

But criticism must be constructive otherwise it does more harm than good. It must aim to find a solution and should be based on correct information and not just street-corner gossip. It must be expressed through the right channels. To take an extreme example, it is quite impermissible to spread it to hostile elements outside the structures.

On the other hand, the right to criticise has little meaning unless the leadership binds itself to certain practices. Criticism must be judged on its merits and not on prejudices about those who express them. The leadership must provide proper democratic platforms for criticism so that the membership is not tempted to engage in hole-in-the-corner whisperings. If the criticism is judged to be wrong, it must be fairly answered. If it is right, the leadership must be seen to do something about it. In order to make possible balanced criticism the leadership has a duty to provide maximum possible information within the limits of a given situation. But it must not exploit such limitations as a device to suffocate democratic life.

Self-Criticism

Self-examination by each member must be deliberately encouraged at all levels of our structures. It should not be approached like the religious confessional in which the 'sin' is written off merely because the subject has admitted it. There is a duty

on the individual to take steps to overcome his or her weaknesses and the collective also has a duty to help him or her do so.

Democracy

The existence of democratic life within an organisation can only be assured when a combination of practices are present. In the first place it demands guarantees that the leadership is subject to free and fair elections. **The membership must have a real right to change the leadership if and when it has lost confidence in it.**

Each member and each structure from top to bottom must be accountable to its constituency. This involves a regular flow of maximum possible information and consultation. There are concrete situations (such as underground conditions, security factors and similar considerations) which may put a limit on this process. But an organisation should be on continuous guard against wrongly using such factors as an excuse to suffocate democratic life.

To make the exercise of democracy a reality proper mechanisms must be provided which enable the membership to express their views both about policy and the way in which leading organs conduct themselves. It is also vital that the spirit of democratic tolerance should be understood and practised by every member at whatever level of our structures. It is easy to listen to people who agree with you. **But the essence of democracy is to listen to people who don't agree with you and to weigh up their views on merit and not on fixed preconceptions or personal prejudices.**

Collectivity

Collectives must not become clubs in which members protect one another through thick and thin. At the same time no collective can survive without a degree of collective discipline. If each member of the collective felt free to wash all its dirty linen in public it would encourage disintegration. If a member of a collective has reservations about aspects of its work or its policies his or her duty is to battle within the collective in an attempt to rectify matters. Of course, in a democratic organisation proper occasions will be provided (Congresses, etc.) when members of collectives have the right and duty to speak freely about its shortcomings and about the weaknesses of their colleagues.

VOTES FOR ALL!

THE CRISIS IN THE SOCIALIST WORLD

Question: Has the SACP adopted a collective position on the distortions of socialist practice which culminated in the recent events in Eastern Europe?

JS: My own first reflections are contained in the recent publication, *Has Socialism Failed?*. The essay has been authorised by our Party leadership not as a final, collective position but as a launching pad for further critical thought and debate both within the Party and throughout the broad democratic movement.

The South African commercial press, like their counterparts in the West, are daily crowing about the 'crisis of socialism'. How do you react to all this?

Before we even begin to address the present problems of socialism, let's remind ourselves of another crisis. Two-thirds of humanity is directly subject to the capitalist system. Capitalism is not just the relative wealth of North America, Western Europe and Japan, it is the mass starvation, the crippling debt burden, the catastrophic levels of unemployment in the third world. Over 90% of people on the African continent live out their wretched and repressed lives in stagnating and declining **capitalist-orientated** economies. International capital, to whom most of these countries are mortgaged, virtually regards cheap bread, free education and full employment as economic crimes. This is all the crisis of capitalism. And even within the advanced capitalist world the working people continue to face the social evils which stem from a system which puts profits before people.

But don't we risk giving even more ammunition to our enemies?

I don't agree that we can allow such a consideration to block what is absolutely necessary: an unsparing critique of the past of existing socialism. We need to carry through such a critique in order to draw the necessary lessons for ourselves. To do so openly is an assertion of justified confidence in the future of socialism and its inherent moral superiority.

By a critique of the past of existing socialism do you mean basically a critique of Stalinism?

Yes, in the sense of a bureaucratic-authoritarian style of leadership (of parties both in and out of power) which denuded the party and the practice of socialism of most of its democratic content and concentrated power in the hands of a tiny self-perpetuating élite. While the mould for Stalinism was cast under Stalin's leadership, he doesn't bear sole responsibility for its negative practices. The essential content of Stalinism — socialism without democracy — was retained even after Stalin in the Soviet Union (until Gorbachev's intervention), albeit without some of the terror, brutality and judicial distortions associated with Stalin himself.

While conceding the need for change, some comrades argue that many of the present problems in Eastern Europe are precisely the result of Gorbachev's reforms. There is a view that perestroika and glasnost are being applied too hastily.

To blame perestroika and glasnost for the ail-

ments of socialism is like blaming the diagnosis and the prescription for the illness. The only way to ensure the future of socialism is to grasp the nettle with the political courage of a Gorbachev. In general, the fact that the processes of perestroika and glasnost came too slowly, too little and too late in Eastern Europe did more than anything else to endanger the socialist perspective there. It is through these processes — and they must be implemented with all possible speed! — that socialism has any hope of showing its essentially human face.

Does the present crisis in the socialist world prove that Marxism as a science is flawed?

No, not at all. The serious errors that emerged in the practice of existing socialism are not rooted in the basic tenets of Marxist revolutionary science. They are the result of distortions and misapplications. They were **not** inevitable. The economic stagnation of socialism and its poor technological performance as compared to the advanced capitalist countries cannot be attributed to the ineffectiveness of socialist relations of production but rather to their distortion. Socialist relations of production provide the most effective framework for maximising humanity's productive capacity and using its products in the interests of the whole society.

Likewise, the great divide which developed between socialism and political democracy should not be treated as flowing naturally from key aspects of socialist doctrine. Unfortunately, this misconception has been fuelled by the sullied human rights record and the barrack-room collectivism of some of the experiences of existing socialism. But Marxism itself clearly projects a system anchored in deep-seated political democracy and the rights of the individual. And, let's face it, these ideals can only truly be attained when society as a whole assumes control and direction of all its riches. No matter how loudly

the ideologues of capital might be crowing, we continue to insist that **a society cannot be democratic which is ruled by profit and social inequality, and in which power over the most vital areas of life is outside public control.**

Could we look a little more closely at this question of existing socialism and democracy. Would you say that the gap that developed between democracy and socialism as practised lies at the root of the present socialist crisis?

Yes. The gap you refer to occurred in a number of spheres. In the first place, there was a steady erosion of the powers and representative character of **elected institutions**. In practice the majority of the people had very few levers with which to determine the course of economic or social life.

Democracy in the **mass organisations** was also more formal than real. The enormous membership figures told us very little about the extent to which the individual trade unionist, youth or woman was able to participate in the control or direction of their respective organisations. At the end of the day these organisations were turned into transmission belts for decisions taken elsewhere. The trade union movement became an adjunct of the state and party. Workers had no meaningful role in determining the composition of the top trade union leadership which was, in substance, answerable to the party apparatus. For all practical purposes the right to strike did not exist. The extremely thin dividing line between management and the trade union collective on the factory floor detracted from the real autonomy of trade unions. Apart from certain welfare functions, they tended, more and more, to act like Western-style production councils, but without the advantage of having to answer for their role to an independent trade union under the democratic control of its membership.

The same erosion of democracy tended to

occur within the **party** as well. In the immediate aftermath of the October revolution, the Bolshevik party shared power with other political and social tendencies, including Mensheviks and a section of the left Social Revolutionaries.

In the elections for the constituent assembly in 1918, the Bolsheviks received less than a third of the popular vote. Well, there may be moments in the life of a revolution which justify a postponement of full democratic processes. I don't want to go into the complex question here of whether the Bolsheviks were justified in taking a monopoly of state power during the extraordinary period of both internal and external assault on the gains of the revolution. Suffice it to say that the single-party state and the guiding and leading role of the party subsequently became a permanent feature of socialist rule and was entrenched in the constitutions of most socialist states. **Henceforth the parties were 'vanguards' by law and not necessarily by virtue of social endorsement.**

This was accompanied by negative transformations within the party itself. Under the guise of 'democratic centralism' inner-party democracy was almost completely suffocated by centralism. All effective power was concentrated in the hands of a political bureau or, in some cases, a single all-powerful personality.

The control of this 'leadership' by the party as a whole was purely formal. As a result of this the invigorating impact of the contest of ideas in Marxist culture was stifled.

You've already touched upon the question of the single-party state. Do you believe that a single-party system is compatible with democracy?

The concept of the single-party state is nowhere to be found in classical Marxist theory. Gorbachev recently made the point that developing the independent activity of the masses and promoting democracy under a one-party system is,

and I quote, 'a noble but **very difficult** mission for the party'.

Personally, I think we have had sufficient experience of one-party rule in various parts of the world to perhaps conclude that the 'mission' to promote real democracy under a one-party system is not just difficult but, in the long run, impossible. But, in any case, where a single-party state is in place and there is not even democracy and accountability within the party, it becomes a short-cut to a political tyranny over the whole of society.

What impact has this lack of effective democracy had on the daily lives of workers in socialist countries?

The destruction of the political and economic power of capital are merely the first steps in the direction of overcoming the general sense of alienation experienced by workers under the capitalist system. **The transfer of legal ownership of productive property from private capital to the state does not, on its own, create fully socialist relations of production, nor does it always significantly change the work-life of the producer.** The power to control the producer's work-life and dispose of the products of labour are now in the hands of a committee rather than a board of directors. And if the committee separates itself from the producers by a bureaucratic wall without democratic accountability, should we be surprised if its role is perceived no differently from that of the board of directors?

State property itself has to be transformed into social property. This involves reorganising social life as a whole so that the producers, at least as a collective, have a real say not only in the production of social wealth but also in its disposal. What is required is not just formal but real socialisation, so that the working people are the masters of all socialised production.

6 FORWARD TO A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY!

We've been looking mainly at the socialist countries. But what is the SACP's own record?

The commandist and bureaucratic approaches which took root during Stalin's time affected communist parties throughout the world, including our own. We cannot disclaim our share of the responsibility for the spread of the Stalinist cult and a mechanical embrace of Soviet domestic and foreign policies, some of which discredited the cause of socialism.

It would, of course, be naive to imagine that a movement can, at a stroke, shed all the mental baggage it has carried from the past. And our 7th Congress emphasised the need for on-going vigilance. It notes some isolated reversion to the past, including attempts to engage in intrigue and factional activity in fraternal organisations, sectarian attitudes towards some non-party colleagues, and sloganised dismissals of views which do not completely accord with ours.

Our party's critics are already suggesting that, in espousing greater democratisation and openness, we are merely running true to form. We are, they allege, once more tailing after Moscow.

We do not pretend that our party's changing postures in the direction of democratic socialism are the results **only** of our own independent evolution. Our shift undoubtedly owes a prime debt to the process of perestroika and glasnost which was so courageously unleashed under Gorbachev's inspiration. And we must acknowledge another debt. Closer to home, the democratic spirit which dominated in the re-emerged trade union movement from the early 70s onwards also made its impact.

But we can legitimately claim that in certain fundamental respects our indigenous revolutionary practice long ago ceased to be guided by Stalinist concepts.

Does this apply to the SACP's conception of its vanguard role?

Yes, absolutely. We have always believed (and we continue to do so) that it is indispensable for the working class to have an independent political instrument which safeguards its role in the democratic revolution and which leads it towards an eventual classless society. But, as our new programme asserts, such leadership must be won, not imposed. A communist party does not earn the title of vanguard merely by proclaiming it. However (and this is my point) the wording on this issue in the new party programme comes more or less word for word from our central committee's **1970** report on organisation.

What kind of inner-party democracy is possible in an underground party like the SACP?

Well, there are inevitable limitations which illegality imposes. Despite this, the principles of accountability and electivity of all higher organs have been substantially adhered to. Seven underground congresses of our party have been held since 1953. The delegates to congress from the lower organs were elected without lists from above and always constituted a majority. The incoming central committees were elected by secret ballot without any form of direct or indirect 'guidance' to the delegates. Our structures, down to the lowest units, have been increasingly encouraged to assess and question leadership pronouncements in a critical spirit and the views of the membership are invariably canvassed before finalising basic policy documents.

What about SACP relations with fraternal and other organisations?

As I have already noted, one of the most serious casualties in the divide which developed

between democracy and socialism was in the one-sided relationship between the ruling parties and the mass organisations. In order to prevent such a distortion in post-apartheid South Africa we have, for example, set out in our draft Workers' Charter that trade unions and their federation shall be completely independent and answerable only to the democratic decisions of their members or affiliates. And we underline that no political party, state organ or enterprise, whether public or otherwise, shall directly or indirectly interfere with this independence.

The substance of this approach is reflected in the way our party has in fact conducted itself for most of its underground existence. We do not regard the trade union or the national movement as mere conduits for our policies. Our relationship with these organisations is based on complete respect for their independence, integrity and inner-democracy.

And you believe in a multi-party system for South Africa?

Experience has shown that an institutionalised one-party state has a strong propensity for authoritarianism. I believe that we must have a

multi-party post-apartheid democracy **both in the national democratic and socialist phases.** If there is real democracy in the post-apartheid state, the way will be open for a peaceful progression towards our party's ultimate objective — a socialist South Africa.

... A final word?

Well, there is certainly no final word on these issues! But let me say with every confidence that the way forward for the whole of humanity lies within a socialist framework guided by genuine socialist humanitarianism and not within a capitalist system which entrenches economic and social inequalities as a way of life.

Socialism can undoubtedly be made to work without the negative practices which have distorted many of its key objectives. **But mere faith in the future of socialism is not enough.** The lessons of the past failures have to be learnt. **Above all, we have to ensure that its fundamental tenet — socialist democracy — occupies a rightful place in all future practice.**



BUILD THE PARTY!

WE DEMAND A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY!



At the Conference for a Democratic Future thousands of delegates from all sectors and corners of our country called for a fully elected Constituent Assembly. The CDF has correctly and decisively placed this revolutionary, democratic demand firmly on the political agenda.

The SACP fully supports the call for a Constituent Assembly based on one-person one-vote in a unitary South Africa. In a democratic and accountable Constituent Assembly the working masses, the overwhelming majority in our country, will have a powerful forum for determining the shape and direction of a future South Africa.

In the coming months let us now popularise and mobilise around the call for a Constituent Assembly. We need to ensure this demand features more and more prominently in our slogans at mass rallies and in marches. Let the call for a Constituent Assembly be the response of the broad masses to De Klerk's intention to restructure South Africa on some meaningless power-sharing basis that will perpetuate white minority privilege and power.

In Namibia a Constituent Assembly, elected on a one-person, one-vote system in a united, undivided country is paving the way for a peaceful and relatively stable resolution of the Namibian conflict. With the Namibian example right before our noses, the De Klerk regime and its supporters have no grounds for special pleading in the case of South Africa. Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

Our demand for a fully elected Constituent Assembly to draw up the constitution for a new South Africa is rooted in our fundamentally democratic approach to liberating our country. We wish to see a future constitution that has emerged from a thoroughly representative, legitimate process.

'What future role do you envisage for PAC? Inkatha? Azapo? etc'. These are questions con-

stantly posed to the ANC-led alliance. Elections for a Constituent Assembly will provide the clearest answer to these questions — from the people themselves. Let all forces who claim to represent constituencies submit themselves to the test of public opinion in a situation in which free political activity is possible.

But how do we get to such a situation? **In raising the call for a Constituent Assembly in the coming months it is crucial that we do not narrowly confine its significance to a negotiated settlement.**

Change in South Africa may or may not come, in the end, through negotiation. The appropriateness of an elected Constituent Assembly as the major forum for drawing up a future constitution remains — whether change comes through negotiation, popular insurrection or some combination of both.

But let us all be very clear. A fully elected Constituent Assembly, answerable to the people, is not about to be served up on a tray. Only intensified mass struggle will bring this demand closer. Let us popularise and agitate around this demand. Let us link it to our daily struggles.

Let us surround the tri-cameral parliament, black local authorities, management committees and all other illegitimate apartheid structures with a sea of demands focusing on **a democratic Constituent Assembly!**

FREE THE PRISONERS!

OF THE COMMITTEE AFRICAN PARTY

90



ng
guring out
with you.

A major objective of the coming months will be the building of a strong, legal SACP rooted among the working masses of our people. A concerted campaign of mobilisa-

AND AN ADVANCE TO SOCIALISM!

DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA!

tion and organisation will be undertaken, with its focus upon the tens of thousands of militant workers and youth who have, over the last years, openly associated themselves with the traditions and ideals of the South African Communist Party. To this end the SACP is in the process of consulting our underground and other structures, and we shall shortly be announcing a public SACP leadership core within our country. We shall also be despatching Communist Party members into the country to strengthen this core as soon as possible.

Our Party is determined to rally all those within our country who are genuinely committed to a socialist future. Now, more than ever, the place of all socialists is within the ranks of the South African Communist Party. In building a powerful, above-board Party let us avoid all forms of sectarianism, élitism and dogmatism. Let us spread and deepen a liberating and democratic socialist culture within our country.

The Central Committee reaffirms the SACP's firm commitment to our revolutionary alliance with the ANC. The new situation will present us with opportunities for creatively deepening and extending still further this alliance. A major task facing all Party militants in the coming months will be not only that of building our Party, but of assisting with the construction of a mass-based ANC, the leading organisation in our national liberation struggle.

The CC wholeheartedly endorses the February 16th statement of the ANC National Committee, and we commend the initiative to present, face-to-face with De Klerk, those outstanding preconditions that need to be implemented in order to create a negotiating climate.

LONG LIVE THE SACP!

LONG LIVE THE SACP-ANC ALLIANCE!

THOUGHTS ON MILITARIST DEVIATIONS

Do we have the capacity to defeat the apartheid war machine? In the event of negotiations, shall we have the military clout to back our demands? Has the movement not paid too much attention to 'political work' at the expense of armed struggle? Should the Party not concentrate on work in Umkhonto we Sizwe, as distinct from work within the working class?

The manner in which these questions have been posed can lead to wrong conclusions. Let us examine some of the issues in greater detail.

● **The relationship between 'political' and 'military' struggle:**

Our programme, *the Path to Power*, is emphatic that the military struggle is a form of political struggle. It pursues political ends and is guided by political objectives. Further, armed struggle in our situation demands not only the progressive involvement of the people in military tasks. The people must engage in mass actions around day-to-day and strategic demands. They should weaken the capacity of the regime to rule them, thus creating better conditions for the development of armed struggle. Without effective mass mobilisation and organisation, armed struggle would not advance in any significant way.

● **'Political' and 'military' organisation:** It is the political structures of the vanguard movement which must give leadership to the armed component of our organisation. Both within and outside the country, the structures and cadreship of the armed forces must be subordinated to the political movement. In our situation, the armed struggle depends even more on the strength of the underground networks of the vanguard organisation.

● **The concept of people's armed forces:** There is the tendency to view people's military forces simply as the trained guerrillas of Umkhonto we Sizwe. They are the **core** of the people's military contingent. And, around them — as a result of the work of the broader political underground — should form various layers of the people's army. These include self-defence units, popular combat groups and, not least, those elements that we are winning over from within the enemy camp. Combined with the masses in revolt and led by the vanguard movement, all these forces must develop the capacity to seize power.

● **Is the military struggle the 'highest form of struggle'?**

The fact that this phrase has been used by many revolutionaries does not mean that it is accurate. Certainly, the armed struggle requires a high level of organisation, planning, political maturity and discipline. But this also applies to underground work at all levels, including propaganda, work in enemy forces, security and intelligence. **Besides, there is no higher expression to forms of struggle than the act of seizure of power and it is not always won through the barrel of a gun.** The tendency to glorify usage of military force is fraught with the danger of undermining other forms — a militarism that can in fact cost us victory.

● **Negotiations and military clout:** Certainly, without the necessary military strength, it would not be possible to have genuine negotiations leading to the transfer of power to the people. But, the military strength of the revolutionary masses must be seen in the context of the forces enumerated above. This also implies strong political structures and painstaking work to win over more and more forces to the side of the people — before and during the negotiations process.

The SACP conducts its work at all levels of the liberation movement and among workers and other sectors of the people, for the victory of the democratic revolution and an advance to socialism. This **strategic objective and the strategic approach outlined above** form the foundation of our activities. We should always examine our work critically.

But we must avoid the temptation to deviate from our fundamental principles.

PEN PICTURES OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS

ELIJAH LOZA

Elijah Loza was the first freedom fighter detained under the 90-days detention act on 1st May, 1963. He was severely tortured, and held incommunicado on Robben Island. On his release in 1965 he was served with a severe five-year banning order and placed under house arrest.

Elijah Loza, communist, chairman of the Sactu Western Cape Committee, and a leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe, found on his release that many of his colleagues had left the country for MK training. Despite severe repression and harassment, he obtained a job and renewed his activities, particularly with workers, mobilising and organising on trade union issues, ANC underground work and MK.

He remained an energetic organiser and activist, making a great impact on the youth. With stalwarts like Dora Tamana, he mobilised in Cape Town in solidarity with the Soweto uprising. He worked tirelessly to rebuild the Party, ANC and MK.

Detained yet again in May 1977, Elijah was tortured so severely that he died on 2nd August,



1977. Demands for a judicial inquiry were rejected. But he is not forgotten. In 1985 he was honoured by the people of the Western Cape who, despite the existing State of Emergency, unveiled a tombstone dedicated to him: **Fighter for Freedom.**

ELIAS MOTSOALEDI

Elias Motsoaledi, one of the Rivonia trialists released in October 1989 after 25 years on Robben Island, was born near Middleburg in Sekhukhuneland in 1924. By 1949 he was an active trade unionist and had joined the Communist Party. During the 1950s he served as chairman of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions, and was an activist of SACTU.

Elias joined the ANC in 1948, and became a member of the Transvaal provincial executive committee. An active organiser for the 1950 stay-at-homes, he was served with banning orders in 1952, detained during the 1960 Emergency, and was held in solitary confinement under the 90-day law in 1963.

Released unconditionally, Elias has immediately returned to active work within the Party, the ANC and the trade union movement.



REDISTRIBUTE WEALTH!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NO MORE TOKENISM!

The article in *Umsebenzi*, Volume 5, Issue 3 & 4, 4th Quarter poses serious questions which must be addressed now, by the Party, the national liberation movement and all the democratic organisations and people engaged in the liberation struggle.

All progressive forces of our country have to put the gender question and women's emancipation on their immediate agendas. The last Cosatu congress has made tentative steps worth following in this regard.

We can no longer afford the luxury of sloganeering and tokenism on the question of women's emancipation. The liberation movement has to draft clear policies as well as a concrete programme of action for this particular area of struggle. Affirmative action has to be undertaken now and not in the hereafter. Sexism and negative attitudes are a reflection of a low level of political and ideological consciousness.

We therefore need to declare a political war against sexism, backward attitudes, male chauvinism and outdated traditions with a clear historical background to the origins of these problems. Without vulgarising the struggle for the emancipation of women, the women, by their own actions, have to take their front positions and explode the myth of their being inferior.

Women's organisations and groups have to transcend the welfare and service role they usually carve for themselves. Sewing, knitting, baking and some such projects are not an end in themselves but a means to gather women for a higher political purpose.

What women can do if their full revolutionary potential has been unleashed has been proved in places like Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, El Salvador and elsewhere. Our failure to use this chained potential today is, in effect, not only delaying the very dawn of victory but also restricting the advance and development of our future South Africa.

On 'Uncovering Enemy Agents'

Comrades, I would like to congratulate you on your excellent work in producing *Umsebenzi*. Every issue gives clear guidance on issues of national importance to our revolution. Every article is relevant, straightforward and understandable. Our trade union movement, indeed all the democratic forces involved in bringing an end to the apartheid system, need your paper more than ever before in what is hopefully the last and decisive phase before victory!

Comrades, reading your article 'Uncovering Enemy Agents' in the series 'Notes from the Underground', I would like to comment on the last part of the article under the subtitle 'How do we proceed?' (after having identified an agent). You are suggesting that 'extreme measures are not always necessary or appropriate'. In the case of a suspect confessing 'the individual must be expelled' and in the case of questions remaining unclear and unanswered 'he or she must be suspended from the organisation'. In this context I would like to highlight a few considerations in dealing with uncovered enemy agents.

It should be clear to everyone that the uncovering of an enemy agent **is part** of our overall struggle against the enemy and its system and should at **no point** become an end in itself. Following from this it is clear that dealing with an enemy agent **must** take a whole range of considerations into account. The basic and most important measurement must be: does the way in which we deal with the uncovered enemy agent further our political struggle? Does it forge stronger unity among the democratic forces in our area? Does it weaken the enemy and strengthen our forces, or are there possibilities of the opposite outcome? A certain type of punishment of an enemy agent may be morally justified but politically unwise, at times even seriously damaging to our cause, if we cannot stomach the enemy reprisals. Under different correlations of factors vigilantes becomes the

AN END TO ALL SEGREGATION!

order of the day and the duty of all revolutionaries. Therefore I fully agree with the following sentence from your article: Only the most trusted and mature comrades must be pulled into such a committee!

It should also be clear that the seriousness of the nature of the case has to play a part in considering the correct punishment. Obviously an uncovered agent at a discussion table at a university will have to be dealt with differently than an agent spying on workers activities, providing the enemy with important information which forms the basis of an organised massacre like the one

at the Germiston train station.

In short the correct punishment of an uncovered agent should be guided by our thoughts of protecting our gains and advancing the struggle.

In the Year of Mobilisation for a Democratic Future our struggle needs the full weight of the SACP. Without the SACP, the vanguard of the South African working class, there can be no democratic South Africa!

Forward to a Democratic Society!

Forward to Socialism!

C.V.

CONFERENCE CRAZY

*Scarce night's transformed into dawn,
with the same daily sight I'm beset:
folks go forth to their offices —
each to his own:*

*to glav,
to com,
to polit,
to prosvet.*

*Barely passing the establishment porter,
they're piled with papers like snow;
selecting some fifty —
the most important! —
to conference
people go.*

*You peep in:
'Couldn't so-and-so see me, eh?
I've been coming here
God knows how long ...'
'Comrade Van Vanich's gone off to confer
on a merger of Theo and Gukon!'*

*The umptieth staircase.
You're done for, you think.*

*Yet again:
'You're to come in an hour.'
Damnation!*

*'They're in conference:
the purchase of a bottle of ink
for the district co-operative association.'*

*In an hour:
neither secretary
nor clerk!
Great hell!*

*All under 22 —
blonde or dark —
at a conference of the YCL.*

*Again, perspiring, already towards dusk
to the top of the seven-storey building I come.
'Has Van Vanich arrived?' I ask.*

*'No — in session
at the a-b-c-d-e-f-com.'*

*Enraged,
like an avalanche in full might,*

*I tear in,
wildly cursing*

Gosh!

*Only halves of people in sight!
'Where are they,'*

*I holler,
'the halves that are missing?*

Murder!

Manslaughter!

I rush about, roaring.

Horrendous, the picture's driving me nuts.

*Then I hear the secretary's calmest voice: 'Sorry,
they're attending two conferences at once.*

*At ten sessions daily
we have to appear,*

*so willy-nilly
in half we tear —*

*down to the waist
we're here,*

*and the rest of us —
there.'*

The shock brings insomnia

Yawning and yearning

I meet the dawn with a dream of bliss:

*Oh, for just one more decisive conference,
concerning*

the abolishment of all conferences!

Vladimir Mayakovsky,

Poet of the Russian Revolution

Studying the Party Programme

2. Study Guide to Chapter Two

The chapter consists of three main sections:

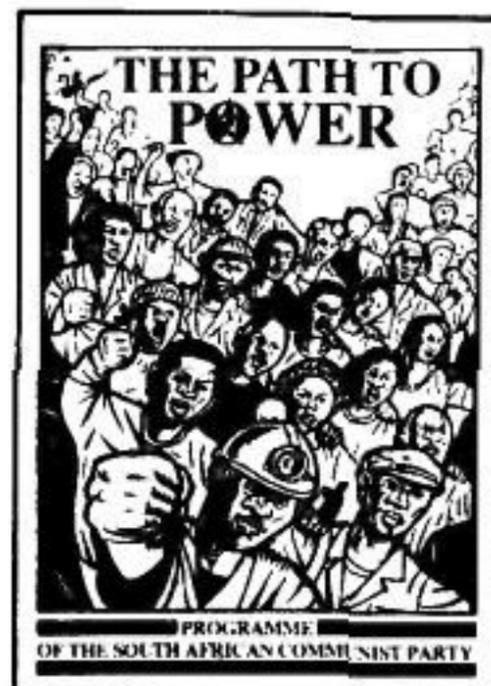
- p13-15 the inter-connection between struggles in Africa, the common historical experience and the differences between African countries. How the balance of class forces results in a wide variety of political systems in independent African countries.
- p15-17 the transition to socialism as the only road to resolving the many-sided problems afflicting developing countries. The difficulties facing African countries on the road to socialism.
- p17-18 the Southern African region — the great changes in the last 15 years, Pretoria's policy of destabilisation and the role of imperialism.

Questions for Discussion

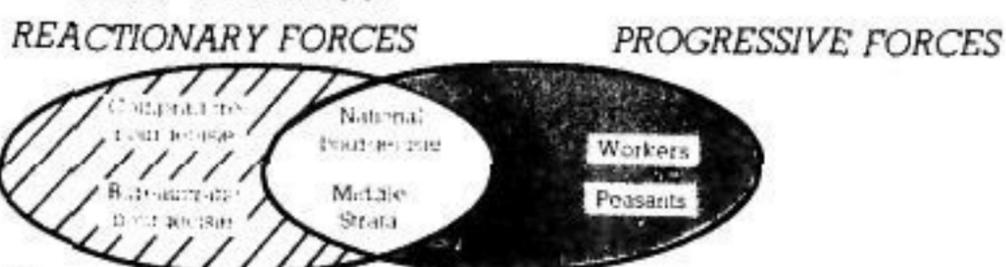
1. On page 13 the Programme says: 'The attainment of independence by the majority of African peoples constitutes the greatest political advance of the past three decades on the continent'. Do you agree with this?
2. The programme distinguishes between three kinds of bourgeoisie that can develop in independent African countries — a *compradore bourgeoisie*, a *bureaucratic bourgeoisie* and a *national bourgeoisie*. Discuss what you understand by each term. Can we see the emergence of such forces among blacks in our own country?
3. What objective problems and subjective mistakes can occur in African countries committed to socialist development? Read the programme section 'The Transition to Socialism' (page 15 to page 17) and also consider a concrete case (for example, the article on Frelimo's 5th Congress in *Work in Progress* No.60).

Further tips on political study

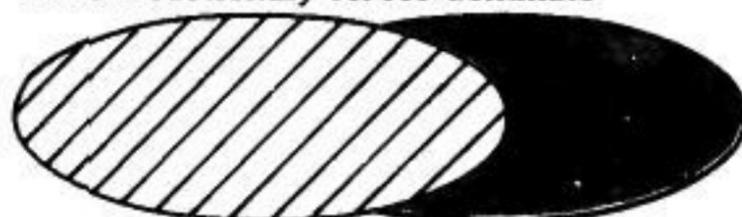
- Starting at a page is not productive. Two hours in front of a book are not necessarily as useful as twenty minutes of good, active concentration. Take a break and clear your mind. Let your mind turn over what you have been reading. You will be surprised at how things can become clearer with a break.



- In discussion simple diagrams to illustrate points can be very useful. For example, we can simply illustrate the point made by the programme on class alliances in independent African countries:



There are two basic tendencies, either **reactionary** forces dominate



or **progressive** forces dominate



In the process, those in the middle can be won over to one or other side.

Some further useful reading:

- 'Imperialism, Apartheid and Destabilisation in Southern Africa', *African Communist*, No.115, August 1989.
- Rob Davies — 'Still Committed to Socialism', on Frelimo's 5th Congress, *Work in Progress*, No.60, August 1989.
- Lenin, *Draft theses on the national question*.
- A rich understanding of colonial Africa, of the various liberation struggles, and of the independence period can also be gained from reading novels and short stories by African writers. The works of Ngugi, or Honwana's *They killed mangy dog*, or Sembene Ousmane's *God's bits of wood*, for instance, can be read and discussed in conjunction with this chapter of the programme.



HOW TO MASTER SECRET WORK

19. Stationary, Portable and Mobile DLBs

We have been discussing the use of the dead letter box (DLB) through which underground members secretly pass material to each other. There are various types of DLBs:

1. Stationary DLBs are fixed places such as a camouflaged hole in the ground, hollow tree trunk or fence pole, loose brick in a wall (as described in last issue).

2. Portable DLBs are containers which can be carried and left in innocent places to be picked up, e.g. discarded cigarette pack, hollowed-out stick or fake piece of rock.

3. Mobile DLBs are in different types of transport (car, bus, train, boat or plane) and are used to communicate between operatives who live far apart.

Magnetic DLBs: A simple magnet attached to a container increases opportunities for finding places to leave your DLB. With the aid of magnets you are able to clamp your DLB to any metal object such as behind a drain pipe, under the rail of a bridge, under a vehicle, etc.

Comrade 'A' will use a variety of DLBs with 'B'. Never use a stationary DLB too often because this increases the risk of being spotted. The advantage of a portable DLB is that the place where it is left can be constantly changed. Because of the danger of a stranger picking it up by chance the time between making the drop and the pick-up by your partner must not be long.

5. Portable DLB — 'Wooden Stick':

Buy a piece of plastic tubing or pipe. Cut off a 30cm length. Glue pieces of bark around it to make it look like a twig. With a little patience you will be surprised at how realistic you can make it. You have a portable DLB into which you can insert material. Work out a suitable location



where it can be safely dropped for a pick-up. You can carry it up your sleeve and drop it in long grass or into a bush near an easy-to-locate reference point. It must be concealed from passers-by and nosy dogs!

Alternatively you can try hollowing out an actual piece of branch, or splitting it down the side and glueing it. But you will probably find the plastic pipe easier to handle and longer-lasting.

6. Portable DLB — 'Hollow Rock': Experiment with plaster of paris (which you can buy from a chemist) and mould it into the shape of a rock. Allow enough of a hollow to hide material. With paint and mud you can make it look like a realistic rock. Carry it to the drop-off point in a shopping bag.

(Note: the above can serve as a portable DLB as well as a useful hiding place for the storage of sensitive material around the home).

Mobile DLB: Comrade 'A' uses the Johannesburg to Durban train to send material to comrades down at the coast. There are numerous hiding places on trains, as with other forms of transport, and if you use magnets the possibilities are increased. Removing a panel in a compartment provides a useful hiding place. Comrade 'A' does this long before the train's departure, before other passengers arrive. He has a telephonic signal system with the Durban comrades to indicate when the material is on its way and how to locate it. They might get on the train before it reaches Durban. Whatever the case, the operational system must be carefully studied at both ends.

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

8. Rural Areas

Our Party underground network continues to grow. It is not easy to describe all developments in these notes — details might betray us to the enemy. What we can say is that this growth has included extending into the rural areas of our region.

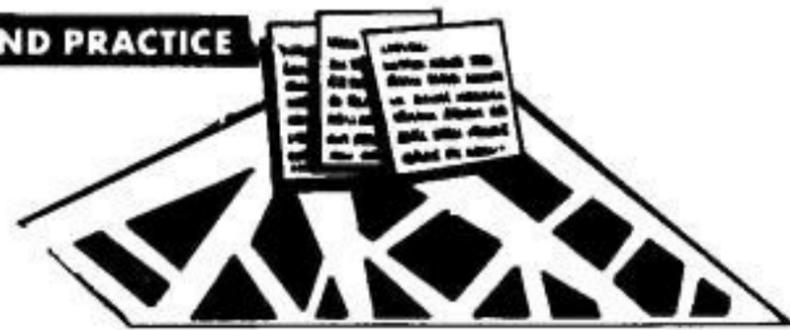
There are many reasons to extend into rural areas. First of all they have value in their own right. We need to ensure that our Party and the politics of our revolutionary alliance reach the people of these areas. By extending to the four corners of our country, we extend the enemy.

The rural areas are also often important because they lie along the supply lines for our main town and city underground headquarters. A good supply of up-to-date information on enemy roadblocks and general movements is highly useful for our operations.

But building the underground in rural areas presents its own difficulties and challenges. For this column we interviewed one of our best rural underground operatives. Let's call him Com P.

Com P.: 'First and foremost, in most rural areas people are suspicious of outsiders. If you want to operate underground you must either be totally invisible — and I mean **totally** — or a known person from the area. If you are a stranger, as I have sometimes been in some missions, you must recruit one or two very good people locally and operate through them. This is a matter of must.

'If you **are** from the area, you must also be able to easily explain whatever absences you might have had. Schooling, you can say, or migrant work. At the moment I'm working politically in my own home town. It is a town like so many other dorps. The white town and shops, two garages, a lumber factory and small fertiliser plant down by the station. And then, three kilometres out of town, just off the main road, the



black township where I live.

In short, not much employment, not much entertainment. But it's a place.

'The MDM structures are not strong here. They picked up a bit in 85-86, but they've broken down again. This is not to say there are no collective structures. And this is my next main point about underground work in a place like this. Here there are two black churches and their choirs, a soccer club, the black school.

'Each of these institutions has good people, and bad people, and mostly lots of just ordinary people. This is important for building our underground. Institutions like these show you which are good people — and what they are good at.

'In a small rural town communications are very important for the underground. Our connection to the regional command structure is our lifeline. I won't tell you how we've solved this issue. But use your own imagination. Every small town has people whose jobs take them regularly to the city — transport workers, taxi-owners, weekly migrants.

'In preparing for combat work, I mean weapons training, securing weapons, etc.; we have begun to solve this by combining it with what we call work in the enemy forces. After all, not every black policeman is a sell-out. Need I say more?

'Reconnaissance of roads for roadblocks and troop movements has been assigned to us as an important task by the regional command. Again we have solved the challenge by recruiting on the basis of people's work. Other specialised units are a workers' factory unit, and a propaganda unit that handles distribution of *Umsebenzi*, *Mayibuye*, etc.'

Com P. concluded his interview by appealing to other comrades involved in rural underground work to share the lessons learned.

STATEMENT CENTRAL OF THE SO COMMUNIST

The Central Committee (CC) of the South African Communist Party has met to consider the new challenges and opportunities facing our Party. Forty years after banning us, the apartheid regime has been forced to concede that it can never uproot communist organisation and communist ideas from the soil of South Africa. Today our Party is emerging from the underground with massive prestige and popularity. The CC is fully aware of the weighty responsibilities this prestige and popularity place upon our Party and upon each one of our militants.

Although our Party has been unbanned, the illegitimate apartheid regime remains in power. Highly repressive legislation remains on the South African statute books. FW de Klerk has implemented some important first steps, but his regime is committed to a brutal economic policy that is anti-worker, and indeed against the interests of the majority of South Africans. His policies of privatisation, especially in the specific conditions of entrenched racial oppression, are handing over ever greater chunks of our national wealth to a small circle of white capitalists.

Over the past year the regime, in collusion with the bosses, has launched a brutal offensive against the organised working class. All too often labour relations are being conducted at gun-point. In a period in which De Klerk has proclaimed his concern for negotiations, his government has been tinkering with the anti-worker Labour Relations Act without once consulting with the progressive trade union movement.

Precisely because communists espouse the immediate and long-term interests of the working people, we have no doubt that, as our Party emerges from illegality, communists will remain prime targets for all kinds of repression — legalised and informal. We

shall not be deterred. We are determined to seize the time, making creative use of the new opportunities, rising to the new challenges.

FORWARD TO A DEMOCRATIC V





UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY ECONOMICS

14. SOVIET ECONOMIC PLANNING — PART ONE

What is economic planning? What is its record? Today those questions are specially important because the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are trying to reappraise and restructure their planned economies.

The country which set the model for planning a whole economy is the Soviet Union. There, for six decades, all major aspects of economic life were controlled by central state bodies and their subsidiaries. That means the central planners decide how much should be produced of each of the major types of goods.

Each industry has to attempt to reach the level of output targeted in the plan. The amounts of raw materials and parts they could obtain as inputs to the production process was also set by the planners. Industrial enterprises were state-owned and controlled by the plan.

By contrast with the Soviet Union's centrally-planned economy, capitalism has different firms deciding their own levels of output and purchases of inputs. Capitalist firms' decisions are partly based on the prices of those goods.

Prices also exist in the Soviet Union and are used in planning. The difference is that those prices are set by central planners and not frequently changed, while under capitalism prices are set by firms and dealers and respond to market conditions.

Soviet planning attempts to achieve a desirable balance for the economy as a whole. Two objectives are at the heart of this. First, the employment balance between the number of workers and the number of jobs. Second, the balance between producing consumer goods as a whole (food, clothing and similar goods) and producing investment goods (such as new machines, trains, factories and warehouses).

It has had success with the employment balance, but also, as we know, some serious problems. The success has been that, unlike capitalism, there has been no unemployment. A problem has been that there are too many jobs so enterprises are sometimes short of labour. A related problem has been that labour-saving techniques of production have not been introduced as fully as possible.

Soviet planning has also aimed to achieve a balance between consumption and investment. The economy has had a very high rate of investment in new plant and equipment. Over the years this has been at a much higher rate than the United States and it rapidly transformed the Soviet Union from a poor backward country to a major industrial power. But this also creates problems. People now feel that too few consumer goods are being produced so the planners should direct more resources to those industries and less to the construction of capital goods.

Soviet planning has had much success, and its problems can be solved without abandoning planning. One approach would be to keep the same planning system but change some of its rules. For example, the planners can allocate more resources to producing consumer goods. And instead of giving enterprises targets mainly for their output they could set quality targets too. Such changes are being attempted and could be successful.

Another approach would be to alter the type of planning, and it may be attempted under perestroika.

In the next issue we shall look at alternative types of planning. The big questions they face are whether planning can operate with private ownership and a greater role for prices.

NO LET-UP ON SANCTIONS!

Both the liberation forces and the racist enemy exist in a complex system of international economic and political relations. As such both sides cannot be indifferent to international opinion. In general terms the exploiting classes would tend to support the racists, while the exploited classes would tend to support the liberation forces.

In the period immediately after Sharpeville, many British and European investors withdrew their investments from South Africa for fear that the political climate was no longer safe. The racist regime faced the prospect of economic decline and perhaps even an impasse that could lead to collapse. It was saved by a massive injection of US investments, which rose sharply especially after the Rivonia arrests in July of 1963. In this way foreign capital helped to rescue the apartheid regime at a time when its policies had resulted in severe economic problems.

The action of these US investors, and others from Western capitalist countries who followed their example, was motivated not by hatred of black people, but rather by their material interest in maintaining a system of cheap labour that was highly profitable to the companies they ran or owed.

However, in many capitalist countries, whose ruling classes have links with and support the apartheid regime, there are numerous political and social forces that can be mobilised to support the liberation movement. In some instances these are people moved by purely humanitarian considerations to oppose oppressive regimes whose brutality they find repugnant. This was the case with the system of slavery during the 18th and 19th centuries. Others are moved by deeply-held religious and philosophical beliefs. The most reliable motive however, is class solidarity based on common interests as members of an exploited class. Socialists regard this as a cardinal principle of working class politics.

It is in the obvious interest of the oppressed to win support among all these layers of people in the Western countries so that they can use their political muscle to deter their governments from collaborating with apartheid. This is the reason why the liberation alliance encouraged the formation of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, first in Britain in 1959, then in other countries.

Solidarity as a Factor in our Struggle

Besides such political forces in Western countries, all socialist countries had an anti-imperialist foreign policy, dedicated to assisting all peoples fighting for liberation from colonial enslavement. This formed the basis of the fraternal Soviet assistance to the Chinese people during their revolution; and the participation of the Chinese volunteers in the Korean War. Closer to home we have the example of the Cuban internationalist fighters who have defended the integrity of Angola.

The people's newly liberated territories in Southern Africa all owe much to the assistance they received from socialist countries in the form of arms, military and technical training, and economic assistance after liberation. Needless to say the racists and their allies would like to break the links of friendship between the national liberation movement and our allies in order to render us weaker. International solidarity was one of the most positive elements of socialist foreign policy, even during the Stalinist distortions. It would be a tragic retreat if the recent positive changes are accompanied by the Hungarian-type betrayal we saw recently when Pék Botha was hosted in Budapest.

Strengthen International Solidarity

Beyond the symbolic, the people in the Western countries that are South Africa's chief trading partners have also mounted a campaign for economic sanctions and the total isolation of the racist regime. Though sanctions have not yet been universally applied, popular pressure in these countries has forced their governments to act. Companies, anxious to avoid the hostility of their customers at home have disinvested; banks have refused to make loans and even arms dealers have been forced to forego what was once a lucrative market.

The impact of all these combined pressures has already greatly weakened the regime and shaken the confidence of its popular support base among whites. The release of our leaders on 15th October followed by that of Nelson Mandela on 11th February, owed much to the support our movement has gathered in the international community. Until De Klerk sees real sense there must be no retreat from a policy of sanctions and international isolation of racist Pretoria.