

INTERVIEWS IN DEPTH

SOUTH AFRICA

african national congress



ALFRED NZO,

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Interview with Alfred Nzo



ALFRED NZO,
ANC's Secretary
General And
National Executive
Committee Member

Discusses
Problems Of ANC's Historical Development
In The Face Of An Increasingly Repressive
White Racist Regime, The
Revolutionary Potential Of South Africa's
Black Workers, Peasants And Students
And The Role Of Imperialist Investments...

Contents

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID REGIME	5
MOBILIZATION OF THE PEOPLE AND THE JOINT MILITARY COMMAND	14
IMPERIALISM AND REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY	16
Appendix	21

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID REGIME

PERHAPS, COMRADE NZO, YOU COULD BRIEFLY DISCUSS YOUR OWN BACKGROUND, ENTRANCE INTO POLITICS AND PREVIOUS POSITION AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA (ANC)?

Well, as for my background, I was born on 19 June 1925 in the town of Binone, just east of Johannesburg in the Transvaal. After elementary and secondary education - mainly in Cape Province - I went to University College at Fort Hare and studied for a B.S. degree in hygiene. I became very ill during my third year, however, and had to quit. Later I picked up my studies at a technical school in Johannesburg - under the Royal Sanitary Institute of London - and qualified in 1951 as a sanitary inspector.

In this work I came into daily contact with the horrible living conditions of our people in South Africa. My job was mainly to give advice to the people on matters of hygiene and health and instruct them on what to do when there were outbreaks of infectious diseases. What struck me most during this period was the incredibly high incidence of diseases like T.B., kwashiorkor, and so on, which were almost entirely the result of poor, overcrowded living conditions and improper diet. Of course, the South African government did virtually nothing to deal with the causes of diseases like this - being concerned primarily with preventing the spread of infectious diseases into the white population.

My baptism in politics came while I was still in college, in 1942. I was one of the leaders of a student strike launched in protest against the poor food which was being given to us. African youth at this time were becoming generally more politically conscious and militant and this was reflected in the growth and militancy of the ANC Youth League. After the strike I became closely associated with the Youth League and the political activities of the ANC. In 1950 I became a full member of the ANC and, in 1957, was elected to the Transvaal Provincial Executive Committee. In December 1958 I was elected to the ANC National Executive Committee and have remained in that position up to the present moment.

In the period just before December 1958, when I was employed

by the Health Authority, the government used pressure and various forms of intimidation in an effort to force me out of politics. It wasn't long after my election to the National Executive that they fired me from my job at the Health Authority and since early 1959 I've been working full-time for the ANC.

Until it was banned in 1960, I worked at our ANC Johannesburg headquarters. Then, after the banning, some comrades and I set up a dry-cleaning business and behind this front we continued our political work clandestinely...holding meetings "over the counter," so to speak. We also set up a few front organizations in the same building; our Youth Cultural Center, for example, which was supposedly a social club concerned only with parties, dances, etc., but which did a good job mobilizing and organizing the ANC youth - some of whom have since become members of our guerrilla army.

Once I lost my job with the Health Authority I was continually harrassed by the police under the various "influx control" laws. I didn't have the proper passes and was picked up and arrested several times. Finally, at the end of 1959, I was given my first "banning order," which prohibited me from attending gatherings of over three people for a period of five years. After the Sharpeville massacre the South African white regime declared a "State of Emergency" and arrested thousands of ANC leaders and activists, most of whom were imprisoned without trial for as long as six months. I was one of those picked up just when the Emergency was declared and I wasn't released until August, five months later, when the Emergency was lifted.

In 1961, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, we were very active underground trying to organize an All-In African Conference, which we held in March that year. Though under a ban, I nevertheless worked as an administrative secretary for the Conference, sending letters to hundreds of individuals and organizations invited to participate. Shortly before the Conference, however, I was arrested and imprisoned for five months on a pass law violation. Then, soon as I was released, I was accused along with twelve other comrades of furthering the aims of the banned ANC and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. We appealed our case, which became widely known as "The Trial of African Leaders." Fortunately, we won.

Then I was served another banning order which prohibited me from going to Alexander township where I had been working and living. They restricted me for a period of five years to a small area in west Johannesburg. This was in 1961. A year later they tightened the restrictions to a "24-hour a day house

arrest" for five years, under the new "Suppression of Communism Act." And in June 1963, under the "Ninety Day Clause," I was arrested and held in solitary confinement till February 1964. After my release I was immediately rearrested; then released and arrested again, and so on, until I'd spent a total of 238 days in a prison isolation cell...without ever having had a trial.

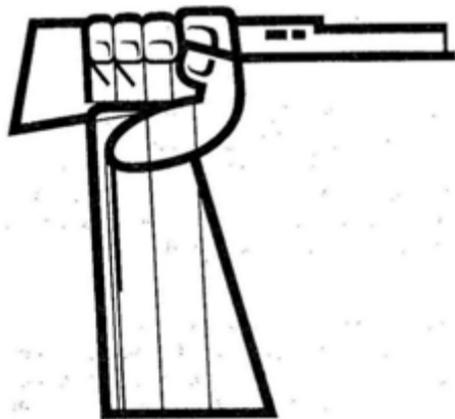
Once out of prison, our underground organization immediately ordered me to leave South Africa - illegally, of course - and join the ANC external mission. The escape succeeded and since then my work has taken me to Cairo (for three years), to the ANC Asian Mission in India (for almost two years), and finally here to Tanzania to work at our Morogoro headquarters.

WHAT ARE YOUR CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES AS ANC SECRETARY GENERAL?

At the ANC Consultative Conference in Morogoro in 1969, where I was elected Secretary General, it was decided that we would set up three departments: the Presidency and Revolutionary Council - responsible for internal mobilization and military matters; the Treasury - responsible for finance and logistics; and the Secretariat, headed by a Secretary General - responsible for the mobilization of international support. So this has, since 1969, been my primary function...along with information work and special tasks done at the request of other departments.

HOW WOULD YOU ASSESS THE MAJOR EVENTS AND STAGES IN THE ANC'S TRANSITION FROM A LEGAL POLITICAL ORGANIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA TO ITS CURRENT POSITION OF CLANDESTINITY AND ARMED STRUGGLE?

First, it is necessary to look briefly at the history of South Africa and the ANC. The first Dutch settlers, employees of the Dutch East India Company, came to South Africa in 1652 to set up a way-station for supplying fresh fruit and vegetables to ships passing around the Cape of India. These early settlers were hospitably received by the local African population. Soon, however, they returned this hospitality by initiating a process of plunder - stealing African land and other property, killing those who resisted, seizing African women, and so forth. There were many, many uprisings and wars against European occupation and domination over the next two and a half centuries...the last major armed resistance being in 1906, in what is now called the Bambata Rebellion. Our people were defeated primarily because they were divided, disunited...fight-



ing and bickering among themselves, and even forming alliances with the European enemy against other African tribes.

The first task the ANC set for itself when it was formed in 1912, was, therefore, to unify all South African tribes into one African nation; to raise the people's political consciousness so that they could fight the enemy as a unified force under modern conditions. During those early years, numerous small skirmishes with the enemy took place and in 1919 the ANC mobilized workers for a series of illegal strikes. Our main tactic, however, right up to 1949, was to send petitions and delegations to discuss our people's problems and grievances with the European government. As everyone now knows, of course, this did not work; in fact, things only got worse.

So, in 1949, at the ANC National Conference, we adopted a new Program of Action, aimed at mobilizing the masses for more direct participation in the struggle. This realization that it was *the masses themselves* who had to carry forward the struggle transformed the ANC into a more militant organization. In 1950 we organized our first May Day demonstration in the Transvaal. The enemy responded with bullets and a number of people were killed. To protest this brutal police action, our first nationwide general strike was mobilized on 26 June 1950. This action was carried out jointly by the ANC, the Indian Congress of South Africa and the then still legal Communist Party. It served, together with the May Day demonstration, very effective notice to the white regime that, henceforth, the African people were going to struggle in a much more determined way against unjust legislation and police repression.

In 1952 the ANC organized what we called the Defiance Campaign. Thousands of disciplined and well-trained ANC volunteers defied a large number of racist, discriminatory laws. By the end of the Campaign, over 8,000 volunteers had chosen to go to prison instead of paying a fine to protest the increasing

assaults of the European regime against the rights and dignity of the African people. The Campaign itself was only called off after the government passed and began enforcing some particularly brutal and savage legislation. But our purpose had already been served. The African masses were aroused and had achieved a heightened degree of political consciousness. Several...in fact, many of our leaders were arrested and charged under the "Suppression of Communism Act" for having led this mass Defiance.

A few years later, a massive ANC effort resulted in the convening of the Congress of the People on 26 June 1955. Here at Kliptown, the Freedom Charter was approved by the ANC, Indian Congress, Coloured People's Congress and Congress of Democrats (an organization of progressive Whites formed in 1953). The Freedom Charter addressed itself to the most urgent questions affecting the people. Its opening statement read: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it and no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people."

Of course, in racist white circles, this was tantamount to "high treason." Within a year after the adoption of the Freedom Charter no less than 156 leaders of the Congress Movement were arrested...most in December 1956. The racist regime wanted to demonstrate clearly that it would not tolerate any mobilization of the people on the basis of the Freedom Charter. Mere acceptance of the Freedom Charter became a capital offence carrying a possible death sentence for those found guilty. However, as events were to show, the people were not intimidated. During the course of the long so-called "Treason Trial," which lasted from 1956 till 1961, the people launched several militant campaigns demonstrating their support for the Freedom Charter defendants. The bus boycott, which began in Alexander township, will serve as an example. Fares were increased over the ten-mile route from Alexander to Johannesburg. A united front, led by the ANC and eventually backed by the entire population of 86,000 in Alexander township, boycotted the buses and walked the ten miles to Johannesburg. News of this, plus protest and sympathy boycotts spread rapidly throughout the country; people as far away as the eastern Cape began a solidarity boycott in support of their brothers and sisters in Alexander. And after three months of struggle - hard struggle - the people finally won and the bus company reduced its fares. The militancy and unity shown in this boycott clearly shook the regime.

Following this, at the end of 1957, the women went on a very militant campaign against the new pass laws which were extended for the first time to cover women. While not succeeding in having the new laws repealed, this campaign engulfed every

major city in South Africa. The experience gained from it served as the basis of a very powerful anti-pass law campaign initiated by the ANC in 1959 at its National Conference.

In addition, there were several other boycotts. The potatoe boycott, for example, was launched in the Transvaal in May 1959 to highlight and attack the slave-labor conditions of African workers on potatoe (and other) European-owned farms. This campaign forced some slight concessions from the planters leading to somewhat improved conditions for the workers. During this same period the peasants, particularly those in the northern Transvaal - and especially the women - fought a hard struggle against the further imposition of pass laws on African women. The campaign was brutally suppressed, but it revealed that the political consciousness developing in the cities was spreading to the peasantry of the rural areas.

PERHAPS YOU COULD DESCRIBE SOME OF THE TACTICS EMPLOYED BY THE ANC AND CONGRESS MOVEMENT IN MOBILIZING THE MASSES DURING THIS PERIOD?

Since the united front was set up after the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955, one of our basic tactics was to organize the people around local issues which affected their day-to-day lives and then explain the connection, the interlinking of these local issues with the basic questions confronting the African masses. In this way people were made aware that their local grievances were not isolated matters, but rather part of a fundamental set of problems facing the entire African population.

During this period, the ANC had strong organizations in all four South African provinces - the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal and Cape - with activities being coordinated and centrally directed by the National Executive Committee. Once a national directive was issued, a campaign would begin in all the major cities in the country, where the ANC and other congress movements have always been strongest. As I mentioned earlier, it was really only in 1957, with the extension of pass laws to the rural areas, that people in the "native reserves" began to engage in the contemporary struggle against the white racist regime. The migratory labor system in South Africa brings peasants into the towns under contract to work in the mines, factories, etc., for generally short periods of a year or two. Then they are forced to return to the rural areas...or stay in the cities without passes and face almost certain arrest and imprisonment. Though there are many horrible aspects of this migrant labor system, like families being separated during the contract period - the movement of men, and in some cases, women,

from the towns to the rural areas, then back to the towns, and so on, has enabled the ANC to build and strengthen its organization in the countryside. It was in this way that a campaign launched in the cities was spread throughout the network of branches in the rural areas.

HOW DID THE BANNING OF THE ANC COME ABOUT, AND WHAT WAS YOUR RESPONSE TO IT?

The ANC was banned in April 1960 by an act passed in the white parliament. Before this, however, it had become clear to us that the government was preparing to declare us illegal. The National Executive, therefore, had already met to discuss the question and issued a directive to all branches that, should the government declare us illegal, we would not accept the ban but would continue the struggle underground. So, by the time our organization was banned, we had already worked out plans for operating the ANC as a clandestine movement.

Of course, it was not easy to set up the machinery for a functioning underground organization...especially since we had operated as a legal organization for decades and our leadership and much of our membership were known to the enemy. In addition, the racist regime unleashed a reign of terror to guarantee that the ANC banning was effective. A "State of Emergency" was declared and thousands of ANC activists all over the country were arrested and imprisoned under the new legislation. The ANC reaction to this repression was a decision, taken by our underground leadership, to prepare for armed struggle against the regime. Only a few days ago we celebrated the eleventh anniversary of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation), which was founded on 16 December 1961 as the military wing of the ANC...the hard core in our war of national liberation. Arrangements were initiated for hundreds of our young men and women to go abroad to receive military training...mainly in African countries, but also in some socialist countries. Training in guerrilla warfare, as you can well understand, was not possible for us to accomplish within South Africa itself.

At the same time, it was necessary for us to intensify political mobilization of the masses. The ANC believes very strongly, you see, that to wage a successful armed struggle against an enemy as cruel and powerful as the South African apartheid regime, it is absolutely necessary for the masses to be politically educated and mobilized. We don't believe our struggle can ever succeed simply by a small group of trained cadres launching the armed struggle. Success requires participation by the masses of our people. So, in addition to the military preparation of cadres, one of our major activities

underground, since 1961, has been to encourage and organize the people to engage in legal and open forms of struggle... without, of course, enabling the enemy to ban or repress such types of resistance. Here I am talking about strikes, demonstrations, student resistance to a slave education, peasant resistance to the bantustans and their puppet leaders, etc. Since 1961 the ANC has helped organize many, many such legal and semi-legal actions against the regime, while at the same time, educating and preparing the black workers, peasants and students for the armed struggle.

The enemy, as you know, has grown increasingly repressive over this same period. The "State of Emergency" was followed by the "Sabotage Act," then the "Ninety Day Clause" in 1963, and a whole series of repressive acts since then. Many thousands of ANC activists have been imprisoned and often held in solitary confinement under these parliamentary measures. Torture and all other means have been employed to gain information about the underground ANC and, unfortunately, not without some success. Such methods led, in July 1963, to the arrest and subsequent life-imprisonment of our central underground leadership. They were trapped and captured in Rivonia, a suburb of Johannesburg. This loss, as you might well imagine, was one of the heaviest blows dealt by the enemy against our movement.

HAVE THERE BEEN ANY MAJOR DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE ANC OVER THE PAST DECADE OR SO WHICH NOW, WITH THE OBVIOUS BENEFIT OF HIND-SIGHT, APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN INCORRECT?

The major decision taken by the ANC in the contemporary period was, of course, to initiate a transition from strictly legal forms of struggle to illegal actions, such as sabotage, and preparations for a protracted armed struggle. This was preceded, as I mentioned earlier, by our decision in 1960 - after the ANC was banned - to continue functioning as an illegal underground organization. From time to time there has been considerable debate as to whether our position on the road to armed struggle was correct. Some have argued that the enemy is too vicious and strong; that since 1960 the racist regime has spent an increasing amount of its budget on the military and police apparatus; that the South African Army has been steadily expanded to a figure now over 300,000; and that international imperialism has shown an unexpected determination to support the white racist regime in South Africa by increasing capital investments, ignoring decisions by the U.N. General Assembly and generously supplying the regime with needed aircraft, arms and other weaponry. So, it has been argued, perhaps it was incorrect for us to have taken the decision to prepare for armed struggle.

We believe, however, that when all arguments are in, and a deep analysis has been made, that this decision will prove to have been correct. Our legal and passive resistance in the Fifties, despite massive political demonstrations, was met not with government concessions but with increasingly brutal repression. Virtually every year from 1956 to 1961 saw the all-White South African parliament adopt piece after piece of legislation designed in a conscious and calculated manner to cripple the national liberation movement and block all peaceful paths to democratic change in South Africa. So our real choice was either to submit to the terror of the enemy and cease to exist or recognize that peaceful forms of struggle alone were no longer valid and that it was necessary to go underground and prepare for armed struggle.

Of course, in a struggle of this magnitude and nature, some tactical mistakes...errors of implementation...are bound to be made. Perhaps our preparations for sabotage were inadequate; and the same might be said for our security precautions. Again, it was perhaps the case that too many of our cadres were sent outside for training, thus weakening our capacity to politically educate and mobilize the masses inside.

There is one later decision, made when the regime first decided to intensify its "Bantustan" policy, which we now believe to have been incorrect. The question arose at this time, in the mid-sixties, as to whether or not the ANC should participate in or boycott the puppet political structures government was creating. At the time we believed it best to boycott these supposedly "independent" structures and agitate very strongly against the government's other new provisions for the rural areas - the concentration and reduction of African lands, imposition of stooge chiefs, and so forth. So we mobilized the people and tried to convince them not to participate in elections to the so-called "Bantustan" parliaments. As it turned out, however, our campaign failed and an increasing number of peasants participated in these elections. We continued our attack and boycott for quite a long time but finally we were forced to ask ourselves: "Are we not isolating ourselves from a significant sector of the masses by continuing to boycott elections and government-created structures which large numbers of people participate in?"

The answer, we finally agreed, was "Yes." To remain in close contact with the people, to provide them with the correct line and direction - as a vanguard movement must do - it was necessary for us to extend our influence in these "toy" parliaments, put forward the main issues confronting the masses and provide direction. Our previous decision was thus reversed and now we use these legal organizations set up by the racist

regime in the "Bantustan" areas in order to expand ANC contact with the rural masses, heighten their political consciousness and maintain continuous activity and struggle against the fascist government.

f MOBILIZATION OF THE PEOPLE AND THE JOINT MILITARY COMMAND

IN 1967 THE ANC AND ZAPU (ZIMBABWE AFRICAN PEOPLE'S UNION) FORMED A MILITARY ALLIANCE AND CARRIED OUT NUMEROUS ENGAGEMENTS WITH ENEMY FORCES IN ZIMBABWE. WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT EVALUATION OF THESE JOINT MILITARY ACTIONS?

These actions were very important in demonstrating to the South African masses that the ANC, though underground, was not only alive but able and willing to confront the enemy arms in hand. The joint ANC/ZAPU military actions in Zimbabwe received very wide publicity - even in South Africa - and generated new and considerable confidence among the people; a confidence which has recently shown itself in an upsurge of political activity, particularly among workers and students whose strikes and demonstrations have refocused world attention on the South African liberation struggle.

Again, the decision taken in 1965 by ZAPU and ANC to form a joint military alliance was a concrete expression of what the ANC has believed in and worked for. The militant united front established inside South Africa at the initiative of ANC had as a logical and necessary counterpart the policy and practice of forgoing unity among revolutionary organizations throughout the whole of southern Africa - that is, among the genuine liberation movements of Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

As you know, ZAPU and ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) have recently formed a joint military command and there has been a resurgence of armed struggle in Zimbabwe. We think this is a very good and important development and the ANC hopes that in the not too distant future we can form an alliance with this Joint Military Command as we did with ZAPU earlier.

THE ANC HELD AN IMPORTANT CONFERENCE AT MOROGORO, TANZANIA IN 1969. PERHAPS YOU CAN NOW DISCUSS THE MAJOR DECISIONS TAKEN AT THIS CONFERENCE AND THE SUCCESSES AND/OR DIFFICULTIES THE ANC HAS HAD IN IMPLEMENTING THESE OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

One very important decision taken at the Morogoro Conference was to set up a Revolutionary Council, an organ within the department of the Presidency which was charged with the mobilization and stepping up of the struggle within South Africa. Of course, problems and difficulties in the sphere of implementation have occurred...due largely to the peculiar situation in which the ANC finds itself of having no friendly borders. As you know, this is a very important factor in modern guerrilla struggles.

Another major decision was to expand the ANC by drawing into it all South African revolutionary elements irrespective of their racial origin. This decision meant that the ANC membership would be broadened to include not only Africans but also revolutionary Whites, Coloureds and Indians. These elements, we believed, had not been participating fully in the struggle during the current period because they had been kept at a distance and allowed themselves to feel that the revolution in South Africa was exclusively the job of the ANC and African masses.

On the whole, we believe this was a correct decision and has resulted in a new level of enthusiasm generated by participation of these non-African revolutionary elements. Of course, the implementation of this decision was not without its problems and it took a considerable period of transition for certain sectors and individuals within the ANC to come to a correct political understanding and acceptance of this new membership policy. Some people felt for a time that we were departing from a basic principle of the ANC: that the fundamental goal of the revolution was the liberation of the African people. Others argued that we were abandoning the correct policy that leadership in the struggle should remain entirely in the hands of the most oppressed sector, the African masses. They feared that drawing non-African elements into the ANC would result in diluting the African leadership of the organization and struggle; perhaps even in a surrendering of leadership in the struggle to non-African revolutionaries who, it was felt, were largely drawn from the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia.

So, there was a period following this decision during which its implementation was made very difficult...even threatened altogether. But careful and patient explanation over many months finally resolved the problem and now all South African revolutionary forces are participating in the struggle under the banner of the ANC and contributing in the best ways they can. This has benefited the movement a great deal and all but a very few have come to appreciate the correctness of this Morogoro decision.

PERHAPS YOU COULD COMMENT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS IN MOBILIZING THE MASSES AND RAISING THE LEVEL OF INTERNAL STRUGGLE?

The efforts of the Revolutionary Council over the last three years have definitely born fruit within South Africa. We now have a considerable number of trained cadres inside performing specific tasks...especially in the urban areas, the economic nerve center of the country, but also, more recently, in the rural areas as well. Thus far we are still in the preparatory stage of organizing and politically mobilizing the people, building up the underground machinery and laying the foundation for future sabotage and other guerrilla activities. The enemy, of course, is ever-vigilant and we have suffered occasional setbacks...as is evidenced from time to time by newspaper reports that some of our cadre are captured and taken to court.

Two major problems now occupy the close attention of the Revolutionary Council. First is the question of logistics, of moving men and the military supplies and equipment necessary for the armed struggle into the country. Second is the recruitment of militants for cadre training outside and their return to bolster our numbers inside. Another problem demanding constant attention is maintaining radio and other contact between the ANC leadership temporarily based outside the country and our underground units operating inside. Also, there is the continual effort to find ways and means of keeping up our information and propaganda work within South Africa. But there can be no struggle without problems, no progress without the resolution of contradictions which inevitably emerge in the course of revolution.



IMPERIALISM AND REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

HOW WOULD YOU ASSESS RECENT POLITICO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA IN RELATION TO THEIR EFFECTS ON THE REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS?

Many outsiders have gotten the impression that South Africa has been enjoying a continuous economic boom. And, of course, the South African regime has attempted to paint such a picture and has been assisted in this by an international imperialism which reaps huge super-profits from its growing investments in South Africa. A careful examination, however, reveals that all is not well in the South African economy. First, there is an adverse trade balance which has been getting worse year after



Black Consciousness

year. The major reason for this is the virtual militarization of the country which has required heavy imports of weaponry, aircraft, etc. Budget allotments for military expenditures have sky-rocketed from 40 million rand in 1960 to over 335 million rand in the 1972-73 budget.

Another problem is the increasing impoverishment of the South African masses. By advancing its apartheid policies and denying the African people any opportunity for economic advancement, the racist regime is also preventing the expansion of its internal market. Impoverished Africans, over three-fourths of the population, are unable to purchase enough to prevent a serious shrinkage in South Africa's internal market. To overcome this contradiction the racist regime has attempted several maneuvers. The so-called "dialogue policy," which developed out of an "outward looking policy" adopted in the mid-sixties, has sought to win friends among the independent African countries, for example, with the major aim of reducing condemnation in these countries of South African apartheid practices and achieving an end to boycotts and restrictions against South African goods. But despite some early successes, such as with Malawi and Malagasy, this policy has met with increasing difficulties and failures. With the change of regimes in Ghana and Malagasy, and the increasing unity of opinion as regards support for the liberation movements in the OAU, South Africa's "dialogue" is no longer even a whisper and the racist regime is failing to maintain, let alone expand, the contacts it hoped would facilitate the export of South African finished products and capital northward into the African continent.

Another aspect of apartheid has created a further difficulty for the white regime. Laws such as the "Job Reservation Act," which function to sustain a white labor aristocracy, have had an adverse additional effect of causing a growing shortage of skilled labor. Instead of opportunities for training and advancement being given to Africans already in the labor market, the government has tried to solve this problem by seeking increased white immigration. But it has run into problems here as well. The growing international condemnation of South Africa's apartheid regime and policies - toward which the ANC External Mission made a considerable contribution - plus the advance and growing international support for the southern African liberation movements (by organizations such as the U.N. and World Council of Churches, for example) has resulted in an increasing reluctance on the part of skilled white workers to emigrate from Europe or elsewhere to South Africa. Thus, instead of white immigration increasing, it has in fact slowed down considerably over the past several years.

Now, the combination of these factors I have been discuss-

ing has created a favorable situation for the advance of our liberation struggle. First, the morale and fighting spirit of the oppressed South African masses have been raised significantly by the international support given to our movement and struggle and by the rejection of South Africa's "dialogue policy." Such international support has given the people confidence that they are not fighting alone, that they have strong friends and supporters throughout Africa and the rest of the world.

Secondly, the increasing oppression and impoverishment of the masses, both in the cities and countryside, has become more and more intolerable. Revolutionary subjective conditions are thus being created and recent events in South Africa confirm that a new spirit of resistance and defiance is building up steadily among the masses of our people...particularly among the young people, both workers and students, whose strikes and demonstrations have become increasingly radical and militant this past year. As you know, the youth are very important to our movement, since the armed struggle to come will depend to a large extent on the participation of this vast social grouping.

Finally, the resilience of the ANC underground movement, its refusal to be annihilated even during periods of great repression and heavy setbacks, gives us hope that in this new period of political resurgence it will be able to build strong and effective units in all parts of the country and be ready in the near future to launch a successful armed struggle. This process, of course, has been aided by our infiltration into the country of large numbers of specially trained politico-military cadres over the past several years. We believe, therefore, that the recent political upsurge and growing defiance of the people provides us with fertile ground for developing the next, armed, phase of our liberation struggle.

LASTLY, COMRADE NZO, WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LIBERATION STRUGGLE? AND HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH THE ANC IN THIS STRUGGLE?

The major role of our External Mission has been to convince friends in the international community that the struggle of our people is not simply a local struggle, a struggle to liberate South Africa. While believing that the liberation of our people from exploitation and oppression by the white racist minority is a major ANC objective, we also feel that our struggle is directed at the destruction of a particularly vicious center of international imperialist aggression. Within the imperi-

alist system, South Africa occupies a very important economic and geo-political position. Its gold, industrial diamonds and other minerals, as well as its leading role in guarding the Cape route for "free world" commerce and the heading up the "Unholy Alliance" with Portugal and Rhodesia, make South Africa of vital importance to the giant multinational corporations of the West and Japan.

And not only is a continuation of white minority and colonial domination of southern Africa important in itself, it constitutes a base and staging ground for neocolonial aggression and imperialist penetration of the rest of our vast continent to the north. It has been quite clearly demonstrated that the South African minority regime will go to any lengths to maintain its fascist grip, including open military aggression against neighboring African countries. It is holding onto Namibia by force, despite decisions of the United Nations and sending military personnel and equipment to bolster up the Smith regime in Zimbabwe and the Portuguese regime in Angola and Mozambique against the liberation forces.

So, you can see, destruction of the white racist regime in South Africa would not only free the vast resources of this region for the benefit of the African masses, it would constitute a threat to colonial and neocolonial control in the rest of Africa and represent a real blow and setback of serious proportions for international imperialism. It is in this sense that we regard our struggle in South Africa as an integral and important part of the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle.

This, too, accounts for our appeal to progressive and democratic forces all over the world to perform their internationalist duty by providing maximum political, moral and material support to the South African people's struggle, led by the ANC. Such support, though still not nearly adequate, has increased over the past few years; and in some countries, such as Australia, progressive regimes have taken over and altered their national policies toward the South African regime, rejecting further contacts - especially in the sphere of sport and culture. These are important developments and have had the additional effect of strengthening solidarity and support from independent African countries which are themselves still struggling - in some cases very valiantly - to free their economies from the bonds of neocolonial and imperialist control. Realization of increased international support for our struggle has infused in them a new enthusiasm to increase their own assistance to the liberation movements of southern Africa.



Appendix

1912 - 1972

SIXTY YEARS OF ARMED STRUGGLE

On April 6, 1652, the first white Dutch settlers landed at the Cape to establish a half-way house to supply fresh provisions for their ships going to the East.

Not long after, however, they began to enslave the local African inhabitants, confiscate their cattle and drive them off their land. This led to many armed conflicts until the second half of the 18th century, when the white invaders were reduced to roving bands of brigands. Towards the end of the 1700s however, Britain, which was allied with Holland in the war against Republican France, sent in her military forces to aid the Dutch settlers.

This brought about a complete change in the resistance of our people. The British, armed with the most modern weapons of war and their long experience of intrigue, defeated our people who were poorly armed and fighting separately as tribal groups. Despite these weaknesses, it was only in 1906 that our people were finally crushed militarily by the overwhelming might of the most powerful country in the world at that time.

Within four years of the final battle, the British government, despite widespread opposition from our people, granted "independence" to the white minority and the Union of South Africa, which excluded Africans and other non-whites, was established in place of the four existing provincial regimes.

African National Congress, "1912-1972: 60 Years of Struggle,"
Sechaba, Dec. 1971, pp. 6-17.

1912

The African leaders of the day were shocked into action. Calling for the unity of all tribal groups, Dr. Pixley ka Izaka Seme, a prominent leader and lawyer, in an article in 1911, declared: "The demon of racialism, the aberrations of Xhosa-Fingo feuds, the animosity that exists between the Zulu and Tongas, between the Basuto and every other native, must be buried and forgotten... We are one people.

Other leaders like Dr. J.L. Dube, D.S. Setaka, S.M. Kakagatho, Sol. T. Plaatjie, Dr. W.D. Rubusana and T.M. Mapikela took up the call and on January 8, 1912, a remarkable and historic conference was held in Bloemfontein. Every tribal group was represented; intellectuals and chiefs, workers and peasants. Zulus, Xhosas, Tswanas, Sothos, Vendas, Shangaans, Tongas, and others who had hitherto looked on each other with suspicion were for the first time united on a common platform.

At the end of their deliberations emerged the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa. On that day the African nation was born.

1913

In the meantime, the white minority regime passed the Land Act of 1913. Under this law the whites took for themselves 87% of the land leaving the remaining 13% for the African people, who constituted more than four fifths of the total population.

A deputation was sent to London in 1913-14 to plead their cause with the British government, which retained powers to veto any discriminatory legislation passed by the White South African parliament. The British government, using the outbreak of World War I as an excuse, refused to help. At the end of the war, in 1919, another deputation met the British authorities and again the British government rejected its pleas and asked the delegation to negotiate with the South African government.

1920

In the twenties the struggle shifted mainly to the economic plane. With rapid industrialization taking place, African workers in the thousands were drawn into secondary industry.

Trade union activity was stepped up under the leadership of Clements Kadaile and his Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU). Scores of strikes by African workers were brutally suppressed by the army and the police. The ANC organized many campaigns against the brutality of the oppressors, vigorously denouncing the massacres of striking workers.

1930

During this period the ICU and ANC used a variety of methods of struggle. Civil disobedience was used to obtain the right

of Africans to travel on passenger trains in all provinces and to walk on the pavements. Powerful demonstrations against the pass laws led to numerous clashes with armed police resulting in hundreds of Africans being killed.

1935

One of the biggest agitations in our history occurred in protests against the removal of African voters in the Cape Province from the common roll.

In 1936, the ANC convened a special convention of all African organizations, political, social, cultural and religious, to meet this crisis. However, the "agitation" was not followed by mass action and failed to prevent the removal of the last group of Africans who had the vote.

1946

On June 13, 1946, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) started a civil disobedience campaign against various laws designed to ruin the Indian people economically as a prelude to their repatriation to India. During the same year the African Mine Workers Union (AMWU), led by J.B. Marks, who was president both of the AMWU and the Transvaal ANC, came out on strike. Over 100,000 African miners struck work and the army was called out by the racists and in an unprecedented wave of brutality the strike was crushed.

In the general elections of 1948, Dr. Malan and his pro-Nazi Nationalist Party came into power on a program of intensifying racial oppression by the enforcement of what they called apartheid.

In 1949, the ANC challenged this vicious undemocratic policy by adopting a Program of Action. Among other things the program laid down new methods of struggle, viz. civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts, non-cooperation and open defiance of unjust laws, with the main object of building the national liberation movement into a powerful mass movement embracing all sections of the people.

1950

In the meantime the question of unity among all genuine democratic forces - the people of Indian origin, the Colored peoples and white rebels - which had received the serious attention of the ANC in the forties, began to take a more concrete shape in 1947 with the signing of a pact of cooperation between the Indian and African peoples. This unity was consolidated in joint action on May 1, 1950, when the ANC and SAIC in the Transvaal called a general strike in this province against the government's attack on the freedom of speech and the banning of some of the leaders of the Congresses. On June 26 of the same year, the ANC and the SAIC together called a day of mourning in the form of a nationwide general strike to mourn

the victims of police shootings during the Transvaal May Day strike and as a protest against new repressive legislation.

1952

In December 1951, the ANC National Conference in Bloemfontein resolved to embark upon a massive campaign of defiance of apartheid laws. On June 26, 1952, together with the South African Indian Congress, the ANC launched the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign. The defiance campaign carried on through 1953 covered all major centers in South Africa. Over 8000 volunteers belonged to the ANC and its allies defied apartheid and were jailed. In 1954, the ANC launched a struggle against the imposition of the inferior Bantu Education System calculated to reduce African youth into "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the white man. Massive agitation took place among the parents and teachers and a boycott was organized against Bantu education schools. Meanwhile, the alliance between the SAIC and ANC was extended further when it was joined by the African People's Organization (representing the Colored) and its successor the Colored People's Congress. Later, during the defiance campaign of 1952 some progressive whites joined the struggle on the side of the oppressed people, and the Congress of Democrats was formed.

This alliance was further strengthened with the South African Congress of Trade Unions, the only non-racial trade union federation in South Africa, actively joining in.

Having succeeded substantially in mobilizing the various African tribal groupings into a single fighting nation, the African National Congress, in keeping with its overall strategy to lead a united front of all anti-racist and democratic forces, hammered out a common program with the representatives of the various racial groups and the trade union movement. This program was further crystallized when on June 26, 1955, at the historic Congress of the People, the fighting demands of the people were enshrined in the Freedom Charter, after a year-long campaign. The success of this campaign and the widespread support the Charter received from the people did not go unnoticed by the racist regime in South Africa.

In 1956, the political police swooped down and arrested 156 leaders of the ANC and its allies and charged them with high treason using the Freedom Charter as the basis of its charge. It was alleged that the ANC planned a revolutionary overthrow of the regime. In 1957, the ANC together with local Residents Associations organized the Great Rand and Pretoria bus boycott. In April 1958, the ANC organized another one-day national strike.

1960

In 1959 at its national conference in Durban, the ANC resolved to conduct, during the following year, a massive nationwide struggle against the Pass Laws. This campaign was under

way when the Pan-American Congress (PAC) sought to wreck it by launching its passive resistance campaign only ten days before the National Anti-Pass Campaign was to begin on March 31, 1960. When the police shot the people at Sharpeville and PAC was in disarray, the ANC called a national one-day strike on March 28, 1960, and ordered action by the masses of our people, declared the African National Congress illegal. The ANC refused to accept the order of the powers that be, and decided to continue the struggle as an underground and illegal organization.

Following the banning of the African National Congress, the movement decided to operate on two levels - internally in South Africa and externally in the international arena. The external mission of the African National Congress is headed by Oliver Tambo, who presently is the Acting President-General of the ANC. The mandate of the external mission of the ANC was to mobilize democratic and progressive opinion in Africa and the world to support our struggle. Our external mission forged strong links first of all with the All-African People's Conference and during the second Congress of this movement, which was held in Tunis in 1960, the African National Congress was elected to its Steering Committee. Our organization played an important role in the work of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement and is a member of the Permanent Secretariat of the movement whose headquarters are in Cairo.

In Europe and America, in the socialist countries, in Asia and Latin America, at the UN and on other International platforms, the African National Congress resolutely raised the voice and demands of our people. The African National Congress was one of the founders of the Anti-Apartheid Movement which was established in the early sixties in Great Britain, which has now spread to other parts of the world and has today become one of the major forces which mobilizes world opinion against the iniquities of racial oppression and apartheid.

However the ANC did not once suggest that we look for deliverance and salvation from outside the borders of our own country. We believe that the cornerstone of our struggle for freedom and democracy in South Africa lies inside South Africa itself.

1961-71 TEN YEARS OF ARMED STRUGGLE

Meanwhile inside South Africa the ANC underground began plans for the establishment of *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (The Spear of the Nation), military wing of the Congress under the leadership of Nelson Mandela.

By December 1961 MK, as Umkhonto We Sizwe later became popularly known, was ready to announce its existence. On the 16th of the same month MK announced to South Africa and the world that a new revolutionary stage in our struggle had been

reached.

On that day, bombs shattered government installations, MK leaflets were distributed explaining the background of its formation. It proclaimed selected sabotage, pointing out that loss of life would be avoided and that targets would be government installations. The white ruling class was still given a chance to change its ways before the country would be plunged into a civil war.

The activities of MK increased in scope and quality and began to spread to all the major towns of South Africa. The enemy was caught flat-footed and was unable to dismantle the MK organization. Every week brought news of systematic sabotage and MK cadres were quickly improving their skill. Among the exploits of MK was the bombing of the office of the Minister of Agriculture in Pretoria, the demolition of pylons in Natal and on the Rand and the bombing of the offices of *Die Nataller*, official organ of the Nationalist Party in Natal.

A revolutionary situation was unfolding in the country; it was becoming clear that the blacks and other revolutionaries were no longer prepared to live in the old way and were determined to take risks to bring about a change. The ruling class realized that their old methods of rule were inadequate. Vorster, a known fascist who was then the Minister of Justice, sought draconian measures from the white parliament to crush Umkhonto We Sizwe. The notorious General Laws Amendment Act known as the Sabotage Act was passed and it empowered the South African courts to impose a death sentence in cases of sabotage. The Act was intended to deal with the increasing cases of sabotage which were becoming bolder and more resourceful.

TORTURE

Umkhonto continued to operate despite the high rate of casualties. The enemy was getting desperate as the effectiveness of its security was beginning to be questioned and the image of a tough and efficient police force was getting dented. The only answer was to ask the white parliament to legalize torture and detention. The 90-Day Detention Law was passed. The ruling class was forced to take Umkhonto seriously and thus went into a wholesale onslaught. All the known leading members of the ANC were detained under the 90-Day Detention Law and were put into solitary confinement and tortured.

This new vicious law caught us unprepared. The movement had not drilled its cadres about behaving in situations of this kind. The police began to use electric torture and held all the suspects incommunicado.

Still suffering from the habit of semilegal days prior to the banning of the movement, we had not yet devised a tight conspiratorial method of work which made it extremely difficult for people to know more than they were entitled to. The looseness in the machinery of the organization made betrayal by the

weak and the provocateurs easy. Those who broke down were able to betray many units and individuals. The most serious blow was the discovery of the headquarters of the High Command of MK in Rivonia. The enemy was thus able to smash the very heart of the organization and this was a very serious setback. The regional commands had also been bled white and only tattered and badly mauled remnants remained.

Despite the sentences and executions, the fascists failed to break the back of the organization. Umkhonto continued to operate and Vorster, who after the Rivonia arrests had boasted that he had smashed the organization, was forced to swallow his words. The movement quickly regrouped and new leaders took the place of those arrested and fallen.

GUERRILLA WARFARE

While Umkhonto was carrying on with audacious acts of sabotage, the High Command was preparing for the second phase of the struggle. The ANC had established an external mission to prepare training places for its cadres. These cadres were to be infiltrated into the country on completing their training.

While the cadres were undergoing training, the leaders and the organization were mobilizing the people and generating a climate for the armed struggle.

The arrest of the top echelon of the leadership of the movement affected the maturity and implementation of the plans which had already been drawn up. The communication lines between the internal and external machineries of the movement were seriously disrupted and thus coordination was hampered. Apart from the wounds inflicted by the enemy on the movement, there were also some objective factors militating against it.

These were the absence of friendly countries on the borders of South Africa and problems of logistic lines. As a result of these difficulties, mistakes were made and erroneous lines adopted.

Fascist South Africa began to support and stabilize tottering regimes in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The ANC and its military wing Umkhonto We Sizwe recognized the need to intensify cooperation and coordination with other fighting movements in southern Africa. It was against this background that the alliance with ZAPU was formed in 1967. The aim was never to commit men to fighting in Zimbabwe but with the help of our Zimbabwe comrades to procure and secure routes to South Africa. Zimbabwe was to be one of the many routes, the movement had decided to use in its efforts to get cadres into the country.

LUTULI DETACHMENT

After undergoing intensive training, the Lutuli Detachment was the first to go into action in Rhodesia.

This was a revolutionary detachment, spurred on not by mercenary consideration but by absolute dedication to the struggle

for the liberation of the black people of South Africa and for the realization of the ideals of the Freedom Charter. In its ranks were to be found men from all corners of South Africa. There are three memorable occasions on which the detachment engaged the Rhodesia armed forces, each time putting them to shameful flight. The equipment captured included machine guns, sub-machine guns, rifles by the dozen, ammunition, radios and much-needed food supplies. On the whole the detachment fought very well as a unit but certain names remain outstanding and when we write the history of our struggle, these brave sons of our country will take their place among those who shed blood to rid our country of tyranny and colonialism.

EASTERN FRONT

While the fight on the Wankie front was going on, the alliance was also probing possibilities on the eastern side of Zimbabwe. Here again members of Umkhonto We Sizwe played a distinguished role in what came to be known as the "eastern front" or Sipolilo operations. It was the activities of these militants which caused the South African ruling class to intervene openly on the side of the Rhodesian white settlers. Some of them lost their lives on Zimbabwean soil fighting South African imperialism, others were captured and arrested and are at present serving life imprisonment in Smith's prisons as well as in Vorster's prisons.

Zimbabwe was one of the routes the movement used to filter men into the country. MK men were filtered into the country with varying degrees of success through other routes.

Like all struggles, the Zimbabwe operations were a school of revolution to the MK cadres. They were not only baptized in battle but were also able to gauge the tactics of the enemy, his weak and strong points. They were also able to observe their own shortcomings and were able to analyze why they were not successful as they had hoped.

The years of struggle have steeled and hardened MK. Dealing with a brutal, sadistic and perfidious enemy which is well supported by imperialism, MK men have realized the need for organization and are fully conscious of their historic duty.

On the 10th anniversary of its formation, MK wants to remind its members, both inside and outside, of the immense responsibility history has imposed on them. The leaders of MK, men like Mandela, MhlaBa, Mkwai and Mlangeni have shown the road to sacrifice. No force on earth must stop us. James April, the most recent cadre to be arrested in South Africa, claimed in Court when charged, that the black man must get his freedom and that the ANC can never be destroyed! We guarantee this!

Amandla Nwa Wethu!
Maatla Ke Arona!
Power to the people!

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