

MAY 1982



SECHABA

official organ of the african
national congress south africa



Front Line States Presidents with the leaders of ANC and SWAPO at the recent Maputo Summit. From L to R: Nujoma (SWAPO), Dos Santos (ANGOLA), Masire (BOTSWANA), Nyerere (TANZANIA), Mugabe (ZIMBABWE), Kaunda (ZAMBIA) and Tambo (ANC).

SECHABA

MAY ISSUE 1982



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EDITORIAL: FIGHT U.S. IMPERIALISM

The US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker has condemned what he calls "terrorist activities" and other "violent efforts" by SWAPO and ANC. Testifying before the US Senate Sub-Committee on Security and Terrorism on March 22, 1982, he said that these two organisations receive 90% of their military aid and 60% of their overall aid from the Soviet Union.

The derogatory reference by Dr Crocker to the just struggle for national independence waged by the national liberation movements as 'terrorism' is but a feeble attempt by the Reagan Administration at concealing its role as the mainstay

of terrorist regimes throughout the world. This Administration, which has self-righteously proclaimed its mission to be the fight against international terrorism, spends huge sums of dollars to prop up fascist dictatorships such as those in El Salvador to continue with their genocidal policies. It is also the same Administration which supports the Pretoria racists not only to conduct a reign of terror against the majority of the people in our country, but also to carry these acts of terror into the neighbouring states with complete disregard for life and property.

Neither the ANC nor the Soviet Union made any secret about the selfless support 1

that the Soviet Union, the Socialist Community and the progressive forces the world over are granting to the people fighting against oppression, exploitation and human degradation.

What, then, is the real objective behind this 'revelation' of Soviet assistance to the liberation movements?

For the people of South Africa the latest manoeuvres of the Reagan Administration in Central America are instructive. US imperialism, having failed in its machinations to subdue the people of Cuba and to reverse their revolutionary gains, was confronted with yet another humiliating defeat with the triumph of the struggle of the people of Nicaragua. Added to these defeats the US Administration is now confronted with the increasing tempo of popular struggles, namely in El Salvador and other countries in the region. In response to these developments the US Administration has adopted a desperate and aggressive stance towards Cuba and Nicaragua.

Similarly, in Southern Africa, imperialism which has suffered great losses as a result of the victories of the revolutionary struggles waged in the region, seeks to reverse these

advances by throwing its full weight behind the racist Pretoria regime.

Fearing the destruction of its stronghold in Africa by the liberation forces led by the ANC and SWAPO, imperialism now seeks to find a pretext for its aggression in the region. However this time the excuse for intervention is not Cuba or Nicaragua, but the Soviet Union for its assistance to the liberation movements. It is now clear that the strategy of international imperialism, in particular the United States, is to suppress the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia, and to use the racist South African regime to attack the front line states for their assistance to our cause.

The ANC therefore calls on progressive mankind to condemn these dirty manoeuvres by the United States and to give all possible support to the national liberation movements and to the front line states in our sub-continent. For our part we in the ANC shall not rest until we destroy the apartheid monster and create a South Africa that will stand for peace, democracy and social progress.

AMANDLA! MATLA!

Alfred Nzo, Secretary General

U.S. DECLARES WAR ON ANC AND SWAPO

It is an open secret, indeed a known fact, that the US does not only collaborate with racist South Africa, it actually coordinates racist South Africa's plans against the people of Africa. Up to now little has been known — at least outside our ranks — that the US has declared war on us, the liberation movements of Southern Africa; it is now taking measures to confront us physically. It is true that the Reagan regime has always confronted us — at least morally — calling us "international terrorists" and attempting to view our struggle in the context of cold war, "internationalising" our struggle. Now they openly collaborate with the racist regime of Pretoria in this dirty game.

Denton Commission

In March something very sinister took place in the US namely the hearings on ANC and SWAPO organised by a sub-committee of the US Senate on Security and Terrorism. The Chairman of this sub-committee is no other than Senator Jeremiah Denton, a man who left America in the mid 60's, an America which still largely believed in the "Vietnam war". He spent seven years and seven months in North Vietnam as a prisoner of war after being shot down over North Vietnam and captured on July 18, 1965.

The hearings of this sub-committee bring back memories of the UN-American

Activities Committee headed by Joe McCarthy.

Lister and his South African Trip

Joel Lisker is the Chief Committee aide of Senator Denton. He together with Bert Milling visited South Africa and Namibia on January 11-19, 1982 to investigate the Soviet, East German (the name they use for the German Democratic Republic) and Cuban involvement and/or control in the ANC and SWAPO.

It was not the first time that Lisker went to South Africa. Formerly with the Registration Unit at Justice which oversees the registration of Foreign Agents, Lisker travelled to South Africa during the Muldergate Scandal to investigate the American aspect and angle to the scandal. The one case that did come out of this was the Mc Goff case. Also investigated was Donald De Kieffer, the Foreign Agent representing the South African Information Office, who is now the Chief Counsel for the office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

There are some shocking revelations about this visit: the trip was coordinated with the State Department; the delegation briefed the US embassy officials in South Africa upon their arrival and were debriefed at the State Department upon their return. They also had the cooperation of the racist South African Government on their trip.

Prior to leaving the US, Lisker sent a "shopping list" to the South African officials indicating the people they wished to meet with, the places they wished to visit and the information they hoped to have access to. All in all they interviewed over 20 people while there, mostly former ANC and SWAPO members. These people had left the organisations for various reasons including arrest in South Africa, voluntary surrender and dissatisfaction with the organisations. All this did not matter to Lisker he was not concerned why they left the organisations he was interested in: what they did within the ANC and SWAPO; what type of training they received and where; what type of education they received and where, how many trips they made to the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic. Lisker was also keen to hear reports of torture in the Soviet Union, on members who



refused to adopt Marxism and abandon Christianity; and was interested in inspecting "captured material" from numerous South African raids into Angola (including the Kassinga massacre).

The delegation, as we said before, received a briefing by the South African Intelligence while there, and in return they briefed the US State Department on their return.

Enter Chester Crocker

The hearings started on March 22 in the US. In his opening statement Senator Denton spelt out the mandate of his subcommittee:

"Today, we commence a series of five hearings on the role of the Soviet Union, through its puppets in Cuba and East Germany, in fomenting and supporting terrorism in Southern Africa ...

"... these three countries have been described repeatedly as actively and successfully trying, under the overall control of the Politburo in Moscow, to infiltrate and manipulate so-called national liberation movements. We have heard repeated references to the Soviet Union's activities in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and elsewhere in the world ... there is a strong case to be made that African Blacks, as well as whites, will suffer if communist movements expand or triumph in that region".

Senator Denton went on to say:

"The purpose of these hearings is not to

debate the appropriate U.S. policy towards Southern Africa. Nor is it our purpose to analyze South African domestic policies...

"What we seek to determine, through the testimony of a number of witnesses, is the extent to which the USSR has successfully penetrated, and in large measure taken over, the direction of two organisations in Southern Africa: the African National Congress and the South West African People's Organisation. I hasten to add that it is not my view that the entire membership of these organisations is communist. History demonstrates, however, that communist parties do not need 100% membership in order to operate ...

"I do not make this charge lightly or without evidence. Indeed, the South African Communist Party itself, the oldest Communist Party on the African continent (founded in 1921), has consistently made its position clear with regard to the relationship of "national liberation movements to the Soviet bloc..."

And then he revealed that:

"The sub-committee staff has devoted considerable effort to obtain first hand evidence of the involvement of the Soviets and their proxies in directing the so-called 'national liberation' organisations operating in Southern Africa. As Chairman of the sub-committee, I also want to acknowledge the able assistance of the Department of State and the United States embassy in Pretoria. We also recognise that the sub-committee's investigators would not have been able to produce the body of evidence to be presented in these hearings without the cooperation of the South African government."

Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs did not say anything significantly different from Senator Denton except to add that:

"Consideration of communist influence in Southern Africa would also include the question of relations of various communist countries with the independent states of the area, all of which consider themselves to be non-aligned nations".

He went on to detail "western interests and US interests in particular" in the Southern African region. He said nothing about African interests and the interests of the oppressed Blacks in Southern Africa in particular.

He told the sub-committee that:

"The ten nations of Southern Africa comprise an area of great mineral wealth, including resources critical to western strategic interests. Angola, South Africa, Mozambique and the territory of Namibia are all littoral states on the strategic Cape sea route, a lifeline of western commerce. US two-way trade with the countries of Southern Africa mounted in 1980 to \$7.2 billion and US direct investment in the region is estimated at \$2.3 billion."

He speculated:

"We estimate that SWAPO receives some ninety percent of its military support and some sixty of its overall support from communist forces ...

"The ANC, which seeks to replace the present government in power in South Africa by violent as well as other means, receives comparable percentages of its military and other support from communist and other sources".

And then he summarised the US policy on Southern Africa:

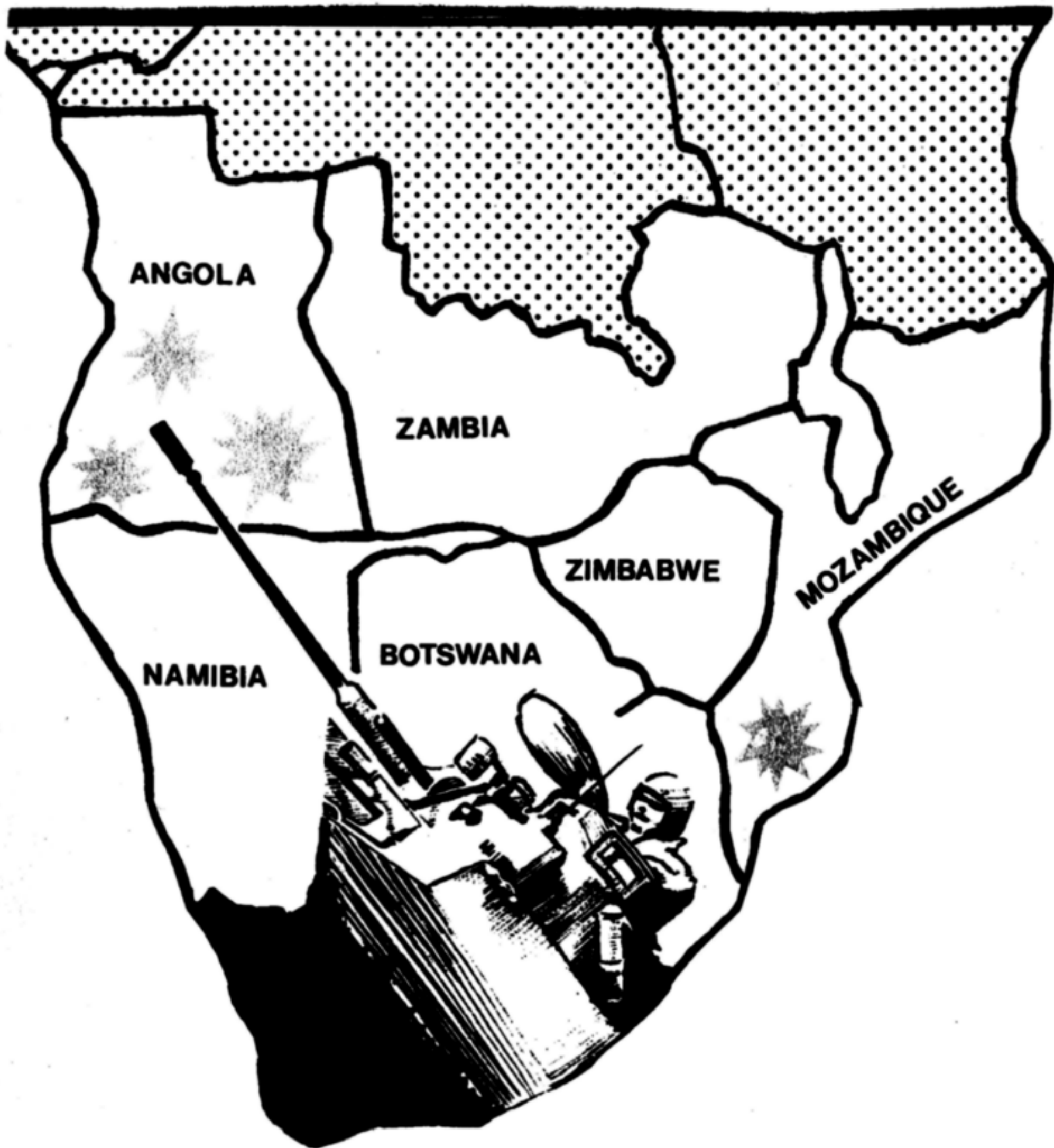
"We categorically condemn all terrorist and other violent acts that either of these organisations take to try to bring about change in Namibia and South Africa. Our policy in relation to both seeks to channel the impetus toward change into peaceful channels. We seek in general in pursuing our objectives in Southern Africa to strengthen and make more viable the possibilities of peaceful change. In so doing, we seek to obviate the necessity for terrorism that some parties involved in developments in the region choose to perceive."

On Namibia he had this to say:

"In Namibia, we have been working very actively since last April to arrive at a negotiated settlement of the Namibia issue that would bring that territory to an internationally recognised independence based on UN Security Council Resolution 435. We are pursuing a carefully crafted, three-phase negotiating process, with coordination at all stages with all of the interested parties, including South Africa, SWAPO and other Namibian political elements".

And on South Africa:

"...we are pursuing a careful policy of constructive engagement, encouraging the government of Prime Minister P.W. Botha



and other elements in South African society to move away from apartheid toward a South Africa changed, modern and strong, with bright prospects for stability and development rooted in justice, free of the problems that now stand in the way of closer US/South African relations. We believe that a process of peaceful, evolutionary change promises a much better immediate and long term future for all South Africans than the protracted, bloody terror and violence that is the alternative for that nation.”

American intrigues

We have quoted at length from these undiplomatic, indeed crude, speeches of these leading American “experts on communism in Southern Africa”. They do give us an insight into the thinking in Washington about what they conceive as the destiny of Southern Africa. What strikes one is the lack of modesty and humanity. Everything — including our aspirations — has to be subordinated to US imperialist interest which dovetail

with the interests of the racists in Pretoria. In this article we shall not deal with their speculations about the "extent of communist influence" in our liberation movements or the source of our support. In any case that is none of their business. We shall deal with their attitude towards us and our struggle. Suffice to say, the very fact that the Reagan administration found it necessary to set up a Senate sub-committee (headed by a former prisoner of war in Vietnam) to investigate our source of support -- instead of supporting us -- is a reflection of how serious the Reagan regime views its declared policy of "superiority" over the Soviet Union. They are panicking, and even neurotic and we are just guinea pigs to be sacrificed on the altar of the cold war.

While we are being condemned ("we categorically condemn all terrorist and other violent acts that either of these organisations take to try to bring about change in Namibia and South Africa") the Reagan regime is "pursuing a careful policy of constructive engagement, encouraging the government of Prime Minister P.W. Botha and other elements in South African society to move away from apartheid". The logic here is simple: guerilla warfare must be stopped at all costs and by all methods (including violent methods) and then seek "peaceful methods" for a "settlement". The Botha regime is being begged to "move away from apartheid". It has never entered the heads of the American government officials that it is the black masses who will bring about change in South Africa and Namibia -- not Botha.

In these statements there is not a word of condemnation of apartheid. On the contrary it is referred to as "South African domestic policies". What about the invasion of Angola, attacks on ANC residences in Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland? What about the recent bomb attack on ANC offices in London? And the kidnapping of our cadres in the front line states?

The material on SWAPO comes mainly from the racist South African regime, including items taken from the wreckage of the Kassinga raid and other military incursions in Angola? Who believes this? Even if it were true is it ethical to denounce a victim of attack precisely because he has been attacked?

The implication of the links between SWAPO and Moscow, we are told, is that a SWAPO victory in Namibia would simply hand over that country to Moscow and therefore the main aim in Namibia "should be to deprive the Eastern bloc of the influence it exerts as the supplier of military hardware and training". The independence of Namibia is being made dependent on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and one of the conditions for a future Namibia -- if SWAPO wins elections -- is whether racist South Africa and the West are willing to cooperate with the new government economically and otherwise. Even the UN General Assembly resolution that SWAPO is the sole and legitimate representative of the Namibian people came under scrutiny.

Unreliable Witnesses

This sub-committee did not stop at that. It took testimony from Ephraim Mfalapitsa, Jeffrey Motutuzele Bosigo and other former ANC students and cadres of Umkhonto we Sizwe, who have now become renegades. Even Bartholomew Hlapane, a rusted renegade of the 1960's, featured in these hearings.

The most startling evidence was that of Nokonono Delphine Kave, a 27 year old young woman from Peddie (Eastern Cape) who told a tale about her involvement in the Black Consciousness Movement with Steve Biko -- according to her the ANC regarded Steve Biko as a CIA agent --, indoctrination in the Soviet Union (the South African papers call it Russia), fratricide within the ANC and her eventual flight to Canada. Nokonono explained how in the Soviet Union her Christian-based distaste for communism and her unhappiness at seeing a black nationalist movement (the ANC) being taken over by communists, created major problems.

Nokonono was sent to the Soviet Union to do a university course but she found herself in a "psychiatric" hospital; she was given injections that caused her to lose her sight temporarily and was sexually abused: "forced to have sex with white men". The Soviets had pictures of this sexual orgy, Nokonono said, and they told her that she had now "become a revolutionary because I had sex with

whites". She continued: "The people I had sex with were different people. I could tell they were different by the different weights I felt on me..." She was also introduced to a "Russian named Shubin who she was told headed the armed struggle in Southern Africa".

In the ANC, she says, she saw terrible things: as a semi-prisoner she watched how three "dissidents" were killed and cut open on a kitchen table. She saw many atrocities in the ANC. The more lies she spoke the more sympathy she got. Denton, the Chairman of the sub-committee investigating the ANC and SWAPO, saw in Nokonono "a brave young woman who had suffered gravely at the hands of the communists" and he made it clear that he believed Nokonono was in mortal danger from her former colleagues and from the KGB because of her evidence! This explains why there were more than 12 federal security agents who guarded her at the hearing of the committee. Nokonono's evidence must have pleased her uncles, Lennox Sebe of the Ciskei and his brother Charles Sebe, the Chief of the Ciskei's Security Police.

Another less successful endeavour was the attempt to get evidence from Andreas Shipanga, the President of SWAPO-democrats in Namibia. In an appropriately titled article: "Say he's a Communist" the Sowetan (26.3.82) reported that Shipanga has revealed that a member of the US Senate Sub-Committee on Security and Terrorism had telephoned him from Washington, asking him to prove "conclusively" that SWAPO President Sam Nujoma was a "convinced communist". Shipanga replied:

"I do not want anybody putting words in my mouth. I know what SWAPO is and I know what I want to say. I was shocked at the approach and I told him so."

Shipanga said Senator Denton asked him again to testify, but he sent a telegram to Washington insisting that he be allowed to testify as a "free witness".

US Manoeuvres in Southern Africa

The pro-government newspaper, the Citizen (24.3.82) expressed a hope that the American Senate sub-committee on Security

and Terrorism takes serious note of the evidence of Dr. Chester Crocker, that SWAPO receives ninety percent of its military support from communist sources and also that the ANC receives "comparable percentages" of communist support. It went further to quote Crocker who said the USA condemns all "terrorist" and other "violent" acts by the ANC and SWAPO and seeks to direct change in South Africa and Namibia into peaceful channels which is what South Africa is doing!

This is more than just a coincidence of designs and schemes: it is a clear demonstration of the growing alliance between the Botha regime and the Reagan administration i.e. world imperialism; an alliance which, while strengthening the apartheid regime also enables the policies of that regime to influence imperialist policies and aggressive designs in this region.

These hearings of the Reagan administration have another sinister aspect. They are also meant to investigate the "hidden link" i.e. organisations in America that support the ANC and SWAPO and other non-American organisations that are being investigated. The aim is to force them to incriminate themselves. The next step is obvious: the ANC and SWAPO will have to quit the USA which will be a step towards a clampdown on American civil liberties organisations and humanitarian bodies, let alone radical political parties and trade unions.

A tragic aspect of all this is that the Bantustans are being used in this process to annihilate us and the progressive forces in America. Let us take the case of Nokonono.

Dr. Ronald Ray, an associate professor of political science at the University of Calgary and one of the men who "sponsored" Nokonono for immigration purposes when she came to Canada last year, is reported to have said that he believed Nokonono was a South African government plant in the ANC. The stories Nokonono told at different times did not coincide. She appeared to be without financial resources, yet she suddenly made a trip from Calgary to Ottawa and Toronto. At one stage she ran up a telephone bill of 500 US Dollars. At another she complained that she could not do her

“work” properly at the University. Asked what she meant because she had every opportunity to follow her studies:

“She answered that she could not do her work against the ANC and that she was going to the United States”. (Sowetan 29.3.82)

The US policy on Southern Africa dovetails with the “defence” philosophy and military theory of the South African racists and militarists whose task is to:

- a) prevent or suppress “internal disorder”, that is, the liberation movement of South Africa;
- b) strike at the “source” of the problem in the front line states so as “to counter the menace” of warfare;
- and c) to control the sea-lanes in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the interests of world imperialism.

Militarisation and Anti-Communism

There is a direct interconnection between militarisation of South Africa and anti-communism. The anti-Soviet propaganda of a “Soviet threat” in Southern Africa serves as a justification for racist South Africa’s pledge to defend “the free world from the communist threat”.

Why all this military build-up? Is there any need for such a strong defence when South Africa is not threatened by any country on her borders? Why all these “blitzkrieg” tactics against the front line states? Why is the ANC associated with a “potential threat” which is described as the “international communist conspiracy” against South Africa? Why this anti-communism?

At a time when a state of undeclared war exists in Southern Africa and acts of brigandage of apartheid regime are escalating, even a higher price is being paid in terms of the lives and suffering of the people of Southern Africa, the United States regime proclaims itself as an ally of Pretoria. The Reagan regime stands out in contemporary world politics as the arch enemy of progress, the bulwark of international reaction which screams out loudly against sanctions in so far as they are intended to isolate the South African apartheid regime, but seeks to bully its allies into joining it to impose sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union. The



US condemns the Soviet Union for supplying the peoples of Southern Africa with weapons to fight for their liberation but its supply of weapons and military personnel to the murderous junta in El Salvador is everybody’s knowledge. The US continues to beat noisy drums in pretended defence of “trade unionism” in Poland while it does not so much as utter a squeak when trade unionists in South Africa are imprisoned, tortured and murdered.

We should not take this development lightly. The United States and the other imperialist allies of South Africa are getting increasingly worried by the growth of our struggle and by the glaring inability of the regime to check this development. They are now manufacturing pretexts for direct intervention on the side of the apartheid regime. This has become the standard practice of the Reagan regime. It is being implemented against the people of El Salvador with the aim of saving the reactionary junta from imminent collapse. We also see the implementation of this aggressive policy against Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada and other progressive states in the Caribbean; against the people of Palestine and their vanguard organisation — the PLO — and against the rest of the Arab national liberation movements through the use of rapid deployment forces and other arms of imperialist subversion.

Now we are told that “part of the problem” is that the ANC and SWAPO get their arms and training in communist countries. We regard this as “part of the solution” to the problem.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Basis for Revolutionary unity

Dear Comrade Editor,

Allow me, through your publication to voice my opinions about a letter published in the January issue of SECHABA and the views it propagates about some of the most important questions related to the South African Revolution, both in theory and in practice. No serious revolutionary can be indifferent to a discussion as important as the one raised by the author of the above-mentioned letter. This becomes imperative especially when his views on questions like the essence of revolutionary unity and the type of change which our people are fighting to realise appear to be confused and his standpoint, distorted.

The question of Revolutionary Unity of all patriots and democrats in our country has always occupied a central place in the agenda of the South African revolution. The 70 years of the existence of the African National Congress attest to this. From its inception up to today, the African National Congress has been championing the cause of unity. Nowadays, when the enemy has embarked on a very dangerous and vicious campaign aimed at keeping us divided and thus, it is hoped, rule over us with renewed impunity, the only effective counter-strategy to frustrate these enemy stratagems is through Unity in Action and at the same time mobilising all democratic, anti-racist, anti-imperialist front for a People's South Africa as envisaged by our revolutionary document - the Freedom Charter.

Now an inevitable question arises — How are we to achieve this unity? What is the basis for Revolutionary Unity, are there principles that are to guide us or should we indulge in "unconditional unity" (whatever that means)? Finally, should colour serve as a criterion i.e., must we confine unity only among Blacks or must

it transcend racial barriers? These questions are inevitable, and are just as vital as the question of Revolutionary Unity itself, because failure to take them into consideration when discussing the question of unity will lead us into untold disasters. In fact, unity achieved outside these questions will, in a long run, deprive us of our hard won independence.

Revolutionary unity cannot come of its own. It cannot be called to order by this or that individual. It is a long and difficult process founded on the basis of a clear-cut Revolutionary programme based on our common desires and championing our people's desires and objectives. Revolutionary Unity is unity in action. It is a phenomenon which cannot be otherwise but must, of necessity be conditional, conditional on the acceptance of clear anti-racist, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist positions, and finally, conditional to the acceptance of the Freedom Charter, a document of the people of South Africa.

Because of the above-mentioned considerations, the African National Congress has repeatedly refuted, and rightly so, attempts by some circles aimed at forcing us into unity with such splinter groups like the so-called Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (P.A.C.). By the way, it is an historically recorded fact that one of the reasons that led to the breakaway from the African National Congress of the faction that later formed the P.A.C. was the fact that they rejected the Freedom Charter as a Communist inspired document. By declaring this, the pioneers of the presently ailing P.A.C. supported enemy claims that Africans cannot think for themselves, and as a result, are incapable of realising or for that matter, undertaking a revolutionary initiative.

Reading through his letter, one is left 9

with the impression that our anonymous writer is an advocate of unconditional unity. As a result, he accuses comrade G.J. of suffering from an old illness "known as sectarianism" and of upholding an inverted version of McCathyism according to which, he accuses, "only those who adhere to his opinion of the Soviet Union can be counted as part of the revolutionary struggle". Shame, what a blasphemy, what a sarcasm and above all, what a misuse of concepts. I think that the author of the letter in question is to a very great extent, out of step with present day developments. I would not be surprised to discover that he views the Soviet Union as "just another imperialist power" as reaction would like us to believe, ready to pounce on our people as soon as we rid ourselves of racist colonialism, oppression and imperialist exploitation. In case this is your fear comrade author, it is necessary that we put the record straight because all revolutionaries should see and understand that the Soviet Union and other countries of the Socialist Community are the true and natural allies of all the fighting peoples. It has no property stakes in the so-called Third World countries. Perhaps one should add that during our present epoch, this dynamic epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism, an epoch characterised by National Democratic and socialist revolutions, we cannot remain indifferent to the struggle between the two opposing forces -- the forces for democracy, peace and social progress headed by the Soviet Union on the one hand, and the forces of imperialism, war and destruction headed by the United States on the other. Consequently, one cannot be anti-Soviet and be progressive at the same time. Historical examples attest to this. Nowadays, one of the criterion of true internationalism is one's attitude to the Soviet Union. Commenting on this, in his January 8th 1982 address, our President comrade Oliver Tambo stated categorically that:

"... The mainstay of this world revolutionary process are the socialist countries, fully committed to the cause of national liberation, the democratic forces in the capitalist camp, and the national liberation movement. We too therefore, are part and parcel of this revolutionary stream that is changing

our planet for a better and happier world to live in."

Somewhere in his letter, our anonymous author writes "We agree that the Freedom Charter is not a socialist blueprint and its aim is to end national oppression." This was a response to comrade G.J.'s assertion that the Freedom Charter demands "total economic emancipation." The aim of the Freedom Charter is not only to end national oppression because, in the words of the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC, "... Our drive towards national emancipation is therefore in a very real way bound up with economic emancipation. We have suffered more than just national humiliation. (emphasis mine) Elsewhere, it reads, "It is historically understandable that the doubly-oppressed and doubly-exploited working class constitutes a distinct and reinforcing layer of our liberation and socialism does not stand in conflict with our national interests." Therefore, the purpose of our struggle in the first phase is "... the complete political and economic emancipation of all our people and the constitution of a society which accords with the basic provisions of our programme -- the Freedom Charter." (emphasis mine.)

The letter in question has many shortcomings, but those that have been highlighted are enough to gear his mind towards a fruitful thinking exercise. It is hoped that the points raised will serve as a trailblazer leading out of the darkness which he/she appears to be groping in. It is also hoped that in the spirit of the Freedom Charter, he will uphold and appreciate my right to "publish and distribute ideas that are not racist, filthy and treasonable", however unpalatable they may become. I only hope that unlike G.J.'s, mine will not be found, to borrow a term "obnoxious".

M.K. Cadre

ITALY PLEDGES GREATER SOLIDARITY

The Second Italian National Conference of Solidarity with the Peoples of Southern Africa took place in Rome, at the "Wing of Parliamentary Groups" of the Italian parliament from the 26th-28th February last.

The theme of the conference was "Against Racism and Apartheid in South Africa and for the independence of Namibia".

The appeal of this important conference, like that of the first held in Reggio Emilia in 1978, was signed by the Secretaries-General of the political parties which form the 'constitutional arc' as well as the three trade union confederations.

The main objectives of the appeal and the conference are: --

- 1) saving of the lives and liberation of all the patriots detained in racist prisons of South Africa and their leaders Nelson Mandela and Herman Toivo Ja Toivo
- 2) the collection of money, food, medicines, clothes and implements for the dispatching of the SECOND ITALIAN SHIP OF SOLIDARITY to the African refugees oppressed by the apartheid regime.
- 3) the formation of the National Association of Friendship and Cooperation Italy-Southern Africa, to be launched on May 25th in Livorno -- the port from which the 2nd Ship of Solidarity will sail from in October.

The appeal states finally that the cause of the Peoples of Southern Africa is an integral part of our cause for a better world and for peace.

Participating at the conference were delegations of both ANC and SWAPO led by their respective Presidents -- Oliver Tambo and Sam Nujoma; Alberto Joaquim Chissano and Mooki Molapo, respectively Foreign Ministers of Mozambique and Lesotho; Kumbirai Kangai -- Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Zimbabwe; Dennis Akumu -- Secretary-General of OATUU; representatives of African

diplomatic missions in Italy; representatives of the various UN agencies; the Council for Namibia; the EEC; the European Parliament as well as high-ranking representatives of Italian political parties, trade unions and government.

The conference opened under the chairmanship of the president of the Regional Administration of Lazio and marked by a message of welcome by the Mayor of Rome (Hon. Ugo Vetere). This was followed by the report of the Italian National Coordinator -- Giuseppe Soncini. Then followed the keynote address by comrade Oliver Tambo -- president of the ANC. (See below)

Among the most outstanding contributions were those of the Hon. Giulio Andreotti -- former Italian Prime Minister and presently head of the Foreign Relations Commission of the Italian parliament who also chaired the final session of the conference; Tullia Carretone -- M.P. and Director of the Italo -- African Institute; Hon. Luciana Castellina -- Member of the CC of PDUP and member of both the Italian and European parliament; Hon. Antonio Rubbi -- Secretary of the Central Committee, responsible for International Affairs of the PCI; Hon. Gallone of the DC; and a worker from Oto-Melara -- the arms industry which has been sending arms to South Africa. Representatives of Italian political parties, trade unions and other democratic forces also made important contributions. The Italian government was represented by the Hon. Roberto Costa -- Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

All these personalities unreservedly reiterated their condemnation of the continued illegal occupation of Namibia and racist South African aggression against Angola as well as the continued colonisation and repression of the oppressed black people of South Africa and Namibia.

Two important events took place in the field of Italian solidarity:

a) the signing of a preliminary protocol for a Pact of Friendship and Solidarity between the Provincial Administration of Rome and SWAPO of Namibia;

b) the conferring of 'honourary citizenship' of the City of Rome to Nelson Mandela.

The formal signature of the Pact of Solidarity between the Provincial Administration of Rome and SWAPO of Namibia is scheduled to take place on April 19th - 22nd anniversary of the foundation of SWAPO. Angola is the venue for this historic event.

The Second Italian National Conference of Solidarity with the Peoples of Southern Africa was a reconfirmation of the commitment of the Italian people to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy and peace.

This was a clear indication that our just struggle for freedom, social progress and peace is appreciated and supported by all freedom-loving forces the world over. The conference should serve as a source of inspiration to our struggling people

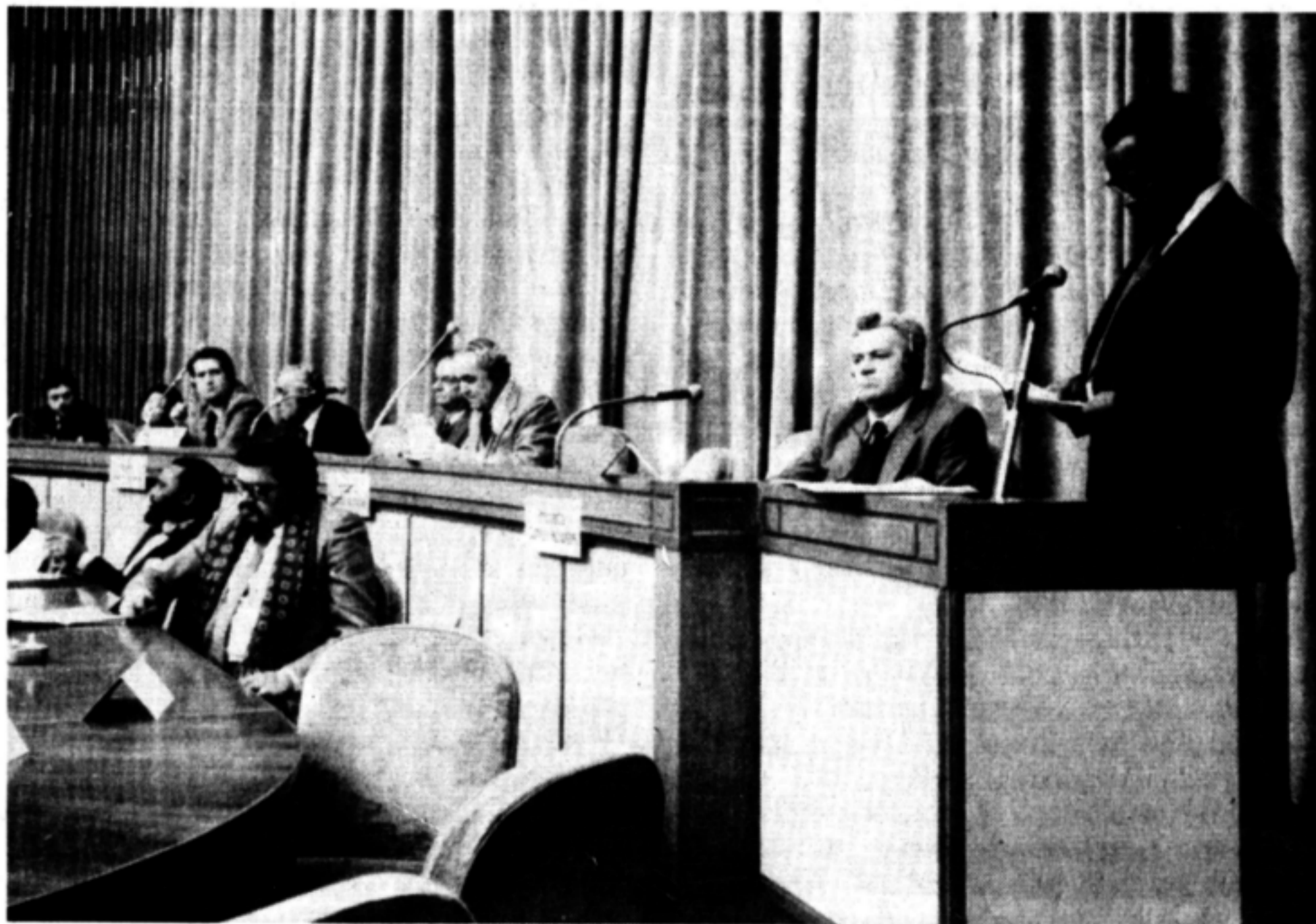
and a reminder to the people of Europe of the urgent need for their concrete and unconditional material support for our cause.

At the end of the conference, the delegations of the liberation movements and frontline states were received by the Secretaries-General of the Italian Communist Party and Italian Social Democratic Party

Enrico Berlinguer and Pietro Longo respectively as well as representatives of the Italian Socialist Party and Christian Democratic Party.

On Saturday, 20th February, at 12.30 President Oliver Tambo of ANC and President Sam Nujoma of SWAPO were received, in a private audience, by His Holiness Pope John Paul 11 at the Vatican.

At the end of their stay in Italy the delegations were received by the president of the Italian Republic - H.E. Sandro Pertini, who reiterated in no uncertain terms, his and Italy's abhorrence and condemnation of apartheid and oppression and called for the immediate solution of the Namibian problem and the right of the South African people to self-determination.



President O.R. Tambo gives the key-note address at the Opening Session

Statement by Comrade O.R. Tambo, President of the ANC at the 2nd National Conference of Solidarity with the Peoples of Southern Africa — Rome February 26-28, 1982.

Italy's solidarity movement with the peoples of Southern Africa has a profound significance for us.

The 1970 Rome conference in solidarity with FRELIMO, MPLA, and PAIGC was followed by the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in 1974.

The Reggio Emilia Conference of Solidarity in November 1978 preceded by only one year the collapse of the Ian Smith settler regime in Rhodesia after the Lancaster House Agreement.

This Second National Conference of Solidarity with the peoples of Southern Africa in the struggle against racism, apartheid and colonialism will certainly be viewed with great apprehension and disquiet by the regime of South Africa and its imperialist allies and agents. For, if this solidarity conference carries the hidden quality of its predecessors, then we do not have long to wait before yet another strategic victory is announced — the independence of Namibia under a SWAPO government.

Liberation of Zimbabwe

Certainly, the march of events in Southern Africa since the Reggio Emilia conference points unmistakably to the demise of the old colonial order in Southern Africa. The independence of Zimbabwe gave a powerful impetus to the revolutionary process which is now rocking the foundations of apartheid-colonial domination in Namibia and South Africa. If the light at the end of the tunnel is not visible to all, the problem is one of political short-sightedness.

It is in this mood of confident expectation and absolute conviction in the certainty of victory for the fighting people of Southern Africa that we greet the participants at this conference, representing "the workers and peasants, the youth, the women, the regional and local governments, organisations, associations and all democratic institutions of the country" — the entire Italian people and their Government.

We salute, in particular, the political Parties and the Trade Union federations who convened this conference with a stirring appeal to the people of Italy, and we congratulate the National Committee of Solidarity on its successful organisation of the conference.

We wish to address special greetings to the Municipality and people of Reggio Emilia to whom the ANC is bound by a Pact of Solidarity.

We greet all the participants at this conference in the name of the ANC and its leaders, militants and allies, representing the democratic majority of South Africans.

We take this opportunity to convey to the Government and people of Italy our deep appreciation of the generous and valuable material assistance brought by AMANDA, the famous "Italian Ship of Solidarity." Let there be another AMANDA.

The theme of this conference underscores the nature of the conflict in South Africa and Namibia. The struggle does not involve only three parties — the S.A. regime on the one hand and on the other, the people of Namibia and the majority in South Africa. The struggle is that of the peoples of Southern Africa against colonialism, racism, apartheid and fascism.

Our Common Determination

At no time has it been realistically possible to perceive the aspirations of the people of South Africa and Namibia as being separate or different from those of Africa and the rest of humanity. Our daily experience in the sub-continent demonstrates a unity of purpose expressed in our common determination to rid the continent of the criminal apartheid colonial system. The price for the continued existence of the Pretoria regime is being paid in the blood of the peoples of Southern Africa — South Africans, Namibians, Angolans, Zambians, Mozambicans, Zimbabweans; in the blood of the people of Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland — the blood of the peoples of Africa.

The struggles of Southern Africa are international concerns in a dual sense. Firstly, the system of apartheid is not a domestic creation, nor does it defend South African domestic interests alone. This economy provides massively for

investors and for arms manufacturers and dealers from west European countries, the United States and Japan.

In its struggle for survival, the apartheid system relies on the support of its powerful international allies. The overthrow of one of the most brutal systems of oppression in the world is our responsibility, but it is also your responsibility. And our meeting here today is an expression of our common determination to achieve that objective.

Secondly, the struggle against apartheid is an international responsibility because apartheid as a system has gone far beyond its borders in escalating aggression against the states of Southern Africa. The racist army today occupies Namibia. Its tanks, heavy artillery, and fighter-planes — manufactured by European patent, supplied by European countries — have invaded the People's Republic of Angola, and continue to occupy parts of that country. Where is the international outcry? Why is South Africa allowed to commit this flagrant breach of national sovereignty and international law with impunity? Why has the United States administration consistently vetoed efforts to impose sanctions against this criminal regime?

Scandal of our Time

It is one of the scandals of our time that the states of the West and the Western Contact Group have raised the Pretoria regime, the aggressor, to the status of fellow mediator in the resolution of the Namibian issue, even while the racists are in illegal occupation of that country and are violating the sovereignty of the People's Republic of Angola.

Angola is the victim of South Africa's most blatant aggression, but the racist army and its generals have active contingency plans for the destabilization of all the countries of Southern Africa. We are witnessing the unfolding of grave dangers: As the liberation struggle reaches new heights, the racist regime has extended to the whole region the type of aggression it first launched against Angola in 1975.

This is blatant aggression, open war. Pretoria's strategy also leans heavily on economic destabilisation. In our region of the continent colonialism left a legacy of countries locked into dependence on the

industrialised economy and infrastructure of South Africa. The nine states of the region are today struggling to break this economic dependence, and the regime is retaliating with economic obstruction and sabotage. No state in our region is safe from aggression. For as long as apartheid survives, no independent African state is free. Africa herself remains captive. In its turn, the overthrow of apartheid will usher in an era of unprecedented reconstruction of these African countries, under conditions of peace and security.

Racist aggression is not a sign of strength. Pretoria has a formidable, well-equipped and highly mechanised military force. But in attacking neighbouring states it is revealing its greatest weaknesses — its incapacity to destroy the armed liberation fighters who have become well entrenched amongst the people and to break the close bonds between the liberation movements and our African allies. The heroic victories scored by the growing mass support for the People's Liberation Army of Namibia inside that country and the resolute determination of the Angolan people to support the Namibian struggle provide a dramatic example of the fascist regime's weakness and failure.

Our Increasing Strength

The chief features of the South African situation today are on the one hand the profound crisis being experienced by the oppressor regime and on the other hand, the increasing strength, resilience and growing legitimacy of the armed liberation struggle in the eyes of our people.

The African National Congress diagnoses the South African system as in crisis. It is an organic crisis, one that cuts to the nature of the system. It is a crisis that could last some time, but the duration does not lessen its severity. For this is a crisis of authority, a crisis of power, which the apartheid system cannot resolve. It is the fact of this crisis, inter alia, which reinforces our firm belief in the certainty of victory.

Within its own ranks the regime has abandoned the pretence of cabinet government. Since 1972 we have seen the increasing militarisation of practically all aspects of government and the so-called State Security Council, comprising top



Giuseppe Soncini presents the Report of the National Committee



ANC delegation to the Conference, front row

military, police and intelligence personnel has effectively displaced the cabinet as the primary decision-making body. All the decisive sectors of the economy contain a strong military presence.

The economy faces a crisis of unprecedented proportions, which while not peculiar to South Africa, does have a number of distinct features. It is characterised by galloping inflation, sharp economic decline, severe dislocation and an ever escalating rate of unemployment. And, in our country, all the unemployed

are without exception black! Those sections of the population who previously battered on racial privilege now stand to lose and the masses of the oppressed who have been forced to bear the cost of the crisis have seen their burdens increased tenfold.

The inability of the racist state to cope with the upsurge of mass resistance is evident in the sustained eruption of every conceivable form of struggle during this last decade. Under the inspiration and leadership of the ANC our country has experienced a series of strikes, boycotts,

student and youth rebellions in the schools and colleges, demonstrations in the cities and in the rural areas; peasant struggles, worker resistance, combined political strikes by workers and by students; open defiance in the streets, and armed combat actions led by the guerrilla units of the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Organised resistance is being intensified at all levels, and its forms have never been so diverse.

Our People are not intimidated

During the last ten years our country has witnessed a phenomenal growth of trade unions, who have employed the strike weapon with a sophistication and resilience that has rendered the repressive apparatus of the regime practically dysfunctional. In the industrial areas the black working class has forged links of common action with popular organisations: shop floor struggles are linked with consumer boycotts, with community reinforcement of these protests. The unity of the black working class is being consolidated. This phenomenal growth of trade union organisation and worker militancy takes place under conditions of virtual state proscription of the right to organise free independent unions. Fascism drove underground, even smashed the political movements of Europe, and especially of Italy, for several decades; our working class and our people organise and resist under conditions of ceaseless fascist proscription and persecution.

Our people are not intimidated. The African National Congress was declared an illegal organisation in 1960. In spite of this the ANC has in the recent past emerged as the undisputed voice of the democratic majority of our people. It is once again in the streets, in the meeting halls. Our flag, our colours, our freedom songs, our demands, our programme, are voiced everywhere; not in whispers or in secret, but in public proclamations of the masses, in their varied forms of resistance; by political leaders — not necessarily those of the ANC itself but those who head political protest in its own right, and who support the ANC programme for the liberation struggle and a new South Africa.

For, the African National Congress maintains its leadership of the struggle

not merely by its presence, by the actions of its combat groups and its political underground, but also by its policy and programmatic inspiration to other, related, but independent, resistance.

We wish here to salute those heroic fighters: workers and students; community leaders and representatives; religious leaders and the church resistance movement. We salute the generation of youth who faced armoured cars and machine guns with stones, and with their bare hands. We salute our industrial workers, who extend the skills they have learned on the job to improvising evermore creative forms of industrial resistance. Their strike movement is not limited to wage demands; it is a struggle for the recognition of free, independent trade unions, for the very right to strike, but also for a new political order.

Armed struggle — Part of mass struggle

The regime faces a future in which all these forms of mass resistance, complemented by the planned actions of ANC combatants, will spread. There is one elementary truth about the strength of our movement: it is a popular movement, a struggle waged by the people on many fronts. The ANC does not now, nor will it ever, conceive of the armed liberation struggle as separate and apart from the mass struggles of the people. Our armed struggle derives its legitimacy from the popular struggles waged by the people and is a continuation of these very struggles employing military means. The close integration of our armed combatants with the masses has enabled our people's army to strike at the enemy with daring and precision. We are confident that as the armed struggle is intensified it will draw into its wake the active participation of ever growing numbers of our people.

Our masses have an inexhaustible potential for struggle, but they struggle against fearful odds. Our political prisoners, led by Mandela, are sealed off from the outside world, some for the rest of their natural lives; there is no remission for political prisoners. Our political prisoners are in the death cell, awaiting execution, for acts of resistance against a system that permits no lawful opposition. There have been political prisoners as young as 14 and 11 years old. Our political prisoners are subjected to

gruesome torture. Our political prisoners have been found dead in their cells. This applies to prisoners and detainees in South Africa and Namibia.

That is why the decision of the Municipality of Rome to proclaim Nelson Mandela a Citizen of this great City of Rome is not only timely but is also a great act of solidarity with the people of Africa, an historic expression of support for all the political prisoners and detainees held by the South African regime, both South African and Namibian, at a time when these detainees are being tortured and even killed in the process, with the knowledge and authority of the South African regime.

The decision of the Municipality of Rome will be conveyed to Nelson Mandela in Robben Island.

The latest of these crimes is the dastardly case of Dr. Neil Aggett, a young white medical doctor, who devoted his life to serving the people both as a medical practitioner and as an organiser for the Food and Canning Workers Union. Dr Aggett was murdered by the racist Security Police because he sought justice for his countrymen. His wife, who like himself was detained, and several other trade unionists, black and white, have been moved from their cells to prison psychiatric wards where they are now being held. The criminal action of the racists in murdering this youthful white patriot is indicative of a significant current that is making itself felt in South Africa today, the movement of numerous whites, especially the young, away from support of apartheid and towards the programme and policies of the ANC.

Apartheid reforms are hollow

The racist regime has tried a number of devices to unravel the crisis in which it is presently embroiled. Its tactics, presented to the world as efforts at reforms, have oscillated between brutal repression and cosmetic superficial changes that have no effect on the substances of apartheid and racist domination. To the insurgent working class it has offered a system of legalised but state controlled union registration. For the most part black labour has rejected these so-called concessions; our working class does not want corporate

and company unions but free independent worker-controlled unions.

To the Indians and Coloured people it has offered a few poisoned crumbs in the shape of "power sharing" in an attempt to enroll new forces into the ranks of its supporters from amongst the oppressed.

It has tried to win over strata of the black middle class. But this action of co-optation has failed; there is no strata of the African population, with the exception of the small clique of Bantustan rulers, which has spoken up for the apartheid system.

It has tried to train black labour in industrial skills and to promote an upper layer of black workers in the factories. But African workers want not only industrial skills, and a living wage, but also political rights in the country of their birth.

The regime's cooptation exercise has not worked. The order of the day is not cooptation by the regime but resistance! It is clearly understood by the mass of our people that the racist regime cannot and will not reform itself. We must not accept the rival claims of the conservative and so-called reformist wing of the dominant racist party on their face value. The split in the ranks of this criminal cabal is over the question of how best to achieve objectives they hold in common and is occasioned by the bitter struggles of the oppressed.

The racist regime cannot be judged on the basis of the rhetoric of self-seeking politicians and their foreign friends. It must be judged by the existence of nine million Africans who have been forcefully deported from their homes in the urban and industrial centres to resettlement camps in the Bantustans; by the millions who are annually criminalised because of some minor infraction; by the thousands of innocent babies who die each year before they reached the age of four!

Apartheid is not merely segregated sport, separate facilities for education, culture and recreation. It is a brutal system of national oppression, embedded in economic exploitation and institutionally entrenched by a monopoly over the political process by a small white minority. Apartheid is neither dead nor dying. It will and must be put to death by the power of the oppressed people.

Reagan Policy legitimises Apartheid

There is a new tide running in international politics since the advent of the Reagan administration in the United States. This policy disguised behind a catchy phrase — “constructive engagement” — is explicitly aimed at ending the South African regimes international isolation and restoring it to a position of respectability as a legitimate power in Southern Africa. To this end the United States government has encouraged a more active investment policy in South Africa, is orchestrating a conspiracy to patch together a so-called South Atlantic Treaty Organisation between the Pretoria regime and Latin American dictatorships, and is trying to foist cold war issues on the national liberation struggle in Southern Africa.

We look to the democratic forces of Europe to prevent this attempt at legitimising racism. More than this: we have to prise away the international support on which the apartheid state relies. Sanctions are not yet in full force. Multinationals are still shoring up the apartheid's economy. United Nations resolutions are stronger in words than in effect. There are serious and disquieting moves to emasculate the force of UN resolution 435 on Namibia: to permit South Africa to improvise new ways in which to entrench her rule in that territory, even after independence. Namibia is a direct EEC responsibility, for where does the Contact Group derive its influence?

The International Community must Act

1982 has been designated by the ANC as the Year of Unity in Action, involving not only the people of South Africa but also all opponents of apartheid, colonialism and racism in the international community. 1982 has also been proclaimed the International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions Against South Africa. This is a task which must be accomplished this year, by the people of this country, the peoples of Europe and the rest of the world. It is for this reason that we welcome the participation at this conference of representatives from the United Nations and the European Economic Community.

The ANC once again affirms its support for the people of Namibia in their legitimate

struggle for national independence under the leadership of SWAPO. We recognise the heroic actions of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia in pursuance of the democratic rights of the people of Namibia.

The apartheid regime must be encircled by your struggles, and by your actions; by our struggles, our actions. These struggles we pledge to you. We are resolved to intensify the struggle for the liberation of our country. Together with you we shall be unconquerable and irresistible.

We take this opportunity to register our support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people, the people of East Timor, Western Sahara, the democratic forces in El Salvador and all the opponents of fascist dictatorships.

Once again we call upon the international community to take positive action to isolate the racist apartheid regime. We call for the complete diplomatic isolation of South Africa and the countering of any actions which attempt to block this effort.

More than declarations and diplomacy: we call for actions and support in as many diverse forms as your political experience and strength can devise.

We ask for political and economic support for the countries of Southern Africa and massive material assistance for SWAPO and the ANC.

We call upon the world community to demand the release of all political prisoners and detainees held by the South African racist regime.

A LUTA CONTINUA!



WALTER SISULU:



birthday of an outstanding revolutionary leader

On May 18, Walter Sisulu celebrated his 70th birthday in prison. As we go to press news was received that he together with Nelson Mandela, Raymond Mhlaba and Andrew Mlangeni have been removed from Robben Island to Pollsmoor Prison. SECHABA celebrates his 70th birthday by reviewing the political activity and contribution of Walter Sisulu to our liberation struggle.

Walter Sisulu, was at the centre of the ANC's struggles from the 1940's until his arrest at Rivonia in 1963. He acted as guide and mentor to Nelson Mandela when he first came to Johannesburg and worked closely with Mandela, Tambo and others in the ANC Youth League whose ideas were a spur to the development of the ANC into the militant revolutionary force it is today.

Walter Sisulu was born at Engcobo in the Transkei on May 19, 1912. He was brought up by his mother and an uncle. Coming from a poor family, he was unable to go far with his formal education and left school at the age of 15 in order to look after the family's affairs when his uncle died.

Sisulu began work on the Johannesburg gold mines working at the rock face thousands of feet underground. When he had completed his contract he did not return, but found work in East London as a "kitchen boy" working for a white family. Here was his first insight into the life of the white minority. This job did not last long either, and soon he was back in Johannesburg, this time working in a bakery for 18 shillings a week.

In his spare time Sisulu sometimes attended meetings of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) and was enthralled with the fiery speeches of its leader Clements Kadalie, but did not join the organisation. He learnt his first political lessons in the arena of practical struggle when he led the workers in the bakery out on strike for higher wages. Sisulu was sacked as an 'agitator'.

His streak of personal rebellion and resistance to white domination grew from strength to strength. One evening while travelling home on the train, he saw a white ticket-collector confiscating an African

child's season ticket. He asked the official why he had done this, but instead of an answer, he became the victim of assault. Sisulu fought back and was arrested and imprisoned. This was his first of many experiences of prison.

As he went from job to job, Sisulu studied for his Junior Certificate and also took part in music and debating clubs. He continued his search for a political outlet and joined the ANC in 1940 after hearing a speech by Dr. A.B. Xuma, who became ANC President in December of that year. However, Sisulu was to become increasingly critical of Dr. Xuma's moderation.

At first active in the ANC Youth League, working with Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Anton Lembede and others, Sisulu was elected to the Youth League at its opening meeting held at the Bantu Men's Social Centre.

It was in Sisulu's office that the Youth Leaguers met to discuss their strategy and tactics. One of those who took part in the discussion, Albertina, a nurse, married Sisulu in 1944. At the wedding, Mandela was best man.

It was at the historic 1949 Conference of the ANC, where a new militant leadership was elected, that Sisulu became the movement's first full-time Secretary-General. His wife, Albertina, wholeheartedly endorsed his decision and from this time the family would depend on her earnings as a nurse.

As the ANC grew in the next decade, so did Walter Sisulu. He began to see the relationship between national and class struggles in South Africa, to understand that the apartheid state was based on the exploitation of the mass of the people both as Blacks and as workers or peasants. He worked closely with the organisations of the Indian and Coloured people, as well as progressive whites, in the united and common struggle against apartheid oppression and for national liberation. Recognising the need for a new theoretical approach, he began to read and study, to plan new forms of struggle.

The increasing mobilisation of the mass of the working people was to lead to a wave of repression by the Nationalist government. In 1950 the Suppression of Communism Bill was published, proposing to give the



Mandela and Sisulu on Robben Island

government the power to ban, not only the Communist Party, but any organisation or individual opposing their policies.

At the national day of protest against the act, on June 26 (South Africa's first Freedom Day), Walter Sisulu declared:

"The African people should not be bluffed by the title of the Bill. It will leave no chance for them to protest and fight for the interests of all oppressed people ... Although the Unlawful Organisations Bill purports to be directed against Communism in general and the Communist Party of South Africa in particular, the ANC Executive is satisfied that it is primarily directed against Africans and other oppressed people, and designed to frustrate all their attempts to work for the fulfilment of their legitimate demands and aspirations".

Based on the Programme of Action of the 1949 Conference, the ANC became more and more involved in leading the militant mass struggles of the time. Along with Dr. Moroka, J.B. Marks, Dr. Dadoo and Yusuf Cachalia, Walter Sisulu was appointed to the Joint Planning Council for the "Campaign of Defiance of Unjust

Laws". The campaign was launched on June 26, 1952, and in all about 8,000 people went to jail for defying apartheid laws. Sisulu himself was a member of a group of 52 Africans and Indians who entered Boksburg location with out permits. Arrested, he told the court:

"As an African and national secretary of the Congress I cannot stand aside on an issue which is a matter of life and death to my people. My duty is perfectly clear — it is to take the lead and to share with the humblest of my countrymen the crushing burden imposed on us because of the colour of our skins.

"In conclusion, I wish to make this solemn vow and in full appreciation of the consequences it entails. As long as I enjoy the confidence of my people, and as long as there is a spark of life and energy in me, I shall fight with courage and determination for the abolition of discriminatory laws and for the freedom of all South Africans irrespective of colour or creed".

Later that year Sisulu and 19 others were rearrested and charged under the Suppression of Communism Act for their

part in organising the Defiance Campaign. They were sentenced to 9 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years. Sisulu was subsequently banned from meetings and confined to the magisterial district of Johannesburg.

The moment his ban expired, Sisulu was back at work, addressing meetings, travelling, organizing, inspiring. But immediately after the observance of June 26, 1954, the authorities once again used the Suppression of Communism Act to attempt to decapitate the ANC. President Lutuli was confined to the Tugela district of Natal and Sisulu was banned from gatherings for two years and ordered to resign as Secretary-General of the ANC within 30 days.

Sisulu was one of the 156 arrested on December 6, 1956, in the treason trial and was one of the key accused who endured the full agony of that ordeal up to the moment of acquittal on March 29, 1961.

After constant harrassment and arrests, Sisulu was again picked up by police in August 1962 (a year after the launching of the armed struggle) and eventually charged with incitement arising from the country-wide strike which had been organised from May 29 to 31, 1961, in protest against the inauguration of the racist "Republic". Nelson Mandela, who had gone underground after the strike to organise the resistance, had been arrested in Natal on August 5 and was charged with a similar offence.

The opening of the trials of Mandela and Sisulu in October 1962 was marked by bomb attacks in Natal and the Western Cape and demonstrations by thousands of supporters in the main centres of the country.

Although Mandela and Sisulu faced charges arising from the same strike, their trials were separate, Mandela appearing in Pretoria and Sisulu in Johannesburg. Mandela faced two charges — incitement to strike and leaving the country without permission — and was eventually sentenced to five years imprisonment. Sisulu's second charge related to documents found in his home by the police which were held to show that he was promoting the aims of the ANC.

Sisulu was released on bail of R6,000. In October, he was placed under house

arrest and ten days later, following the death of his mother, Sisulu was arrested at his home for attending a "gathering" created by the mourners who had come to pay their last respects. All this took place during the proceedings of the incitement trial. At the conclusion of the case, Sisulu realised that time had run out for him and on April 20, 1963, he went underground to join the High Command of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

On July 11, Sisulu and other leaders of Umkhonto we Sizwe were arrested at their Rivonia headquarters. For months they were held in solitary confinement, ceaselessly and often brutally "interrogated" by the security police. Some were viciously assaulted. Nelson Mandela was brought from Robben Island to join them in the dock when their trial finally got underway on December 3.

At the Rivonia Trial, Sisulu was in the box for five days. From the outset he made it clear he would say nothing and answer no questions which might lead to the identification and prosecution of others, and he calmly and firmly refused to be provoked by the prosecution. Sisulu demonstrated that a man who is clear in his ideology and convinced of the logic and justness of his cause, is more than a match for his enemies.

During his detention, Sisulu revealed, he was told he faced the death penalty, but could avoid being hanged if he gave information to the police. He refused to cooperate. The authorities could do what they like.

Finally life sentences were passed on Walter Sisulu and his fellow accused. At the time of writing, Sisulu has been behind bars for almost 19 years, Mandela for nearly 20. For them and others, life imprisonment means that the regime intends to keep them in prison for the rest of their natural lives.

The Rivonia men on Robben Island, who were the leaders outside prison, are also the leaders inside prison, of the daily struggle the prisoners have had to wage against an administration determined to break their spirits.

Sisulu, at 70 years of age, is the man he always was — older and wiser, still as positive in his thinking and acting, optimistic and forward-looking, as convinced as ever that

he will see freedom in his lifetime. His influence on his comrades is immense. His peers always seek his agreement, the youth look upon him as a father figure. He is still the rock of the ANC. In all his struggles Walter Sisulu has had the firm backing of his wife Albertina, who has been under a longer period of continuous banning than any other person in South Africa and who to this day continues to play a major role in the freedom struggle. Since the expiry of her banning order at the end of July 1981, she has been a speaker at public meetings throughout the country, agitating amongst other issues,

for the release of all political prisoners, protesting against detention without trial and the torture and murder of political detainees.

In observing the 70th birthday of this outstanding revolutionary leader, the best tribute that our people and democratic humanity can pay him is to intensify support for the liberation struggle on every front. Most important his birthday should be an occasion when each of us undertake to do all in our power to work for the release of all South African political prisoners and detainees.

"SOUTHERN AFRICA – THE TIME TO CHOOSE"

Below MIKE TERRY, Executive Secretary of the Anti Apartheid Movement assesses the significance of a recent Conference held in London and discusses the need for a greater level of commitment in the drive for the total isolation of South Africa.

There is every prospect that March 1982 will prove to be a turning point for the entire liberation struggle in Southern Africa. As the Heads of State and Government of the Frontline States together with the Presidents of the African National Congress and SWAPO of Namibia concluded their historic Summit meeting from 6-7th March with the adoption of the Maputo Declaration final preparations were being made for the Anti-Apartheid Movement's "Southern Africa: The Time to Choose" Conference in London.

The Conference opened on the evening of 11th March at the headquarters of the British Trades Union Congress, Congress House. The Opening Session, itself, was a vivid expression of the growing and powerful international solidarity with the national liberation struggle in South Africa and Namibia. The key-note address from His Excellency Dr Alex Ekwueme, the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of

Nigeria set the tone of the Conference. The international community was represented at its highest level by H.E. Alhaji Yusuff Maitama-Sule, the Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid and H.E. Mr Shridath Ramphal the Secretary General of the Commonwealth. British contributors at this opening session were Michael Foot, leader of the Labour Party, David Steel, leader of the Liberal Party and Tom Jackson, Chairman of the International Committee of the Trades Union Congress.

South Africa's aggressive character was brought home dramatically by Mr Jacques Hodoul the Foreign Minister of Seychelles whose state had been the recent victim of a South African planned attempted mercenary coup. From the heart of the struggle were David Meroro, Chairman of SWAPO and Alfred Nzo, Secretary General of the ANC.

Participants were welcomed to the Conference by Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, the President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement who was an inspiring force throughout the Conference.

The Conference was organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement in cooperation with the UN Special Committee against

Apartheid from 11-13 March. It was intended to consider, above all, as the Declaration of the Conference explained:

“the responsibility of Britain in relation to the grave situation in southern Africa resulting from escalating repression and aggression launched by the apartheid regime, of South Africa, the ominous implications of its nuclear plans, as well as the advance of the struggle of the oppressed people, including armed struggle for liberation.”

As the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo declared in a message to the Conference:

“Because of the unavoidable intensifying liberation struggle in Namibia and South Africa, the apartheid regime is waging an undeclared and escalating war throughout southern Africa. Britain stands at the centre of the history of this situation.”

The Conference proved to be the most representative gathering ever held in Britain to consider the situation in Southern Africa. All the British parliamentary parties were represented including members of both the Houses of Commons and Lords. Altogether 122 different British organisations were represented including the TUC as well as national and local trade unions; the British Council of Churches, representatives of 6 Anglican Bishops, and many different denominations and other christian organisations; a very wide spectrum of youth and student organisations as well as all the major bodies concerned with and campaigning on Southern Africa.

The international dimension of the Conference was equally significant with representatives of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid, the UN Council for Namibia, the ILO, UNESCO as well as the Commonwealth Secretariat. Twenty-eight member states were represented primarily from Africa and Non-aligned states. In recognition of the importance of the Conference and as further proof of Nigeria's commitment to the liberation of Africa, the Vice-President brought with him H.E. Chief Patrick O. Bolokor, Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs, Senator S.A. Akintoye of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Hon Alhaji

Sani Abubaker, Chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Relations Committee.

All the major anti-apartheid and solidarity movements from western Europe were represented as were movements from Africa, the Caribbean, New Zealand and the socialist countries. Twelve international non-governmental organisations were represented.

Significance of the Conference

However the significance of the Conference was not simply its representative character but of equal importance was its content. There were four plenary sessions, but the main work of the Conference was in the Three Commissions which considered the themes:

- † South Africa's Military and Nuclear Build-up
- † South Africa's War against Independent Africa
- † Southern Africa: British, European and Western policy

The highlight of the opening session was the pledge of the leader of the Labour Party, Michael Foot, to a dramatically new policy towards Southern Africa:

“I pledge the support of the Labour Party as a whole in the country. There are two pillars of our approach; to isolate apartheid and to strengthen the forces of those fighting against it by every measure in our power.

Our first priority is to work for mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. This approach may take time and I know there have been arguments about it in the past but the British Labour Party is committed to that cause and when we assume power once again to govern this country we shall seek to take all the steps we can to carry that view into action.”

Warning to the West

From the 12th March the Conference was based at the Wembley Conference Centre in north London. The Main Plenary Session on the morning of 12 March was addressed by the Nigerian Vice-President,



Speakers at the AAM National Demonstration

Mozambique's Ambassador to the United Nations, on behalf of the Front Line States, Alfred Nzo, David Meroro and Archbishop Huddleston.

Addressing this Session H.E. Dr Alex Ekwueme gave a powerful warning to Britain and other western states:

"We in Africa feel that the time has come when we shall no longer tolerate the disregard which some Western nations display at issues that affect us seriously, and when we can no longer continue to ignore the action of these Western nations in the Southern African region in our respective bilateral relations with them. In other words, there must be a clear linkage between what is happening in Southern Africa and our relations with these Western nations."

Assessing the critical role that Britain plays in sustaining the apartheid regime, he continued by forcefully pointing out:

"We believe that the United Kingdom, faithful to her best tradition of freedom and justice, can, if she has the political will, bring sufficient pressure to bear on the South African regime to compel her to reverse the repressive and dehumanizing system of government which she practises and which goes by the name of apartheid."

The Nigerian Vice-President's challenge was echoed by Alfred Nzo, the Secretary General of the ANC in his appeal to the British people:

"The British Anti-Apartheid Movement, which draws its strength from the democratic forces of this country, has worked tirelessly for over two decades to get the people of this country to help to undo the disaster imposed on us by the policies of the British ruling class over a period of nearly two centuries as far as South Africa is concerned. After all this effort, it is surely time that we saw a little more decisive action on the part of the British people, their political parties, the trade union movement, the youth, the women, the churches and so on — a little more decisive action against the continuing economic,

sporting and other links between this country and apartheid South Africa".

It was however in the Special Plenary Session "Africa Under Attack" on the Friday evening that the war in Southern Africa was brought home most dramatically. The main contributor at this Session was Lt. Col Ngongo of the General Staff of FAPLA, the People's Army of Angola. He gave a comprehensive account of South African aggression against Angola in particular since South Africa's occupation of southern Angola, since August 1981. His contribution was backed up with photographic and film evidence. The following day a special show was arranged at which the film Cahama was screened for the first time outside Angola which depicted the war in Angola in the most dramatic form.

Substance to the issues discussed in the Conference was provided in the Commissions where the opportunity was provided to discuss and consider matters in depth. The Conference, benefitted from a wide range of experience and expertise. In Commission I on South Africa's Military and Nuclear Build-up, the key note address was presented by Alhaji Matitama-Sule, the Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid. Other contributors were Ruth Mompoti of the ANC, Hidipo Hamutenya, Secretary of Information and Publicity of SWAPO. Frank Barnaby, former Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and Abdul Minty, Director of the World Campaign against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa.

Commission II was presented with evidence of South African aggression by representatives of Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, as well as the chairman of its first session Lord Hatch who is currently lecturing at the University of Zambia. However perhaps the most fascinating contribution was that by John Stockwell who had headed the CIA operation in Angola from 1975 - 76.

Commission III tackled the most serious issue; British, European and Western policy. A powerful critique of US policy was presented by Ramsey Clark the former US Attorney General, who as a member of the International Commission of Enquiry into the Crimes of the Racist Regimes in



Dr Alex Ekwueme, Vice President, FR Nigeria with Maitama-Sule, Chairman UN Special Committee

Southern Africa had visited the war zone in southern Angola last year. Alan Sapper the current Chairman of the British TUC argued effectively for a fundamental change in British policy whilst representatives of the western European anti-apartheid and solidarity movements gave assessments of their governments policies.

Last phase of the Conflict

The three days of intense work, discussion and debate culminated in the Final Plenary Session on the evening of 13th March during which participants sought to overcome the deep depression caused by the defeat of Spurs in the League Cup a few hours before and in particular the author who had lost a heavy bet!

The Conference Declaration drawn up by the Steering Committee was presented to the Session by H.E. Alhaji Yussuf Maitama-Sule and adopted by acclamation. Reports from the Three Commissions were presented by Abdul Samad Minty (AAM), H.E. Luis de Almeida (Angola) and Senator Akintoye (Nigeria). Zimbabwe's High Commissioner

to the UK, Dr Zwinoira, delivered a speech on behalf of Dr Witness Mangwende the Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe and there were concluding statements by H.E. Dr Alex Ekwueme, Vice President of Nigeria; H.E. A.B. Nyakyi, High Commissioner of Tanzania, on behalf of the Frontline States and Archbishop Huddleston.

The culmination of the Conference as a whole was the Anti-Apartheid Movements National Demonstration in London the following day, Sunday 14th March. A huge crowd estimated to be up to 15,000 marched through London to Trafalgar Square where an enthusiastic response was given to the platform of speakers, in particular to the representatives of the ANC, SWAPO and Angola. The spirit of the demonstration reflected a new sense of unity and determination amongst the British people to put an end once and for all to Britain's sordid record of collaboration with apartheid South Africa.

It was no coincidence that as demonstrators gathered in Hyde Park news was received that the ANC office in London had been bombed.



Al Haji Yusuff Maitama-Sule at the Opening Session

South Africa's escalating pattern of international terrorism had reached beyond the borders of Africa into the heart of London.

The message of the Conference, the Demonstration and the whole new movement of solidarity in Britain was summed up most clearly by Archbishop Trevor Huddleston who proudly wore his Isitwalandwe medal as he led the demonstration:

"First: to assert once again and unequivocally that we are in the last phase of the conflict between those who believe in human dignity and the rights of man and those who support and sustain a racist ideology which totally denies these things.

"Secondly: to warn Britain and the

West that their choice at this moment will be decisive in terms of our relationship with the great continents of Africa and Asia. A choice against an effective sanction policy is a choice for 'apartheid' and can be nothing else.

"Thirdly: to show that if the West cares about peace in our world, it must act now to root out the cancer of racism represented in its most extreme form by apartheid and that such action is within our competence ...

"If we choose rightly, and if we choose now, we can be certain that we shall be contributing to a future for our world in which justice and peace will be infinitely more secure. But we cannot avoid the choice.

"And we dare not delay to make it."

BOOK REVIEW—ROBBEN ISLAND AN "ISLAND IN CHAINS"

Island in Chains, Ten years on Robben Island by Prisoner 885/63; as told by Indres Naidoo to Albie Sachs, Penguin Books, London 1982. (Also distributed by the International Defence and Aid Fund, 104 Newgate Street, London EC1 7AP)

For those of us emersed in the struggle for the liberation of Southern Africa, the fortitude and example set by the political prisoners of the apartheid regime, serve as a constant inspiration and spur to greater efforts. At last here is a book which chronicles the day to day struggles of these imprisoned patriots, and exposes the brutal and inhuman treatment they undergo on Robben Island and other maximum security prisons in South Africa. 'Island in Chains' tells the story of Prisoner 885/63 who served 10 years on the Island for his membership of the People's Army Umkhonto we Sizwe.

The story begins in 1963, two years after the decision to wage armed struggle. The opening chapters which deal with the arrest and interrogation of Indres Naidoo and his comrades, are a sober reminder of the savagery of the racist South African state in its efforts to crush the militants of the revolutionary struggle. Faced by his interrogators, Naidoo recalls:

"My arms were stretched out at my sides and I was held down from behind, and then I saw the main lead running to a dry cell battery, a very crude-looking instrument, just a battery and wires, and as they attached the lead to the battery I felt a dreadful shock pass into my body. My whole being seemed to be in shock — I learned afterwards that it was only for a few seconds, but at the time it seemed like five or ten minutes." (p.23)

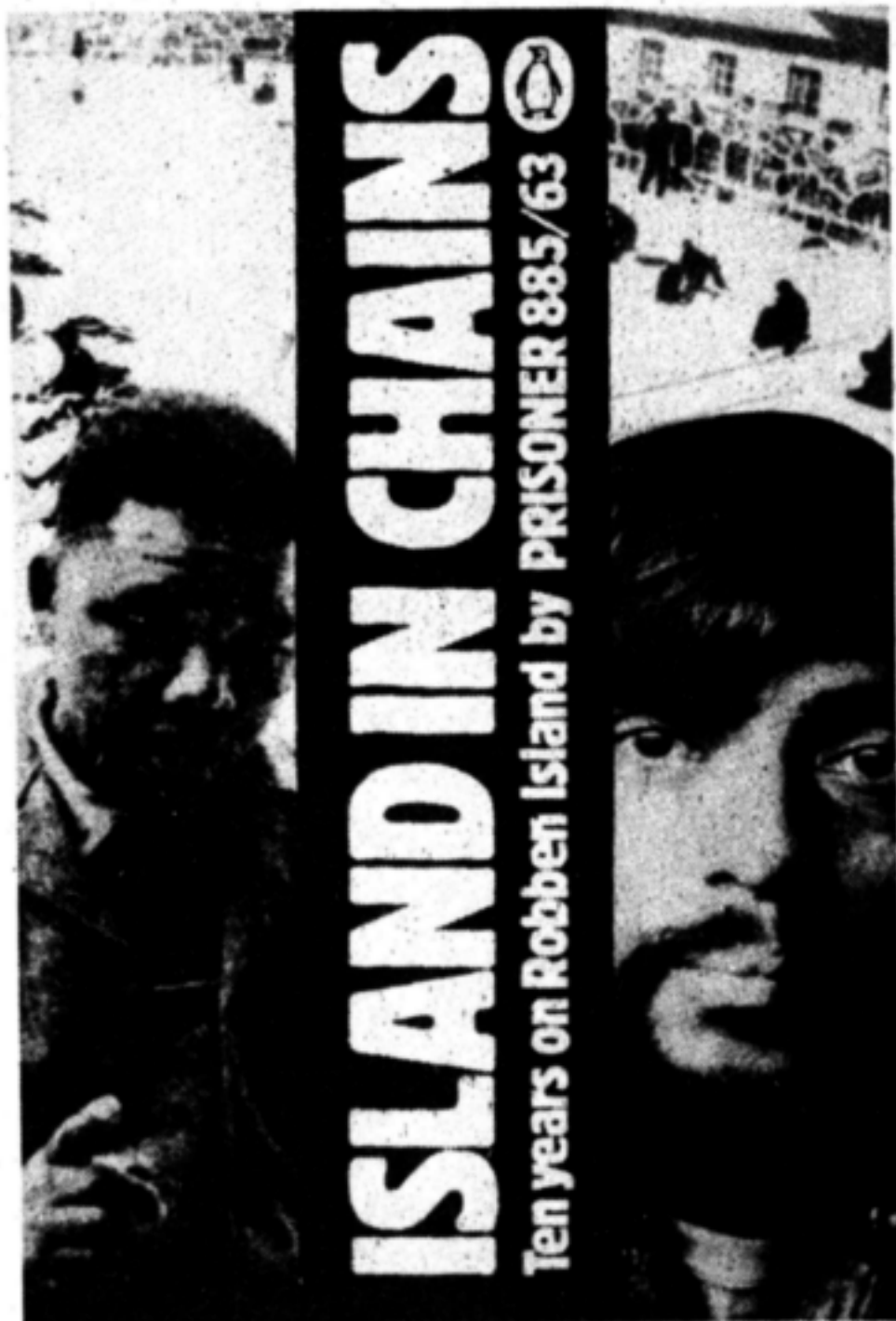
More frightening still for the reader is the knowledge that in the last two decades, the South African security police have 'perfected' their torture techniques, and



since 1963, 54 people have been murdered in detention.

Arriving on the Island, Prisoner 885/63 and his comrades were met by shouting warders. Their greeting: 'Dis die Eiland — this is the Island. Hier julle gaan vrek — here you will die'. Adapting to survival on the Island is a long process and the book describes the problems facing the prisoner in learning to deal with the violence of this desolate prison camp where life mirrors the worst excesses of apartheid brutality and oppression. Hardening to the conditions of prison 'work' is shown to be a gruelling ordeal. The reader, aided by a clear and simply worded narrative, is able to get some grasp of the kind of suffering involved in toiling in the Island quarries:

"My whole shoulder was collapsing on me, my back was weakening, I had cuts on my arms and feet from the stone debris, the blood on them was mixed with sand, sweat and powder." (p.77)



“...at times they could be seen hanging out to dry: patches of coarse bright red material lodged between the bars of every cell, rows and rows of them stretching throughout the prison. The authorities accused us of flying the Red Flag and recalled every one of the red hankies, giving us soft khaki ones instead, and at last we could blow our noses in peace.” (p.152)

Although separated from the other prisoners, the ANC leaders like Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki, as well as Ja Toivo of SWAPO, are shown to be the guiding light for all the ANC cadres, continuing to exercise their leadership role, a constant source of support to the militants of their movements. Their stature and strength is movingly portrayed in the book.

The most important message that ‘Island in Chains’ brings to the reader is the value of the international campaign to free South African and Namibian political prisoners:

“Our morale was greatly boosted to know that we were not being forgotten; that the names of our leaders, like comrades Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki and Ahmed Kathrada, as well as comrade Toivo Ja Toivo of SWAPO, were known and honoured throughout the world.” (p.189)

The book also shows how these campaigns have led to an amelioration in conditions for the political prisoners.

‘Island in Chains’ is an extremely readable book, its story told with warmth, sensitivity and compassion. It is highly recommended to SECHABA readers not only as a literary work but perhaps more importantly as a weapon to be used to lift the campaign for the release of all political prisoners to a new and more effective level.

H.R.

The violence that is daily routine is described not only by the accounts of brutality of the warders which fill the book, but also in the relations between common-law prisoners organised into gangs such as ‘Desperadoes’ and the ‘Big Five’. The narrator’s clear insight into the behaviour of the groupings that constitute prison society is one based on the political consciousness associated with membership of the ANC.

Indeed, the most inspiring feature of the book is the spirit and comradeship displayed by the ‘ANC prisoners’. Their unity and determination is depicted most clearly through the constant struggles they wage. The book deals with their hunger strikes in protest against their treatment and it also contains the less dramatic but equally important actions they undertook. Their fight to get handkerchiefs for example, is one such story recounted: “I followed the warder to the office. On the table was a coarse piece of red cloth, the result of two weeks campaigning”. (p.151)

The mentality of the prison authorities is treated with humour. Prisoner 885/63 goes on to recall:



STOP PRESS... U.N. ACTION

On 7th April 1982 the Appeal Division of the Supreme Court, Bloemfontein confirmed the death sentences imposed on three ANC freedom fighters Johnson Lubisi, Naphtali Manana and Petrus Mashigo.

Within hours the ANC mission to the United Nations moved into action to secure the mobilization of the international community to save the lives of these three young patriots.

An immediate appeal was made to the UN Special Committee against Apartheid and its Acting Chairman, Vladimir A. Kravets (Ukraine) issued a statement on behalf of the Special Committee the same day appealing "to all governments and organisations to take urgent measures to stop the imminent execution of these young South African patriots".

The following day 8th April the National Executive Committee, of the ANC, recalling the Statement issued by the President of the UN Security Council on 5th February expressing concern at the death sentences, formally requested a meeting of the UN Security Council.

The African members of the Security Council, Togo, Uganda and Zaire, responding positively to the ANC's request moved into action and on the afternoon of 8th April it was announced that emergency consultations would take place amongst members of the Security Council the following morning April 9th, Good Friday.

These consultations in turn led to agreement that the UN Security Council should formally convene on the afternoon of Good Friday.

This was the background to the unprecedented meeting of the Security Council. It was called to order by the President of the Council Kamanda wa Kamanda, Zaire's Permanent Representative of the UN at 4.31pm and Ambassador Olara Otunnu of Uganda introduced the Resolution on behalf of the three African members, Uganda, Togo and Zaire. Within minutes Resolution 503 (1982) had been unanimously adopted.

This decision of the Security Council is without precedent. Never before has the Security Council met formally and adopted a Resolution in an effort to stop the execution of ANC freedom fighters.

The resolution called upon "the South African authorities to commute the death sentences" and also urged "all states and organisations ... to take urgent measures ... to save the lives of these three young men".

Many governments as well as numerous organisations responded promptly to this appeal and that from the Secretary General of the ANC for international action.

* * * * *

On 7th April the 7 African members of the World Medical Association (WMA) announced their withdrawal from the international doctors organisation. This decision was a direct response to the admission of the racist Medical Association of South Africa and the so-called Transkei Medical Association to the WMA at its Assembly in September 1981.

The announcement was made by Dr O.O. Adekunle of the Nigerian Medical Association in New York to a meeting of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid where he was leading a delegation from four African Medical Associations, Nigeria, Ghana, Tunisia and Liberia.

In January 1982 the World Health Organisation took the unprecedented step of terminating the non-governmental consultative status of the WMA and severed all relations with it.

The WMA's action to admit South Africa and the so-called Transkei was in the face of the persistent and implacable opposition of African and non-aligned members of the WMA as well as others including the British Medical Association. However the undemocratic structures of the WMA means that it is controlled by the American Medical Association and a handful of other reactionary Medical Associations such as

Taiwan, "Free Cuba", El Salvador and Chile. The USA alone has 35 votes compared with 11 votes for the entire African and Asian regions. Even all the European Associations have only 30 votes.

The African Group have therefore decided to lead a mass withdrawal from the World Medical Association in a dramatic

condemnation of the admission of South Africa and to create the basis for a new and democratic international body.

Already a meeting has been convened for August 1982 to discuss the founding of a Confederation of African Associations and Societies with nearly 20 countries expressing interest in participating.

STOP APARTHEID EXECUTIONS



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