

## By What Methods?

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Whenever they have the chance, governments of many western countries never tire of repeating that they too are for the liberation of the peoples of Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa and Guinea-Bissau. But they are quick to add that they want liberation to be achieved through peaceful struggle. They oppose armed struggle. At the United Nations they oppose any resolutions that do not agree with their views on peaceful methods of struggle. And they never fail to exploit opportunities that may arise to sermonize Caetano, Vorster and Smith on the evils of racial discrimination, apartheid and colonialism.

But how does their record stand up to the test of peaceful struggle? Does it live up to their declared commitment to it? The answer is a clear 'no'.

Over the years many of these countries have shown that they pay only lip service to peaceful struggle. They use the language and the cloak of peaceful struggle to mask their support for, and cooperation with the racist and colonial regimes in southern Africa.

The breaking of UN sanctions by the United States which is now importing chrome from Rhodesia; the continuing sale of arms to South Africa by, in particular, Britain and France in defiance of UN resolutions; the refusal by West German and by British firms to withdraw from the construction of the Cabora Bassa dam in Mozambique in spite of world-wide demands that they withdraw; the sabotaging of the general boycott of South African goods by

nearly all western countries; the relentless efforts by many of these countries to re-admit South Africa and Rhodesia into the Olympic Games – all these are but a few among numerous examples of the tongue-in-cheek attitude that most western countries adopt to peaceful struggle. It is nonsense to say that they support this form of struggle when they sabotage action in support of that struggle.

Indeed, western economic involvement in unliberated Africa – the white south – increases every year. Companies from NATO countries are selling more goods and investing more capital in the white-ruled south. This means that they have powerful economic and political interests in the defence of enslaved Africa; they have a stake in colonialism, racism and apartheid. And in turn, Rhodesia, South Africa and Portugal are making sure that the west defends that stake – they intensify the suppression, repression and oppression of the indigenous peoples. This is why most western countries flout sanctions and embargos against the white south and sabotage world-wide efforts to isolate the racist regimes politically, culturally and socially. In a nutshell, the west does not want enslaved Africa to be liberated either by armed struggle or by peaceful struggle. It is fair to say that their record shows that most western governments would welcome it that white rule should last indefinitely.

But Africa cannot allow this. This means that independent Africa will have to carry the chief burden of enforcing sanctions and embargos while the oppressed people in Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau bear the brunt of the armed struggle. The two struggles complement each other, with the armed struggle being the main struggle. And the time has come for Africa to put teeth into the peaceful struggle. She must now take measures that will force western companies which break sanctions and embargos to choose between the huge market of independent Africa and the comparatively small market of the white south.

Several methods present themselves. African states could take over or nationalize the subsidiaries of companies which operate in their countries and which are extensions of western companies which break sanctions and embargos. Secondly, they could make it a condition that any company wishing to set up shop in an independent African country should first declare its position towards the white south. The company could be required to declare that it is not operating in the white south before it is allowed to carry on business operations. Lastly, companies already established both in an independent African country and in the racist south could be given time limits by the end of which they would be required to have decided either to confine their operations in independent Africa only or to quit.

We believe that these methods, which could be put into effect in planned stages, offer perhaps the only efficacious means of putting teeth into peaceful struggle to a continent as yet militarily weak. And without legal powers to prosecute offending companies within the western countries the only practical action available to independent Africa is economic action within the continent itself. Time and events have proved that appeals to western countries and to the United Nations to enforce sanctions and embargos are not enough. And

calls on western companies not to invest in the white south have fallen largely on deaf ears. Africa needs to supplement these calls and appeals with independent action of her own, and she has the political power to do so.

It can safely be said that those western countries and firms which are breaking sanctions and embargos are doing so in the conviction that their political and economic interests in independent African countries will not suffer. They believe that Africa cannot hit back; hence they sabotage peaceful struggle. Africa's duty here is to drive home to all firms and countries of the west that they can and will suffer for working against her political and security interests.

These methods have powerful advantages too. The first is that they would go a long way to liberate Africa economically while at the same time helping to liberate the white south politically. They would help to Africanise the economy of each African state concerned regardless of the political ideology of that state. Every subsidiary of a western company which is breaking sanctions or embargos and which an African country would take over on that account would make that country's control over its economy stronger still. And every company which would prefer to do business in an independent African country to the exclusion of operating in the white south would make the white south be starved of investment by that much. Secondly, independent Africa would be effecting those methods in support of the United Nations.

In fact their use for political ends is not new. Several African countries have already used one or other of them, or all of them. Zambia, for instance, took over a subsidiary of certain companies which are taking part in the construction of the Cabora Bassa dam in defiance of international opinion. What would be new is that African states would be coordinating, intensifying and expanding the use of these methods for continental liberation. African nations would also be linking up this form of struggle with, for example, the struggles of certain church bodies in many western countries which are waging a campaign — with some success — for the withdrawal of church investments from companies that are operating in the white south or companies that are breaking sanctions or embargos. The African nations' struggle would reinforce, in a practical way, the efforts of millions of people in the west who belong to church bodies and to other organizations engaged in similar peaceful struggles and who all oppose racist rule and colonial domination. In the third-world and elsewhere, Africa would almost certainly trigger chain-reactions of support from many nations. The tremendous international support received over the expulsion of Rhodesia from the Olympic Games forcefully demonstrated this kind of support.

Technical know-how and technology are no longer the monopoly of companies that break sanctions and embargos. The construction of the Tanzam railway and of many other complicated engineering jobs in other parts of Africa show that independent Africa can, if she so desires, get required help from countries as far apart as Sweden and India or China and Yugoslavia. Some of these countries being developing nations themselves

but having a technology more advanced than that found in most African countries and having also once suffered colonial and foreign domination, would be in a better position to understand Africa's aspirations and problems. There are countless other sources for transistor batteries should African states decide to take over the business assets of Union Carbide (Ucar batteries) which is breaking sanctions against Rhodesia. Some of the sources may be found even in the west itself!

The struggle for the political liberation of the white south will be protracted. It is precisely companies like Foote Minerals and Union Carbide, and their political faces like the Nixon Administration, which will make the liberation struggle long, difficult and bloody. Yet Union Carbide is basking in the sunshine of huge profits which it siphons from independent Africa's enormous market! For how long will independent Africa continue to enrich such firms while they, at the same time, provide Smith, Vorster and Caetano with the wherewithal to oppress, suppress, repress, restrict and detain without trial jail, rape, maim and kill black people in Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwe and South Africa? For how long must independent Africa continue to face threats to her security – and actually suffer military attacks – from the white south while it permits the very fountain-heads of those threats and attacks to operate on its continent? The Nixon Administration falsely claims that it is breaking sanctions in order to build up stocks of chrome for defence purposes. But what about the defence of Africa?