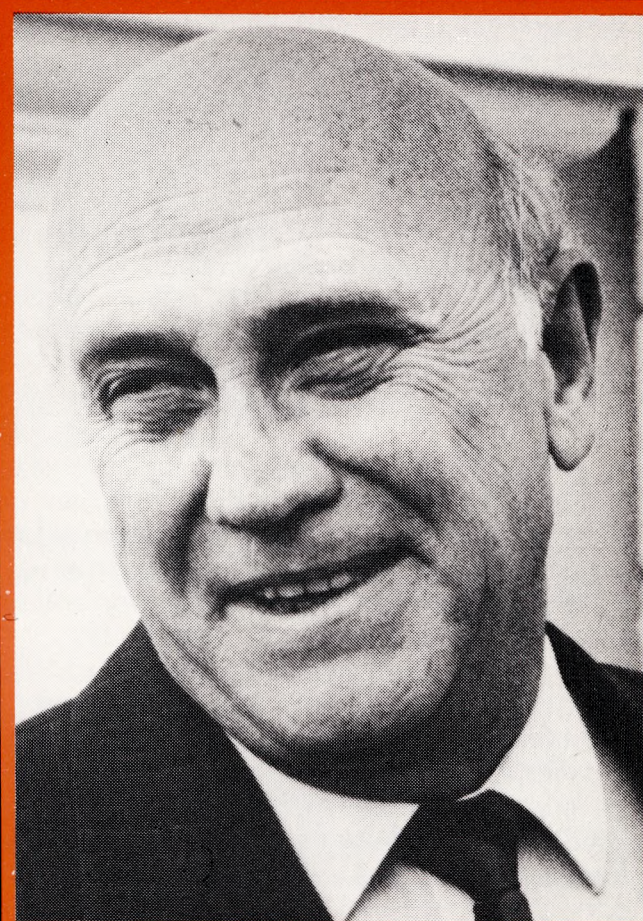
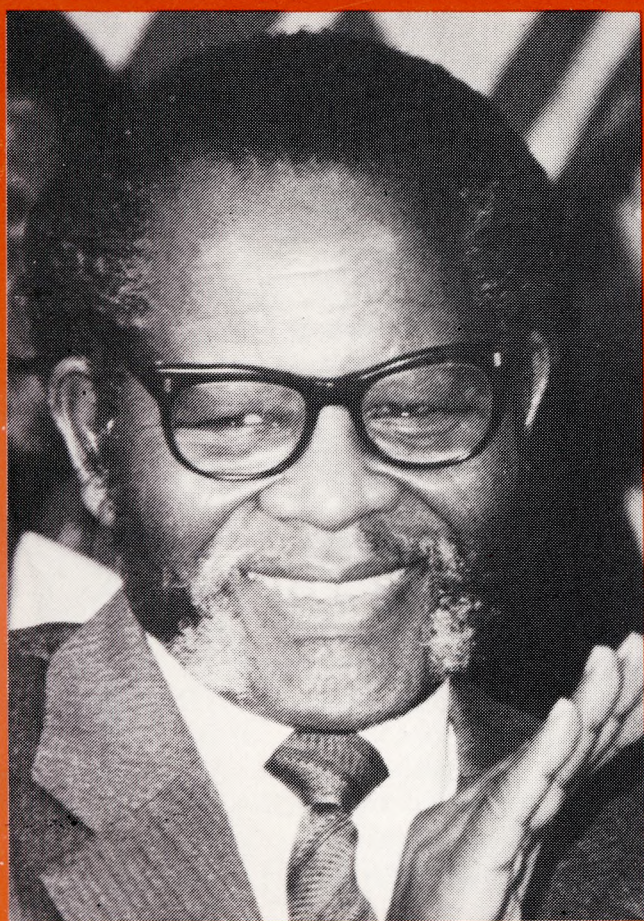


# WORK IN PROGRESS

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## NEGOTIATIONS



## ANOTHER SITE OF STRUGGLE

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The air is thick with talk about negotiating South Africa's future.

From the government of FW de Klerk and PW Botha to the rulers of England, the Soviet Union, the United States of America and West Germany; from the National and Democratic Parties to the ANC and SACP; from the 'mass democratic movement' to Inkatha, the Reserve Bank and those financial, commercial and industrial interests which make up South Africa's capitalist class: all have raised the vision of a negotiated settlement to the conflict over apartheid and South Africa's future.

But matters are never that simple - especially in a conflict between interests which may be fundamentally opposed.

Some years back, the ANC drew a distinction between 'talks' and 'negotiations' - a distinction which many commentators on South Africa seem unable to grasp. Additionally, serious analysts have noted that the idea and process of negotiation is itself an arena of struggle and contestation. This is true not only for opposition and anti-apartheid forces, but for the South African government itself.

There is nothing predetermined or linear about a negotiation process - even if most parties are in agreement that, in principle, negotiated settlements are preferable to a 'fight to the death'.

Negotiation is but one weapon in the arsenal of struggle - for all parties. Other weapons may - at various times - include armed force and military action, sanctions and international pressure, diplomacy and lobbying, destabilisation and disruption, mass politics and mobilisation, detentions, assassinations and vigilante activity. Many of these can be the tactics of struggle for the interests involved in the South African conflict: not only for the South African government, but also the Soviets, Americans or British; not only for the ANC and SACP, but also for Inkatha and the South African state's security apparatuses.

And agreement in principle to negotiate is a long way from sitting across a table discussing the dismantling of apartheid and a post-apartheid dispensation. Neither does a

commitment to negotiations exclude the use of all tactics to create a climate most conducive to specific interests represented - be they the interests of white supremacy, imperialism, democracy, conservatism, capitalism or socialism.

All the major actors involved in talking about negotiations know that well: it is only those who comment on and analyse their actions who often miss the point.

\* For the ANC, then, there is no necessary contradiction between exploring negotiations and an armed struggle;

\* For the SACP, working-class organisation, insurrectionary potentials and socialism are not contradicted by an agreement - at a particular point - to negotiate the dismantling of apartheid;

\* For FW de Klerk, there is no conflict between the language of negotiation, a racial election and a state of emergency;

\* For governments of other countries involved in the conflict, sanctions and international pressure on both the South African state and its anti-apartheid opponents do not run counter to a strategy of negotiations;

\* And for Inkatha and its supporters, negotiations about peace in Natal seem compatible with a strategy of repressing all who fall outside their camp.

These are the issues raised in a number of contributions to this edition of *Work In Progress*. All parties to the 'negotiation option' have contradictions to manage, suppress or overcome within their own ranks; all parties have the intention to create a climate most conducive to their interests and agendas; and all parties will, within the limits imposed by other forces operating on them, attempt to structure any negotiation process in favour of the interests they represent and champion.

In this, they will utilise methods and tactics of struggle which appear to contradict a commitment to a negotiated settlement of South Africa's racial issues. There is nothing surprising in this: for negotiations themselves are a site of struggle, influencing and influenced by rhythms and developments in other areas and tactics of political struggle.



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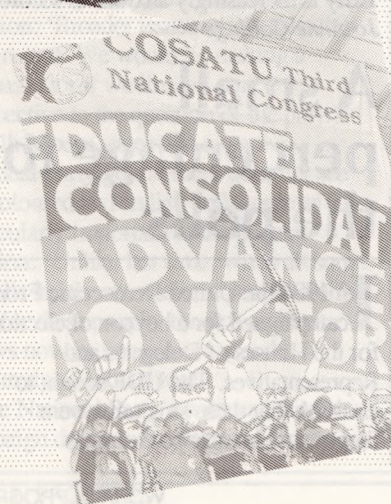
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## UDF: testing the West

United Democratic Front leaders, headed by president Albertina Sisulu, set a preliminary test for Western governments during their recent tour of Europe and the United States.

'Show us that it is possible to secure a climate for free political activity in South Africa', they challenged. 'Use your influence to ensure that our Conference for a Democratic Future takes place'.

The proposed conference, which the UDF groups discussed with US president George Bush, British premier Margaret Thatcher and other top-ranking officials, is the meeting formally adopted at this year's Cosatu congress as a replacement for the broad anti-apartheid conference which was banned a year ago.

'My own view is that there will be serious repercussions for the South African government if it acts against the conference', a senior UDF member said.

The delegation apparently took the position that, with talk of negotiations flowing thick and fast - but at the end of the day, in rather vague terms - it was preferable to press for concrete action to strengthen the hand of the democratic movement, than to abstractly debate preconditions for talks.

Approaching the sixth anniversary of its launch on 20 August, the UDF found itself in a position unique in its short lifespan. Still officially banned under the state of emergency, it had been received at the highest level by governments friendly to Pretoria. With its affiliates in the process of re-organising as the emergency's sting eased, but with its support base nothing like as visible as three years ago, the front was being acknowledged by conservative foreign governments as a representative popular voice. While many of its key figures remained restricted and shackled politically, others were able to function without reprisal from the platform of the Mass Democratic Movement.

The contrast between the UDF's position on its fifth and sixth birthdays can be read as a reflection of a real break in the political ice.

'The UDF delegation told Bush and Thatcher that we in the MDM are engaged in a struggle to regain legal



UDF executive member  
Titus Mofolo

space and we expect their support in that battle', the UDF source told WIP. It is understood that the Conference for a Democratic Future will be used, essentially, to consolidate a 'unifying perspective' on seven key points:

- \* The institution of one-person-one-vote in a united, democratic South Africa;
- \* the lifting of the state of emergency;
- \* the release of all political prisoners;
- \* the unbanning of all banned organisations;
- \* the achievement of freedom of association and expression;
- \* the achievement of a free press;
- \* the securing of a living wage for all.

The objective is not only to spell out the breadth of support for these goals, but to develop a concrete programme drawing in diverse anti-apartheid forces.

The seven essential items of the 'unifying position' will determine the range of participants in the conference. 'Organisations will exclude themselves (on the basis of their policies) rather than anyone taking steps to exclude them'. The first of the items, requiring adherence to the concept of a 'united democratic South Africa', may well stand in the way of participation by proponents of various 'federal' schemes for the future.

The UDF delegation told foreign leaders that the conference was likely to be an important forum for debate on the question of negotiations. 'It is wrong to counterpose negotiations and struggle as two separate paths. The one has the potential to reinforce the other', the UDF source stressed.

'It was made clear to Western leaders that we were not simply reacting to the government but were ourselves addressing the question of a post-apartheid society ... that we were looking honestly and with open minds at all genuine initiatives away from apartheid'.

Western responses to the advent of FW de Klerk as NP leader and to the government's 'aggressive diplomatic initiative to persuade the world it is going to change' have caused some concern in the MDM. The delegation reported that it repeatedly encountered the position that De Klerk, as the new man in office, should be given a chance to prove himself.

'Our delegation argued that it was an act of gross folly at this crucial time to let up on the pressure', the UDF source said, adding that the MDM's own plans for mass action around the parliamentary election and the Labour Relations Act had been put forward.

The assessment by the delegation is that there are several encouraging features for the democratic movement in the present US political context. The first point they make is that the US congress has accepted the principle of sanctions and therefore no dramatic threshold has to be crossed to secure increased pressure on South Africa. Secondly, in contrast to Reagan - who vetoed the congress sanctions bill - the Bush administration acknowledges that sanctions have had an effect in prompting new thinking in Pretoria. Thirdly, the Bush administration has no wish to allow the South African issue to create a duality between itself and congress, as it did in Reagan's term of office. This is especially so since the liberation of South Africa has become a domestic political issue - especially among black US citizens, whose vote the Republican Party is increasingly anxious to secure.

Jo-Anne Collinge

## A small percentage to the polls

In 1984 the United Democratic Front campaigned for a boycott of elections for the Houses of Delegates and Representatives. The UDF sought to establish that these structures were illegitimate in their posturing as



instruments of democracy. It was a strategic intervention to discredit the government's 'reform' constitution.

With the next round of elections approaching, the tricameral system is widely acknowledged as a resounding failure.

Against this background the Mass Democratic Movement has reasserted that its supporters 'will not participate in these elections'.

If the call by democratic forces for a stayaway is less strident this time round, is it a reflection of repression or new priorities?

One of the clearest assertions of the boycott position has come from the Transvaal Indian Congress, which confirmed this position at a day-long conference held at the end of July. TIC president Cassim Saloojee said: 'We are calling for an all-round boycott. Since the inception of the tricameral parliament nothing has occurred to improve it in our eyes. It is a racial system, essentially white-dominated and one which has led to the concentration of power in the hands of the state president - power which he has used dictatorially.'

'Our prediction that the two new houses would simply become junior partners in the enforcement of apartheid has clearly proved true. They have actually facilitated the repression of those who have challenged the system'.

So the boycott campaign is back on track and the TIC expects the percentage poll will be much the same as in 1984.

Saloojee also says that while the boycott is vital, it is by no means the TIC's major preoccupation: 'Within the context of what is happening in South Africa, with real hopes of ultimately realising a non-racial and democratic future, these collaborators just become profoundly irrelevant'.

It is a view echoed by Mohamed Valli Moosa in explaining the MDM's position: 'Broader issues are at stake this time round. We would be making a serious error if we limited our perspective to the question of the polls'.

Valli Moosa states that even the National Party government does not see the coloured and Indian collaborators as particularly important in the present election: 'Unlike last time, when all sorts of polls led them to believe people would vote for these people, the government knows now its not going to get the coloured and Indian vote'.

The National Party's current 'reform' campaign depends far less on minority

collaborators than on its new leadership which, it argues, will put the party in a position to act boldly to end the political stalemate.

'What this tells us is that we need to constantly be raising central demands for political rights. We must expose FW de Klerk's policies as essentially no different to those of his predecessors', says Valli Moosa. Campaigns against the Labour Relations Act and defiance of apartheid laws were intended in part to do just this.

The relationship between the Democratic Party and the MDM appears to have foundered. This is not only on the narrow question of it fielding nine candidates for the House of Delegates.

Says Saloojee: 'Many of us in the MDM saw the DP as a vehicle to mobilise sections of the white community for the democratic cause. During early interaction between the MDM and those who mooted the DP there was cause for some optimism that the DP would play such a role.'

'It did not take us long to realise that just as the NP is hidebound by the apartheid system, the DP was bound by an old liberal attitude reflected by old Progressive Federal Party elements. These people suggest that the only possibility of fundamental change will be found within this parliamentary system which is white dominated'.

Saloojee says experience has taught just the opposite: 'Even such limited changes as we have seen and the present crisis for the ruling classes have been generated by events outside of the parliamentary system'.

The DP's hints at an informal alliance with the Labour Party, the attitude it took in April to South African Defence Force action against Swapo, and its stance of accepting free settlement areas, all contributed to the deterioration of the DP/MDM relationship.

While the MDM has predicted that DP candidates electioneering in coloured and Indian townships will draw a 'hostile' response, it has not called on white voters in general to boycott the polls. It has simply made it clear that there is no distinction between black and white members of the MDM in their stance of non-participation in elections.

The TIC, sometimes criticised for its 'ethnic' base, sees its task largely in terms of mobilising a sizeable community into the mainstream of democratic political life and tying it into the broader struggle.

In recent months it has adopted a 'sectoral approach' to mobilisation - entering into talks with cultural groups, religious organisations, sports and professional bodies as well as the Indian business community and what it terms 'the working poor' in its constituency.

Though the commercial sector is proportionally large in the Indian community, only a fraction operates on a scale extensive enough to warrant consideration as part of the 'business sector', Saloojee argues. 'But there is a business community which, in spite of political adversity, has undoubtedly made material advances. This class might be tempted to support the collaborationists', he concedes.

The TIC businessmen's conference earlier this year, attended by hundreds of men from across the province, appears to have been an intervention to counter any such tendency. Reviewing the gathering, Saloojee comments: 'They seemed to have retained a democratic outlook'.

In 1984, independent calculations put the proportion of eligible Indians who voted at 16% (the official poll was 20%). In the coloured community the respective figures were 18% and 31%.

The new system of special votes might artificially increase the vote and intimidatory tactics might influence tiny rural communities, but 'the TIC wants to maintain that on election day we will have a very small percentage walking up to the polling booths'.

*Jo-Anne Collinge*

## More than musical chairs

While it is arguable that the National Party has not learned a great deal since coming to power in 1948, one thing it has learned is how to win elections.

Helped by its absolute control of television - SABC is the most influential news medium among white South Africans - and by 40 years of defining constituencies to maximum advantage, the National Party will probably do better on the day than early polls suggest it deserves to.

Widespread speculation of a hung parliament - in which the Nationalists fail to gain a straight majority (84 or more of the 166 seats) and are forced to



seek a governing alliance with either Andries Treurnicht's Conservatives or the Democratic Party - therefore seem unrealistically hopeful at this stage.

But the NP itself is expecting to lose ground. When the election campaign formally began in late July, party officials admitted that they expect to drop around 20 of the 120 seats they currently hold.

A flurry of opinion polls undertaken in late July point to the Conservatives more than doubling their current 22-seat presence, and the Democrats increasing their representation from 19 to between 25 and 35 seats.

But the outcome expressed in terms of seats gained or lost does not accurately reflect the support enjoyed by the contesting parties. And the polls do not reflect a major gain for the Conservatives or for right-wing politics generally.

For much of its 40 years in power the National Party has been the main beneficiary of right-wing votes. It thus delimited constituencies so that rural constituencies (normally more conservative) are numerically smaller than those in the cities and each rural vote worth proportionally more.

This now works to the advantage of the Conservative Party: quite literally, each Conservative vote is worth substantially more than each DP vote.

The July polls bear this out. Most pollsters agree the Conservatives will remain the biggest opposition party in parliament, although support for the Democrats is greater and growing faster.

For example, a poll commissioned by *Rapport* newspaper found in July that support for the National Party was at its lowest in more than three decades - at just over 40%. By contrast, support for the DP was rising fast and, at the time, stood at just under 30%. The Conservatives were trailing with just on 23% of voter support. But *Rapport* concluded that the Conservatives would remain the major opposition party, and the Democrats would increase their parliamentary presence only slightly.

But the natural focus of pre-election polls on party support also has short-comings.

Most white South Africans traditionally engage in politics through the parliamentary process. They do not have the automatic rejection-reflex towards parliament that most South Africans feel.

So most white South Africans wishing



Democratic Party leaders Malan and Worrall on the left and ex-Prod de Beer on the right

to demonstrate their rejection of 'the system' do not do so in the way most other South Africans would: by refusing to have anything to do with the election process.

Instead they vote, choosing from the options placed before them - the Nats, the Democrats and the Conservatives.

From this perspective, the *Rapport* poll takes on a new significance: Three out of ten of white South Africans are not so much reflecting their support for a participating party, as for the only party available to them which is committed to destroying apartheid and constructing in its place a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

An additional factor is that support for the Democrats has little to do with the small print of the party's policies.

Post-apartheid federalism, for example, lies at the core of DP policy. But for a constituency whose collapsing collective lifestyle has forced a belated recognition that South Africa needs an alternative to Nat rule, federalism is not something likely to stamp its significance indelibly on the frontal lobes.

Further, pre-election polls also indicate that opposition to apartheid is significantly higher among young white people than it is among older generations - the key cut off being around the age of 35. White opposition to apartheid is thus on the increase.

A final consideration is that this shift is demonstrably less vulnerable than in the past to Nationalist swart-gevaar (black peril) tactics which amount to a warning that: We might be bad, but the alternative is too ghastly to contemplate.

This was clearly demonstrated by the Nats' loss of the Johannesburg municipal

seat of Linden to the DP in June. The Nat campaign focused almost exclusively on participation by members of the DP in a meeting between the ANC and a delegation of women from inside the country. In Linden at least, voters showed they were prepared to contemplate the alternative.

It remains to be seen whether the rest of white South Africa will be equally invulnerable to a far more intense Nationalist election campaign. But FW de Klerk and his government have read and understood the polls. And there is real reason for believing that 6 September will be the last white election. *WIP Correspondent.*

## The not so friendly uncle

Joshua Doore, the 'friendly uncle' in the furniture business, was not so friendly recently when it retrenched close to 500 workers and was forced to negotiate with Ccawusa.

Instead, the company tried a wide range of tactics to end the legal strike by 2 000 workers at over 50 furniture outlets.

But Ccawusa's shopfloor strength and militancy paid off substantially. Ccawusa's Johannesburg branch secretary Kaizer Tibedi said: 'Our demand for re-instatement has been met and a wage settlement has been agreed to as well'. The settlement, which was reached after a 35-day strike, will secure the re-instatement of 460 retrenched workers.

The dispute with Joshua Doore started



a few months after its merger with the World Furniture Group last August, bringing under its ownership Score Furnishers, Price and Pride and Bradlows. The JD Group announced a change in the structure and operation of the company which it said could lead to possible retrenchments. In February this year, the company confirmed its decision to retrench 460 workers at 10 Score and World Furniture Stores. It said it intended closing down the stores because of their low profit margin. Ccawusa rejected the decision, claiming the reasons given by management did not warrant closure.

Management then put forward a proposal as an alternative to the retrenchments: it offered major changes in employment conditions; a reduction in commission for sales staff from 10% to 5%; a reduction in the period of assessment of sales staff from four-and-a-half months to one month and an increase in sales targets to close to 200%, according to the union estimate.

'The company was asking for the impossible. These were issues the union had fought for and won during a 24-hour, non-stop negotiating session in 1988. Management wanted us to lose our gains', said organiser Mike Tsotsetsi.

The retrenchments started in April amidst large-scale worker action in stores on the Witwatersrand, lasting one week. Workers occupied the stores at night and the company obtained a court order to evict workers from the premises.

A full-scale strike started on 20 June after a conciliation board failed to resolve the dispute. Workers were continually harassed by police throughout the strike - close to 100 workers were arrested, and picketing at every store was disrupted by police.

During the strike, management used personalities associated with the democratic movement to intervene in the strike. Yusuf Surtee spoke to Tsotsetsi in an attempt to persuade the union to end the strike. Trevor Tutu, who acted as a consultant for the JD Group, spoke to the union on several occasions and put forward a proposal which the company denied any knowledge of.

'We believe the company tried to intimidate us by showing that they have contact with political figures who could assert some influence - a dirty trick', said Tsotsetsi. At the time of the dispute, annual wage negotiations were also taking place and a settlement was eventually reached on both issues.

According to the agreement, the company guaranteed the re-instatement of all retrenched workers on the basis of 25 workers a month starting from August. It also agreed to establish a monitoring committee of representatives from both the union and the company to ensure that the terms of the agreement are adhered to.

On the issue of wages, both parties agreed on a minimum wage of R710 effective from 1 February this year; an across-the-board increase of R110 effective from 1 August and a further R10 across the board in January 1990.

*Shareen Singh*

## Still in search of unity

**T**wo years have passed since the split in Ccawusa but despite its divisions it has achieved major gains recently.

Said Vivian Mtwa, general secretary of one faction: 'The Commercial, Catering industry still came out militant. Organisation on the ground and major battles against bosses have continued as usual'.

According to labour analysts the union has won wage increases averaging close to 20% between March and May this year. The increases are significant because the various union factions were not always in agreement on wages and industrial action.

This year the union also staged one of the toughest and longest-running strikes at Edworks stores nationwide. Some 600 workers were involved in the six-week-long strike action.

The union also forced management to recognise the union in Bophuthatswana. More recently, a nationwide strike at OK Bazaars was averted after lengthy and tense negotiations with management. Workers did, however, embark on a one-day strike. In 1986, Ccawusa members shook OK Bazaars - workers sustained a militant strike for ten weeks.

Traditionally, major national strikes in the sector have been over wages and working conditions - but this year substantial increases were won at several major chain stores without any industrial action. Noticeably strikes that did occur were confined mainly to the Transvaal.

Contrary to reports and speculation that Mtwa's Ccawusa planned to move into Nactu or continue on their own, the

union held on to its commitment to Cosatu and the principle of one union, one industry. Understandably, a certain degree of bitterness has existed over the union's expulsion, but it is clear that the majority were fighting for their place in Cosatu structures.

On reflection, it is clear that Cosatu realised its decision to expel might not have been the correct one and at this year's congress it decided to review its 1987 decision.

Cosatu invited the whole union to participate at its third congress - an indication of a more mature and concerted effort to unite the groups.

But due to the strong difference still existing between the two parties, the union was not allowed to second or put forward any motions unless it was a consensus position by the whole union. The union did, however, participate in the debates.

New developments have occurred during the year which could have implications for the broad unity process in Ccawusa. The Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union (Harwu) severed all ties with the grouping led by Kganare.

According to Harwu's Alan Horwitz the union is currently closer to the Mtwa faction politically but still sceptical of going back into Ccawusa.

He said Harwu is seriously considering going it alone and building the sector independently from Ccawusa. Horwitz said the sector had not been developed at the time of the split and has since suffered major setbacks as neither parties had given it much attention. Membership had not increased and the organisation is still weak on the ground.

Another problem affecting the union is the confusion about the legal status of the union, according to Horwitz. After the Ccawusa split, the court ruled the Harwu/Ccawusa merger null and void. This effectively meant that Harwu members had to continue operating independently.

Horwitz reiterated the need to build and develop the sector independently. 'The issue is to organise workers on the ground and build strong union structures, not politics', Horwitz stressed. A final decision on a merger will be taken at a Harwu meeting this month.

A Cosatu resolution passed at the congress outlined a process towards unity with a national congress of the union to be held on 10 November.

*Shareen Singh*

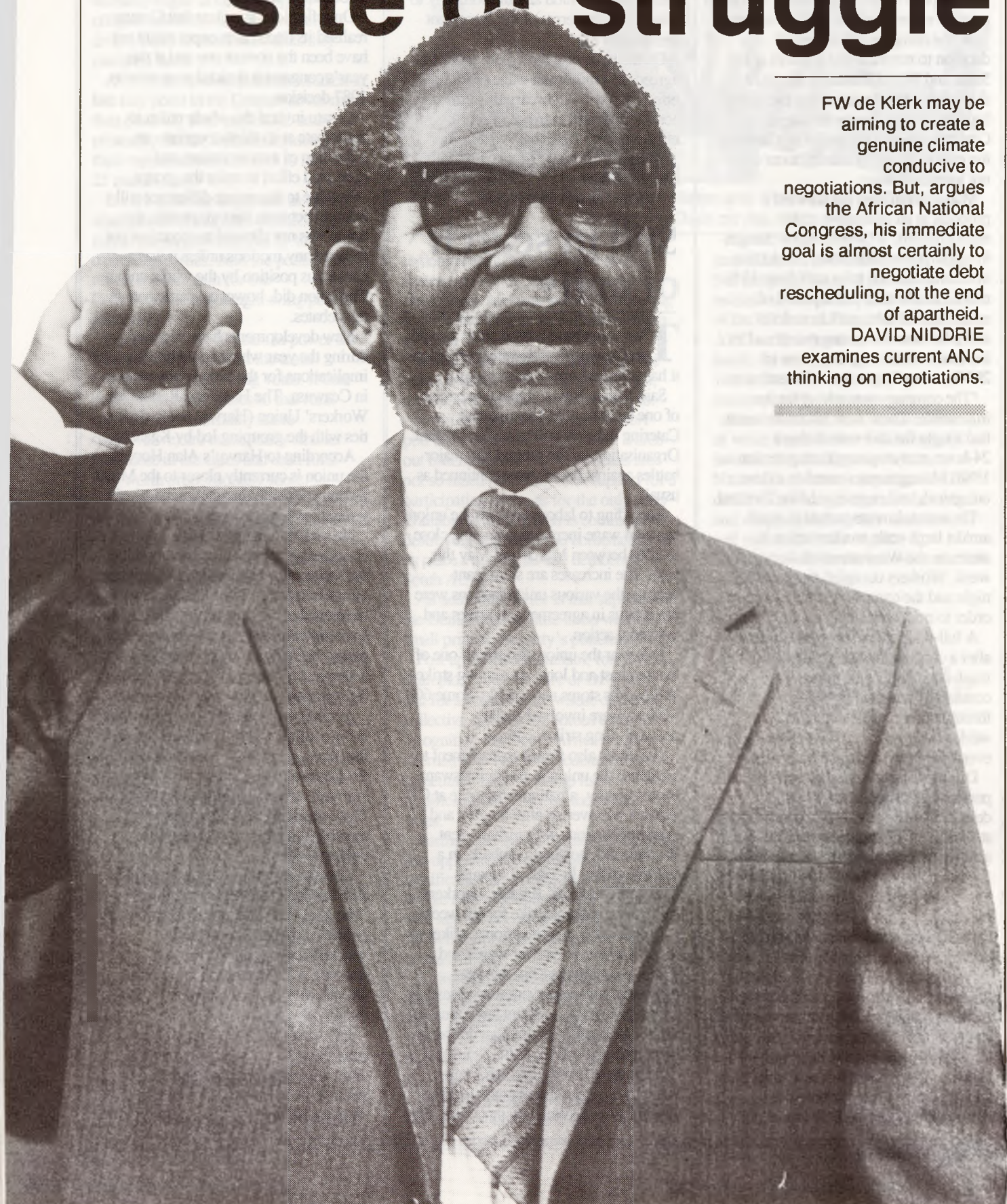


NEGOTIATIONS

# ... another site of struggle

FW de Klerk may be aiming to create a genuine climate conducive to negotiations. But, argues the African National Congress, his immediate goal is almost certainly to negotiate debt rescheduling, not the end of apartheid.

DAVID NIDDRIE  
examines current ANC  
thinking on negotiations.





**T**he African National Congress is re-examining its position on negotiations. But this reassessment has nothing to do with the offer made by National Party leader FW de Klerk at his party's special congress in June.

The ANC's point of entry into current debates on negotiations is not a reaction to government initiatives. It drafted a comprehensive position on the subject four years ago, and has been prompted to re-examine that position not by De Klerk's offer, but by the circumstances which forced him to make the offer.

This is not a minor distinction for the outlawed movement.

On its own the offer - portrayed by De Klerk as taking place between racial 'groups' and with the explicit intention of entrenching a white political veto and minority control of the economy - hardly bore consideration by the ANC.

This point was made in the ANC's response and driven home by the manner in which it was delivered: as a routine comment from the organisation's department of information and publicity, rather than as a statement from its leadership.

But no serious revolutionary movement can afford to ignore the implications of an enemy offer to talk.

At worst, such an offer implies Pretoria's need to engage the movement politically - if only to defeat it politically.

This in itself is a significant achievement. Indeed, in the ANC's early years political engagement was precisely what the movement was seeking.

The intervening years have seen a major shift both in the ANC's make-up and its strategic objective - now firmly locked on to what it calls 'transformation of South Africa into a non-racial, united and democratic country'.

But this does not diminish the significance of Pretoria's offer.

In October 1987, the African National Congress identified the steps Pretoria would have to take to create 'a climate conducive to negotiations'. These included:

- \* the release of political prisoners;
- \* the unbanning of banned organisations;
- \* unconditional return of exiles;
- \* the withdrawal of troops from the townships;
- \* an end to the state of emergency and the creation of an atmosphere in the country conducive to political freedom (either scrapping or suspension of repressive laws).

The movement specified that the aim of negotiations would have to be the transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial country, and that negotiations could only take place with the agreement of 'the entire democratic leadership of South Africa'.

From the ANC's perspective, Pretoria is seeking new ways of defeating its challenge for power. It is a tacit admission that the government has been unable to do so by other means, and in other terrains of struggle.

ANC officials argue that this admission of a tactical defeat demands that the movement continues and intensifies its work in these other terrains - mass political activity, military combat and the campaign for greater international pressure on Pretoria - rather than shifting the emphasis of its struggle to a terrain favoured by Pretoria.

The movement also draws encouragement from the circumstances which prompted De Klerk's offer.

While the political and economic crises which faced PW Botha through the mid-1980s appeared temporary, De Klerk has to operate from a recognition that the crises facing him are real and permanent facts of South African life.

And while for much of Botha's presidential term South Africa's Western trading partners viewed the National Party government as the only realistic source of political renovation, they now recognise that on its own the National Party is unequal to the task.

The ANC believes events at home and in the region have further confirmed Pretoria's limitations: at home, Pretoria's stated aim of

destroying the resistance movement and constructing an acceptable alternative has failed to 'break the morale of our people'; and agreements on Angola and Namibia have demonstrated that 'with all its vastly superior resources, Pretoria can be defeated'.

'The international community has read and understood the message in all this: it is possible to end apartheid, and to do so soon', argues an ANC official.

The movement assesses that its own capacity to take advantage of these changed circumstances has increased. 'So yes, indeed, we are optimistic', says another official.

But if the combination of these factors is bad news for Pretoria, the ANC is alive to the fact that they also touch its plans.

Having forced De Klerk to acknowledge negotiations as a possible route out of his government's difficulties - effectively putting the prospects of negotiations on the agenda - the movement and its allies, argues a ANC discussion paper released on 16 June, 'must be ready to bear the consequences of our victories'.

**T**o this end, in 1985 when its prospects were markedly dimmer, the movement began evolving a series of 'tactics for talks'. In an extensive assessment published in *WIP* 39, journalist Howard Barrell identified several elements of these tactics:

- \* a clear distinction between 'talks' and 'negotiations';

- \* 'talks' - far less common at the time than they have since become - covered exchanges with formations inside the country which the movement regarded as its basic or explicit allies, and engagements with 'non-government elements of the white bloc'. The objective of such talks, since pursued with obvious success, was 'to achieve maximum unity'. Talks also aimed to win over as many potentially amenable whites as possible or at least to neutralise hitherto actively reactionary elements;

- \* the ANC defined 'negotiations',



by contrast, as having a far more limited and defined framework, within which attempts were made to achieve a settlement and to which several non-negotiable preconditions would apply. Central among these would be that the object of such negotiations would be to dismantle apartheid and arrive at an agreed means of transforming South Africa into a united, non-racial and democratic country. 'All we would be discussing in such talks is the modality for the transfer of power', an ANC official told Barrell at the time.

The principles from which these tactics were evolved, Barrell continued, included a recognition that a liberation or revolutionary movement 'goes to war for the seizure of state power by the people. It does not, in the first instance, go to war to hold talks'.

And while the ANC asserted that any serious liberation movement must be prepared to talk 'even as the battle rages', it was emphatic that 'talks of any kind should never be allowed to demobilise the liberation movement's forces - unless and until an explicit ceasefire is decided upon. Unless and until that happens, talks are one tactic alongside the gathering of forces involved in mass political mobilisation and armed struggle'.

Building on this, the ANC's national executive committee publicly put forward its perspective on the issue of negotiations two years later. This included the preconditions - now accepted both by the dominant elements of the internal resistance movement, and by many of the international forces and institutions with an interest in the issue.

These preconditions were designed to create what the movement described as 'a climate conducive to negotiations' and to ensure mutual agreement on the object of any negotiations: the transformation of South Africa.

**W**ith talk of negotiations becoming increasingly persistent this year, the ANC turned again to its 1987 position. It did so with two major aims in



*Thabo Mbeki - leading the ANC's diplomatic campaign*

mind.

Firstly it aimed to broaden the base of support for its demands. It has drawn into debate those formations inside the country most likely to sit alongside it at the negotiating table. In developing a common and comprehensive position with those formations, the ANC is also seeking to pre-empt any attempt to impose an instant settlement package from outside - the most likely candidate being Britain, which managed something similar during the Lancaster House negotiations which gave birth to Zimbabwe.

Secondly, the re-examination is intended to ensure that the liberation movement's perspectives, platform and planning are sufficient to ensure that 'a climate conducive to negotiations' is achieved in practice, and then that the negotiation process has the real potential to achieve the ANC's stated objective.

This re-examination has already produced a key addition to the ANC's original five preconditions of 1987: Cosatu's proposal that South African Defence Force and police personnel be confined to base during negotiations. Individual ANC officials have pronounced themselves in favour of this.

This is based on a belief that neither free political activity nor a climate conducive to negotiations can exist under the guns of an enemy force - as the presence of Koevoet units in Namibia has already

demonstrated.

The ANC believes that either the military forces of both sides must control the streets during negotiations, or that neither side should have that power. Given the vast military disparity between the two, the ANC clearly favours the latter option.

An additional possibility raised during this re-examination is that of a constituent assembly. 'In place of a negotiating table filled with parties with no clear and demonstrable constituencies or mandates, an elected constituent assembly in which the various parties would be represented on the basis of their actual support would be a more sensible option'.

Both this and the demand of SAP-SADF confinement to barracks appear to assume some degree of international involvement in policing the process and possibly in providing the backing for an interim government.

This may lie some way off in the future. But for the ANC there is a more immediate issue, which is central to its current thinking on negotiations: even if De Klerk's government moves on from its June proposals, it does so on its own terms, and under no obligation to accept either the form or the objective of negotiations favoured by the ANC.

Left to himself, the ANC argues, De Klerk will agree only to those preconditions he feels compelled to accept, will implement them in the order and at times most favourable to his party, and will define the process itself in terms most beneficial to the interests he represents.

**T**he release of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and the other Rivonia trial prisoners is essential if anyone is to regard what follows with any seriousness. But even this first step has been the target of serious resistance from within South Africa's security establishment. Senior military and police intelligence officers have argued that the political climate remains too volatile for the releases to take place.

Steve Hiron-Barber - Arapex



But having been forced to back down on the hunger strike and on the hospital protest, they are likely to lose out on this issue as well.

The release process - reportedly planned to take place in stages, starting with Sisulu and ending with Mandela - will set the tone for subsequent developments, says an ANC official. In its effort to buy maximum international credit at minimum cost in political reaction back home, Pretoria is likely to warn each departing prisoner that any political activity on his part will place in jeopardy the liberty of those he leaves behind.

A senior ANC official argues that De Klerk is thereafter likely to move rapidly to consolidate his reputation and credibility abroad - and attempt to outflank the liberation movement, forcing it to participate in negotiations or face increasing marginalisation. His logical next step would be to lift the state of emergency and an informal lifting of the ban on the ANC by tacitly recognising Mandela and his ex-prison comrades as an internal ANC 'committed to peace'.

Having thus fulfilled the first three clauses of the release-unban-dismantle-negotiate process demanded of him - but without actually creating the 'climate conducive to negotiation' - De Klerk would then logically offer the 'internal ANC' a place in his national council. If the ANC rejects this (as seems most likely) he could, without losing anything, offer to talk to them on virtually any subject under the sun.

The international credibility thus accrued would, for De Klerk, be literally worth its weight in gold, argues the same ANC official. And it can only be imagined what Margaret Thatcher, who has virtually single-handedly held off tougher sanctions in the Commonwealth and European Community in exchange for not a single major reform from Pretoria, could achieve for conservatism in this context.

A multitude of factors - mass political activity, spontaneous or organised, to name probably the



*ANC National Executive Committee member Ronnie Kassrils*

most significant - would seriously distort this and similar scenarios. ANC officials are not overly fond of scenario sketching. But they demonstrate a keen awareness of their need to deny De Klerk a free hand in setting any negotiations agenda.

They also believe that once De Klerk begins moving it will be in his interests, in the early stages, to move fast. If he is seen to be granting major concessions of the sort described in the scenario, his reward will come in the form of growing pressure - particularly from the West - on the ANC to respond in kind, with concessions of their own.

Thereafter, say ANC sources, Pretoria's pace would logically move down several gears much as it did over Namibia from 1980 - with the intention of wearing down its opposition with endless highly technical negotiations: haggling, in the expectation of a slow but steady demobilisation and demoralisation of the liberation movement's support base.

De Klerk has in fact spoken of 'the next ten years' as deciding the future of the country and the region.

**T**he ANC, however, identifies a more immediate hurdle for De Klerk. Next July, South Africa's R30-billion foreign debt standstill agreement expires and in the run-up to expiry, the government must negotiate rescheduling

(delaying repayment) of the debt.

If the political situation in South Africa looks rosy, and the economy as if it may be on the road to some sort of recovery, foreign bankers will be amenable to fairly benign rates of interest and terms of repayment. And Pretoria will have won itself some economic breathing space.

**I**nternationally, therefore, the ANC is engaging in a dual diplomatic thrust. As a short-term objective, it is working to bring maximum pressure to bear on the British, French, US, West German and Swiss bankers involved in negotiating the debt rescheduling.

At the same time, anti-apartheid groups throughout the world will be working to seal off Pretoria's existing access to desperately-needed finance.

If this succeeds or even threatens to succeed in the next 11 months, De Klerk will have to work extremely hard to keep the bankers happy - thus making himself more vulnerable to the demands of the ANC and its allies.

Paralleling this initiative is an attempt by the ANC to build a substantial body of support for its negotiations platform to counter-balance that being offered by Thatcher.

This could demand substantial compromises by the ANC and its allies on positions they regard as essential if the attainment of political power is to have any meaning for the majority.

This issue is currently under examination by a sub-committee of the Organisation of African Unity. The ANC would like to see both OAU and the frontline states hammer out a common position in advance of the Commonwealth conference in October to head off any Thatcher initiative.

The ANC thus sees De Klerk's current initiatives as a genuine attempt to create a climate conducive to negotiations - but on debt rescheduling, not on the end of apartheid. If De Klerk succeeds with this, his narrow options will expand considerably.



# It takes two



Gill de Vlieg - Atapix



Eric Miller - Atapix

# to tango



**A**t the rhetorical level, at least, there is international consensus on the need for a negotiated settlement in South Africa between the two prime protagonists - the South African State and the African National Congress.

Says United States Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen: 'I think it is important for the two parties to get themselves together. It takes two to tango. We are not going to talk only to the South African government. We must talk to the black leadership, including the ANC, and say to them, "If the new government of South Africa proposes a dialogue, will you be ready?"'

Earlier this year, Soviet Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamishin used exactly the same metaphor of the tango to assert a very different position. The ANC, he asserted was ready to negotiate. 'There is no need to push them on that. But it takes two to tango'.

Adamishin made this observation in Harare, on a continent where the Namibian settlement has dramatically underscored how the settlement process itself determines the fruits of negotiation.

Many have welcomed as a clear victory the Namibian settlement which will lead to the final withdrawal of South Africa from its former colony. The decisive battle at Cuito Cuanavale, combined with the inability of the South African government to sustain the costs of the war, has won what no one thought possible a year ago - independence for Namibia before the end of the apartheid state.

The elections will test support for the South West African People's Organisation (Swapo). And, while a hostile South Africa cannot be wished (or fought) away at this stage, it is for Swapo to ensure that the transformation of Namibia gains the active participation of Namibians, making foreign disruption less likely.

Others believe that while Resolution 435 has resulted in a

*Negotiations are not an all-or-nothing matter. They need not be a recipe for instant defeat, but equally they will be no instant solution for the victory of democracy, argues MARK PHILLIPS from the Centre for Policy Studies. Who, of the many actors in the drama, will win out in determining the context for negotiations will not become clear for some time to come.*

relatively peaceful settlement, it has altogether excluded Swapo and the Namibian people from the settlement process.

A South African-appointed administrator continues to wield final authority during the transition. Dirty electioneering may prevent Swapo from gaining the 66% of the votes it needs in November to be able to draw up a constitution without having to strike compromises with other parties.

And with South Africa holding onto Walvis Bay and maintaining troops at bases less than an hour from the Namibian border, its capacity to destabilise and incapacitate the new state's economy and social infrastructure is even greater than it was in Mozambique.

All these factors make it difficult for many to see recent events as anything more than a partial victory for the Namibian people.

To avoid a playback of the Namibian settlement in South Africa, the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) is moving towards a three-part programme involving setting clear terms for negotiation; taking the initiative in popularising these conditions; and mobilising to ensure that mass-based organisations play a central role in any negotiations which may form part of a political solution.

It is no longer a question of whether the MDM views negotiations as desirable - for they are rapidly becoming a reality. For instance, in May United States Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen announced his

government's intention to 'do everything possible to organise negotiations between the black majority and the white minority'.

This was but one indication of the powerful pressure which US President George Bush and British Premier Margaret Thatcher, on the one hand, and the Frontline states, the Soviets and the millions of South Africans who desire peace, on the other, are bringing to bear both on the state and the liberation movement.

Negotiations are not an all-or-nothing matter. They need not be a recipe for instant defeat, but equally they will be no instant solution for the victory of democracy. In certain circumstances they may be complementary to mass mobilisation for people's power.

**T**he issue of negotiations is one terrain of struggle, among others. Both the state and the liberation movement will mobilise to advance their interests to the maximum.

Beeld's political correspondent, Willie Kuhn, sees negotiations as a 'different kind of war' more testing to the state than the fight against terrorism'. In an article in April this year, he argued that the state lacked - and badly needed - a plan to deal with the possible decision by the ANC to suspend armed struggle as a strategy.

'It will have to be able to defend this plan not only against smaller powers like those participating in the tricameral parliament but ultimately against much stronger powers who also represent UDF/ANC interests. The party which cannot properly pursue that debate ultimately loses the war. That is the hidden danger when war is pursued as debate'.

The National Party (NP) government enters the 'war' on a strong organisational basis and, through its security network, effectively in control of the state. But its options are narrowing and it has to contend with dissension within its ranks.

Since PW Botha's stroke and the resultant power struggle within the National Party, the executive, the



security establishment and the state president are no longer the omnipotent power which PW Botha and his military advisors so successfully bound together.

The economy is widely perceived to be in a state of decay. Both ministers Adriaan Vlok and Barend du Plessis have openly admitted that international pressure, particularly in the form of financial sanctions, is an effective constraint on state action.

The moribund state of the national statutory council (or 'Great Indaba') is the most graphic illustration of the state's failure to broaden its political base despite three years of emergency rule and co-ordinated counter-revolutionary warfare policies.

Though it has been weakened and fragmented, mass democratic organisation is slowly reconstituting itself and it continues to hold the greatest political influence over most township residents. It has managed, under difficult circumstances, to broaden its influence, mobilising the biggest stayaway in South Africa's history under emergency conditions.

It exercises the greatest constraint on the ambitions of conservative politicians in urban councils and bantustan states.

The success of the hunger strikes has effectively eliminated mass detention of activists as a cornerstone of 'counter-revolutionary warfare' policies. It is rumoured that the state security council was overruled by the cabinet on the hunger strike - the first time in years that political considerations outweighed those of security in this way.

While the domestic crisis of legitimacy remains quite unresolved, there is mounting pressure on the state to dismantle apartheid and deal with its prime adversary - the ANC.

Yet, the questions of who to negotiate with to resolve the political stalemate and what form of constitutional proposal to back remain sources of deep conflict in the



Botha says that no negotiations or policy discussions occurred, the fact remains that Botha became the first head of the white minority state to meet the ANC leader.

Yet, it was just over a year ago that two top officials in the department of constitutional development and planning had their security clearances withdrawn, partly for their willingness to talk to members of the MDM. And during the reign of the securocrats, firm instructions were issued to officials to stop talking to 'revolutionaries' - a reference to community organisations and bodies like the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC)

which had engaged the state in negotiations both at the local and national level in the 1985/6 period.

The NP's insistence that the ANC 'renounce' violence before it would consider talking to it reflected this hard line. But the failure of security structures to resolve political conflict led some within the the NP camp to look beyond this position.

In January the NP-supporting daily, *Beeld*, declared in an editorial that negotiations with the ANC were not as unthinkable as was commonly held.

Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk moderator Johan Heyns has suggested that the renunciation of violence should be an outcome of negotiations not a precondition for them, as the state has insisted. A recent NP statement puts the precondition somewhat differently, stating it is willing to talk to 'anyone who is committed to the pursuit of peace'.

Verligte Nat MP Albert Nothnagel - now Ambassador to The Hague - was defended by Botha when he stated that the government would one day have to negotiate with the ANC.

Many NP supporters are worried that the government is not adequately prepared for the new situation which is developing.

NP state.

The state-appointed Law Commission, exploring the issue of a Bill of Rights, concluded that all South Africans required the vote. Though its recommendations have support within the NP, there is little consensus over precisely how votes should be exercised.

De Klerk has declared himself in favour of four separate 'constituent assemblies' for 'own affairs' and some sort of consensus-based multi-racial executive controlling general affairs 'without any one group dominating any other group'.

The dominant NP idea at its last federal congress centred on the concept of 'concurrent majorities'. This seems to imply the majority representatives of all four racial groups (and possibly the representatives of a 'non-group' group) would have to separately agree on an issue for it to become law. White rule would be exercised through a veto over policies contrary to white group interests.

**N**egotiations with the ANC are the key issue for the NP state. In this light, the symbolic significance of PW Botha's meeting with Nelson Mandela on 5 July cannot be over played. Although



Beeld's Willie Kuhn points out that the release of Mandela would give the ANC the key to participation in the political process - and therefore the opportunity to begin its war-like debate.

The state's refusal to release Mandela has been portrayed as the key obstacle to negotiations by everybody, from bantustan leaders to Western governments and the ANC itself. But once he is released - and public pressure almost guarantees it will be as an unrestricted activist - the state will effectively be allowing the ANC leader to operate openly within the country.

Since becoming NP leader, de Klerk has had a series of discussions with the conservative National Forum, with Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha and with a range of bantustan leaders, such as Gazankulu's Hudson Ntsanwisi, Lebowa's Nelson Ramodike and Enos Mabuza of kaNgwane.

These discussions, billed as evidence of the NP's serious intent to 'negotiate' a new constitution, would be better seen as evidence of de Klerk's continuing intent not to negotiate with the ANC, to keep it on the outside and to pursue a reformist, multi-racial power-sharing formula in which the demands for a non-racial democracy would not have to be addressed.

The state might hope for an inflexible negotiating stance on the part of the liberation movement which would allow it to gradually bring into state structures a range of conservative blacks while refusing to accede to genuine democratic demands. As this scenario developed, the liberation movement, to avoid marginalisation, might feel impelled to join the negotiating system from a 'Johnny come lately' position of weakness.

If the government were under less pressure internally and externally, negotiations could become just another in the long line of strategies which successive governments have



pursued to defend the white minority state.

In all these scenarios de Klerk still faces formidable obstacles, including the dilemma of Nelson Mandela; the demand for an end to the state of emergency; the severely limited credibility of conservative black politicians; the power of the MDM; and intense international economic and political pressure for all-party talks to include the liberation movement.

Furthermore, the most prominent conservative black politicians have all refused to enter into constitutional negotiations until conditions very similar to those set by the democratic movement are met. Buthelezi, Mabuza and Daveyton councillor Tom Boya have all set the release of Mandela and other political prisoners, the unbanning of the ANC and the lifting of the state of emergency as preconditions for talks.

The success of the ANC's international and diplomatic offensive has meant that the struggle in South Africa has been internationalised to an extent unprecedented in the history of national liberation struggles.

The reduction in international tension as a result of the Soviet Union's policies of glasnost and

perestroika has largely removed the South African question from the sphere of east-west conflict. At the rhetorical level at least, there is now an almost complete international consensus on the need for political initiatives, including negotiations between the state and the ANC, to bring the system of apartheid to an end.

**W**hy, after many years of being seen as being in cahoots with South Africa's white rulers, are the British and Americans now pushing for an all-party settlement?

In the United States, the anti-apartheid movement has succeeded in integrating the issue of apartheid into

the domestic civil rights issue. In 1986 this was probably the primary motor force within the US Congress in its imposition of limited mandatory sanctions, despite a presidential veto.

The increasing tempo of the struggle within South Africa has led to a re-evaluation of US policy. The Kissinger doctrine in the 1970s held that the strength of white minority regimes in Southern Africa, the weakness in nationalist resistance and the dictates of the Cold War made it logical for the US to tacitly back these states, assuming that change could only come through them.

Despite Zimbabwe's independence, the doctrine continued to underlie Reagan's 'constructive engagement' policy. But the failure of US-backed top-down reform in South Africa became very evident in the light of the unprecedented internal resistance of 1985/6. The Schultz report of 1986 concluded that change from above could not work and that no solution was possible without ANC participation.

Unlike the Reagan administration, the Bush administration accepts the utility of sanctions as one aspect of a carrot-and-stick approach. Cohen does not at this stage support further sanctions against apartheid, but he



accepts those that are now in place and admits they have been successful in 'concentrating South African minds'.

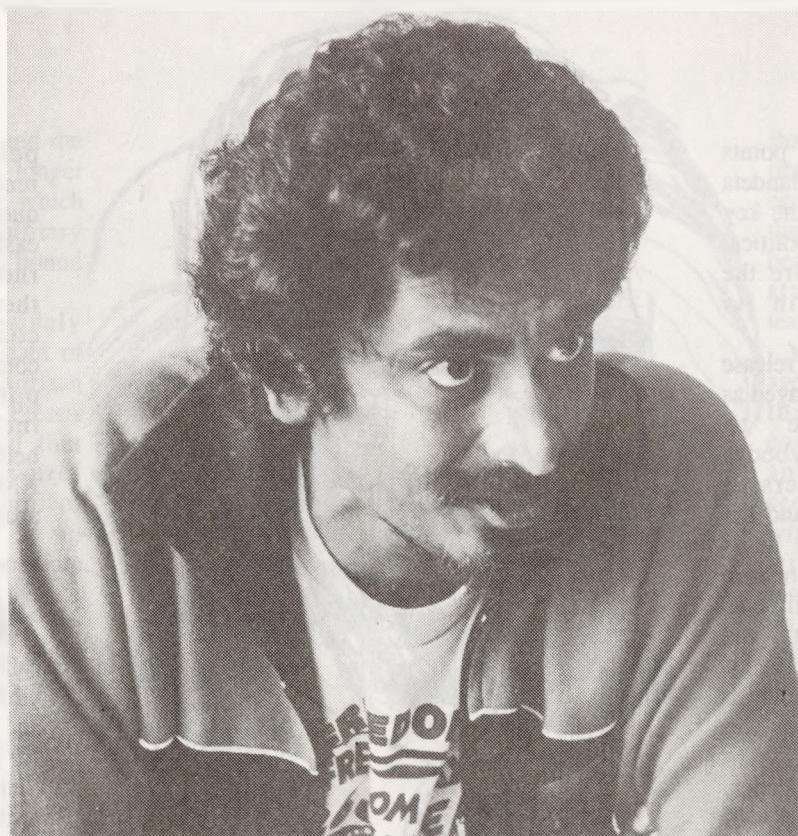
The US, along with Britain, hopes that the regional settlements which are developing in Namibia, Angola and possibly Mozambique will serve as a model for South Africa itself. It is now convinced that this must involve negotiated compromise involving all parties, including the NP state and the ANC.

While the ANC has privately been warned that it might isolate itself from an internationally approved process should it refuse to talk, the NP state is under great pressure to create an environment conducive to talks back home.

The stick is the threat of continuing or even greater economic and diplomatic isolation. The carrot is diplomatic kudos, an easing of economic pressures and possible influence by the West to encourage compromises protecting key cultural, economic and, possibly, political interests of whites in future negotiations.

Along with the US, which has its own limited sanctions, Margaret Thatcher's Britain is the only power which regularly vetoes mandatory sanctions in the United Nations. Likewise, Britain, with the largest single stake in the South African economy, was the only stalwart opponent of sanctions at the Commonwealth conference last year. The Commonwealth conference in October will bring great pressure on Britain to fall into line or prove that its non-sanctions policy is showing results.

The growing prospect of a Labour Party revival in Britain itself is another major pressure point on British foreign policy towards South



*Cosatu's Jay Naidoo:*

*Cosatu positions on negotiations are very similar to the ANC's*

Africa.

Thatcher's stand on sanctions gives her the leverage to wield a big stick at Pretoria, while simultaneously offering an enticing carrot. This dual strategy hinges on persuading the South African state to release Mandela and, on the other hand, enlisting the support of the Frontline states to force the ANC to renounce or at least suspend its armed struggle and negotiate.

'Negotiate!' has been Thatcher's constant refrain on Southern African issues.

In an interview with *Beeld* editor Wim Wepener, she refused to equate the IRA and the ANC, on the grounds of the denial of the vote to black South Africans. 'I do not see how', she said, 'in the modern world, it is possible to achieve political stability except on a basis where all adults have the vote. The issue is to reconcile the exercise of those normal democratic rights, which cannot be denied, with the reasonable protection of minority interests. How that is to be done has to be negotiated between South Africans'.

For the moment, Thatcher's persuasive approach has the support

of the US. Because British foreign policy is determined by the executive without congressional constraints, it is easier for her to offer the carrots while the US waits behind with the sanctions stick.

A relatively early internationally-brokered solution would be seen as less threatening to Western economic and strategic interests than one in which the balance of power had shifted decisively to the mass-based, anti-apartheid opposition.

The fear of growing diplomatic isolation, the possibility of a more flexible NP

state under de Klerk and a desire both to limit the Soviet role and build on its new policy of joint resolutions to regional conflicts all contribute to the urgency with which Thatcher and Bush are moving on South Africa.

**U**S and British strategies for a negotiated compromise rely to a large extent on Soviet co-operation. The US and Britain's hope is that if they can deliver the NP government to the negotiating table, the Soviets will deliver the ANC. This gives the Soviets considerable power in the process. But it by no means implies either a break with the ANC or uncritical acceptance of the US and British agendas.

While some Soviet academics suggest that South Africa is ripe for political compromises which will protect important white interests while guaranteeing blacks political rights; and while there are Soviet commentators who have posed negotiations as an alternative to armed struggle, a Soviet Foreign Ministry official was quoted in June as saying: 'Scholars can hold their own views differing from official ones ... But one thing is certain. The

Anna Ziemski - Atapix



USSR will continue backing the democratic forces in South Africa who combat apartheid under ANC leadership'.

Reports of ANC meetings with Soviet government and Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee representatives have emphasised a preference for 'political' solutions and de-emphasised the fact that Soviet backing of the armed struggle continues.

Perhaps one of the most accurate accounts of current Soviet policy is contained in a recent paper prepared by senior Foreign Ministry official AA Makarov, in apparent consultation with the universities, the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, the Communist Party and the government.

It analyses the South African crisis as having 'been generated mostly by contradictions between the development of South African productive forces in the age of the revolution in science and technology and the apartheid-based institutionalised system of monopolistic state control and regulations governing national manpower'. It concludes that 'South Africa's intensive economic development has been made directly contingent on freedom ... from racial discrimination and on political rights'.

The Soviets assess the balance of forces around this contradiction as relatively stable. 'Organisationally, politically and militarily, the anti-racist resistance movement is not yet ready to topple the regime and capture power, while the regime is no longer capable of curbing the growth of resistance'.

The Soviets believe the state will continue with its reform programme - but that this can at best provide it respite.



*Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.  
The USSR will continue backing the democratic forces in SA*

Although Makarov argues that a revolutionary overthrow of the state remains possible, he emphasises that objective conditions still militate against it. These include the state's powerful apparatus of repression, the fact that the SADF is fully loyal to the state, the heterogeneous nature of the resistance, the lack of a strong political centre or comprehensive underground structure and the fact that MK 'cannot yet be regarded as a people's revolutionary army'.

Therefore the Soviets are emphasising the importance of talks, says Makarov, while conceding that under present conditions talks would be little more than a 'tactical ploy' for the state, aimed at misleading public opinion and dividing the ANC. For this reason, he writes, a political solution to the South African conflict is only possible when the state is so weakened by internal contradictions and popular resistance that it either has to cede state power altogether or to share it on terms laid down largely by the national liberation movement.

**W**hile the ANC believes that, together with its internal allies, it delivered power-

ful blows to the apartheid state and helped inspire mass action and resistance, it recognises that it was not able to take full advantage of favourable conditions.

Points of self-criticism raised within the ANC include:

- \* failure to deploy sufficient forces inside South Africa;
- \* difficulty in basing itself organisationally among the masses;
- \* over-reliance on an externally-based Umkhonto we Sizwe;
- \* failure to integrate armed struggle with mass democratic struggle, leaving the masses unarmed in

the face of the security forces and vigilantes. There has been a re-assertion of the necessity for political strategy to lead and determine military strategy - allied to the belief that armed struggle must complement mass struggle.

While there are differing views in the ANC over whether a military-based seizure of power is likely, what is generally agreed is that the armed pillar is indispensable as one strategy among others for the attainment of power. The creation of a revolutionary army with three components - rural guerilla units, urban combat groups and a popular self-defence militia - is seen as a crucial current and future task.

At the same time, there is a growing emphasis in the ANC on the concept of negotiations as a complementary facet of struggle. Questions are being posed as to whether there are irreconcilable contradictions between a people's war and a negotiated settlement; between 'partial' and 'absolute' victories; and between the armed seizure of power and a possible strategic objective of negotiating the transfer of political power from the white minority to the majority.



For the ANC, the urgency of the issue is increasing as the US and other Western powers bring pressure to bear for the ANC to moderate its stance, suspend violence and start talking. This pressure can only grow.

The ANC has consistently defended its alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) but there is little doubt that this will come under heavy attack from conservatives and liberals in South Africa and the West. The SACP, although wary of attempts to push the liberation movement into negotiations before it has organised strength on the ground to back its demands, was reported after its last congress as accepting that strategies of armed struggle and popular insurrection do not rule out the possibility of negotiations and compromise.

In a statement on 9 October 1987, the ANC National Executive Committee stressed: 'The ANC has never been opposed to a negotiated settlement. The ANC and the masses as a whole are ready and willing to enter genuine negotiations provided they are aimed at the transformation of our country into a united and non-racial democracy'.

Then, and subsequently, the ANC has set out specific steps that the government would have to take to 'demonstrate its seriousness' and to create a climate for negotiations. These are:

- \* the release of all political prisoners and detainees;
- \* the lifting of the state of emergency;
- \* the withdrawal of troops and paramilitary police from the townships;
- \* the unbanning of the ANC and other organisations;
- \* the scrapping of repressive laws that limit basic freedoms.

The meeting of these conditions - which imply that exiles will be allowed home, treason trials will cease and political hangings be halted - also forms the basis for a possible suspension of armed struggle and the sanctions campaign.

The ANC has recently gone further to propose what it calls a 'new negotiation concept'. This involves

ensuring mass participation in the negotiation process by elections to a constituent assembly which would draft a constitution. Negotiations would therefore be conducted by representative, elected leaders on terms determined by an electorate comprising all South Africans.

The ANC might consider participation in some form of interim government to oversee the election of a popular assembly and the consequent negotiation process. This draws on the transitional experiences of Namibia and Mozambique and aims, among other things, to subject the claims of different groups to take part in the negotiation process to the democratic test.

**T**he mass campaigns of the 1980s placed the MDM, led by the UDF and Cosatu, as the most powerful counter to the NP government within the country. The further development of national formations among youth, women, workers, pupils and students - and the struggles conducted by them - will ensure the participation of the masses in securing their future.

Congress of South African Trade Unions general secretary Jay Naidoo and this year's National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) congress have substantially confirmed and reiterated the ANC's position on negotiations. Church leaders Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak, Beyers Naude and Frank Chikane have asked foreign banks to set conditions for the rolling over of loans to the South African government - conditions similar to those listed by the ANC as prerequisites for negotiation.

Negotiation strategies are not new to the MDM. Throughout the building of organs of people's power in the 1980s, negotiations occurred between UDF affiliates and various state authorities. These helped to build and legitimise organisations.

The MDM has not made the lifting of restriction orders a precondition for local-level talks. But the question of national negotiations is very different. A consistent prior demand of the MDM has been the freeing of the political process. This is linked to a rejection of 'behind closed doors' talks which could lead to compromises and bargains which exclude the mass of South Africans.

The MDM's position is straightforward: negotiations can only occur with a mandate; mandates can only be democratically granted under conditions of free and open political activity. This position is based on the belief that, organised within the ranks of the MDM, the masses remain the most important guarantee of democratisation and social transformation.

It is in this context that the liberation movement's stated preconditions for national negotiation are so significant. As articulated by the ANC, by the Numsa congress, and by Cosatu's Naidoo, they are a powerful guarantee against a negotiation process designed to bypass the South African people. In Naidoo's words: 'The condition we stress is freedom of association and freedom of speech. In order for us to have negotiations, organisations will have to put their programs to the people, to canvas the people and get mandates. That implies that any negotiations have to be open'.

For the MDM the greatest challenge as questions of transition become more immediate is the deepening of organisation and the building of the broadest possible unity of anti-apartheid forces. As struggles intensify and the state comes under increasing pressure to respond, a united front of mass organisation and apartheid opponents will be impossible to marginalise.

During the process of negotiation the state may be less able to use high levels of repression against the MDM and greater space for organisation may be created. But a concomitant increase in extra-legal and informal forms of repression is quite possible - and even likely. Negotiations through cycles of warfare and conflict are no less possible than they were in Vietnam, Rhodesia and Namibia. If negotiations are a terrain of struggle, then as in other struggles, there will be advances and retreats, gains and losses.

**An expanded version of this article will appear shortly in Transformation No 9**





# The face of EC policy

*The EC has dropped the preconditions for dialogue with South Africa that it agreed upon in 1985. Now it only has one - the release of Nelson Mandela. DAVID COETZEE reports from London on the implications of this action by the EC.*

**A**fter five years of equivocation, the European Community finally and quietly seems to have ditched its common policy on South Africa and sanctions - as well as the pre-conditions for dialogue it agreed to in 1985.

The diplomatic backsliding came to a definitive end last month at a Frontline states/EC meeting when European foreign ministers refused to tighten sanctions. Observers in Brussels agree this has been primarily as a result of pressure from Britain's Margaret Thatcher.

In refusing any further sanctions action, the EC's foreign ministers, meeting their Frontline counterparts in Luxembourg, said 'the time is not right'. Instead, indications were that they would give President-designate FW de Klerk the time he needs to make 'reforms'. At the same time, they expressed an interest in the possibility of 'dialogue with democratic parties' inside South Africa.

In 1985, the EC's Council of Ministers decided that before there would be any negotiated settlement Pretoria had to make significant policy changes: it had to end detentions without trial; unban political parties; remove discriminatory laws; end the state of emergency; release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and stop forced removals.

Pretoria has not yielded to any of these demands; in fact in many areas things have significantly worsened.

The six conditions now appear to have been reduced to just one - the release of Nelson Mandela.

The other five points have, de facto, and with no public announcement, been relegated.

Thatcher's success, say European observers, has been



to remove sanctions from the political agenda and to insert the concept of dialogue with South Africa - prior to any movement by Pretoria. To this end, she has worked with West Germany and Portugal, while Holland has played a useful role as its ruling coalition has shifted rightwards.

The Frontline states' foreign ministers had called for an end to EC loans to South Africa and a better enforcement of those sanctions already in place.

They wanted an immediate ban on South African coal, directly and through third countries, a ban on fruit and vegetable imports and an end to all military operations with South Africa.

They also urged EC states to introduce measures to end all visa arrangements with South Africa, and to introduce measures to prevent EC nationals from working in the defence and police forces.

Their call was based on the limited sanctions package agreed on by the EC in 1986. This agreement included a ban on iron and steel, imports of gold coins, and a ban on new investments by EC companies in South Africa.

But their meeting took place in a new climate of accommodation towards Pretoria. So, the frontline reps were also seeking simply to counter the diplomatic offensive launched by FW de Klerk around his 'new deal', and to set some diplomatic precedents of their own.

They had been trying for three years to set up the meeting on sanctions, but in the end their spokesman, Zambian Foreign Minister Luke Mwananshiku, said afterwards that the meeting was 'not a success'.

Francisco Fernandez Ordonez, Spain's foreign minister and the spokesman for the EC group, said that they did not discount additional sanctions, but 'the time is not right'. (Spain, incidentally, remains a major importer of South African coal).

Until the last, the EC officials were trying to get the discussion put into the framework of EC-ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific nation) talks, which are limited to aid and human rights discussions and not to political and military issues.

Thatcher, in her antagonism to sanctions action, has been knocking

at an open door - most EC states are keenly aware of the advantages of trade with South Africa and could only be prised with difficulty from their positions by the internal uprising of 1985/6, when they agreed to partial sanctions.

British trade with South Africa (it was revealed last month through a slip-up by the UK trade department) is now massively higher than previously noted: Ecu6,97-bn (European Community currency) in imports last year, largely through gold bullion.

With these figures taken into account, the statistical office of the EC announced that overall EC South African imports last year rose 132% from Ecu5,3-bn to 12,5-bn and exports rose by 27%, from Ecu4,9-bn to 6,3-bn.

For South Africa, links with the EC are crucial: it is the world's largest trading bloc, with an internal market of 323 million people accounting for 19% of world trade. It speaks on behalf of its 12 members in international trade negotiations. Trade with the third world represents around a third of external EC exports and imports.

South African trade with the EC represents 53% of all its foreign trade.

The EC has played a particularly important role in the SADCC, as a source of investment (and direct aid) and as a trading partner. And it will usher Namibia into the Lome Convention after independence.

While going slow on sanctions, the EC is stressing 'positive' measures for the 'victims of apartheid'. It is a major funder for a number of organisations in the democratic movement in South Africa, working through the Kagiso Trust, the South African Council of Churches, and the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

These measures, more aid to SADCC and a move to 'dialogue', are being presented as an alternative to sanctions.

Individual EC members have, in exasperation at this stance, or as a means to urge others on, or as a result of local lobbying pressure, pursued their own lines. Thus the Danes instituted comprehensive bans on South African produce; the Irish on fruit and vegetables; and the French on coal.

But sanctions campaigners are now fighting against time: they have to secure more gains before the inception of the single market in Western Europe in 1992, when it will become more difficult to win an overall sanctions policy issue and when measures by individual countries, like those taken by the Danes, will not be possible.

Their aim now is to secure unilateral action by member states, so that by 1992 the South Africa issue will have become an internal market issue, and not one of individual foreign policy.

They have in their favour a slightly more favourable balance in the European Parliament since its elections last month. There was a slight swing towards Greens and the Left and Communists. Social-democratic parties and Greens now have a slender majority in the 518-member assembly.

Campaigners sought to get the sanctions issue put on the pre-election agenda, but the vote also strengthened local right-wing bases for Pretoria's lobbying work.

In Belgium, an anti-immigrant party called the Vlaams Blok trebled its share of the vote and won one seat, and in West Germany the far-right Republican Party won six of the country's 81 seats.

In France, the extreme right National Front took 10 seats.

However, the bloc of Britain, Portugal, and West Germany - all of which De Klerk visited - and Holland, where government policy has shifted significantly to the right, may have its own problems.

Portugal's ruling Social Democratic Party did not have a good result; there are elections in West Germany next year, with the possibility of a Socialist/Green victory; and rumblings against Thatcher's rule are beginning in Britain's Conservative Party which recorded its lowest vote in the EC election this century.

The Left is not just racing against 1992. It also has to counter a quickening diplomatic initiative apparently worked out in concert between the European Right and South Africa.

De Klerk's overseas visit to his allies in June was the opening shot in what may turn out to be a long public relations campaign.



# A new party programme

**S**outh African Communist Party membership grew by 90% between the 1984 and 1989 party congresses. What caused this increase in support for the party?

The post-1984 ferment was accompanied by an all-round spurt of both legal and illegal radical opposition. Trade union and working-class consciousness spread considerably, with a special focus on a future socialist alternative.

The party benefitted in two ways: as part of its alliance with the ANC, and as the symbol of anti-capitalism. The raising of our flag beside that of the ANC, and pro-party songs and slogans, were mostly initiatives taken on the ground, not prepared by party structures.

But our growth was also the fruit of underground political interventions and the spread of our propaganda and agitational material, which struck a chord among activists. The party's appeal also grew as a result of a shift away from dogmatism and narrow styles of work.

We aim to increase our strength even further, but are not a mass party. Bearing in mind considerations of quality and security, we need to temper growth with caution.

Our recent party congress recorded that progress has been at the cost not only of effort but also of sacrifice. Twenty-two party members were killed in combat or died in the course of duty between the 1984 and 1989 congresses.

**H**as there been a shift in the class and racial make-up of party membership?

The party's racial composition is 70% African, 16% white, 10% Indian and 4% coloured. This reflects the sort of balance which has been in our party since the late 1920s.

*The South African Communist Party recently adopted a new programme at its congress earlier this year. It also claimed a massive 90% increase in membership since its last congress, held in 1984. In the interests of understanding the SACP's policies, DAVID NIDDRIE submitted a series of questions to the party's leadership. The positions expressed here by the SACP, as with all articles in Work In Progress, do not reflect the policies or principles of WIP's editorial collective, but are published in the interests of debate on South Africa's future.*

The working-class component of membership was negatively affected in the post-Rivonia period when the party's underground was decimated and structures had to be recreated externally with the aim of getting back into the situation. The bulk of those who came abroad for political and military training were students and intellectuals in origin, some of whom joined the party.

This explains the contrasting external and internal class statistics noted by our seventh congress. Seventy-five percent of membership outside is made up of ex-students, professionals and the intelligentsia, while 25% is comprised of ex-workers. In our underground, close to 75% of membership is

working class.

A negative feature which our congress resolved to rectify is that women make up only 16% of our membership.

**W**hat are the main changes between your 1962 programme, 'The Road to South African Freedom', and your new programme, 'The Path to Power'?

The world, our region and South Africa itself have undergone major transformations in the last 27 years. Both the descriptive and analytical content of the SACP's programme needed clarification, updating and adjustment to reflect developments. The new programme comes to terms with the reality that the instability of modern capitalism and the crises which surface from time to time do not lead to its automatic collapse; the relations of production have not, as previously predicted, stood in the way of impressive technological growth.

Whilst asserting socialism's enormous potential for all-round progress, attention is also drawn to its serious deformations which led to stagnation, criminal violations of justice and extensive departures from democratic norms.

Some lessons gained from attempts in Africa to prepare conditions for an advance to socialism are touched upon. The main error is identified as the drive to move ahead of objective conditions both in economic and political policy. Premature attempts to eliminate the whole private sector have often resulted in the narrowing of the social base of the revolution and have harmed the quest for socialism.

The great changes in Southern Africa, their impact on our struggle, Pretoria's policy of destabilisation and its pursuit of regional



domination, are also examined.

Closer to home, the programme clarifies a number of our party's key perceptions such as the thesis of colonialism of a special type (CST) and the relation between national-democratic and socialist transformation. In some cases - such as our concept of vanguardism - there are distinct departures from the previous programme. This reflects new approaches which have been evolving over the past 27 years.

The chapter on the 'Path to Power' is largely innovative. The 1962 programme did not deal with this aspect in a structured way and the fact that we were called upon to do so now is a measure of the more promising potential in the situation.

**I**s the concept of colonialism of a special type in the 1989 programme anything more than a rehash of the old 1962 position?

The programmatic development of CST in 1962 was an important theoretical advance for our party and for the broad national liberation movement. The concept now enjoys wide currency within the ANC and in the ranks of the mass democratic movement (MDM).

In preparing ourselves for the seventh congress and for the new party programme, CST was subjected to the closest scrutiny by our membership, taking into account various criticisms which the concept has attracted.

There was general consensus in our ranks that the 1962 formulation was not always sufficiently precise, more especially in its treatment of the relationship between the concept and class analysis, and therefore class struggle. Some critics of CST have maintained that it conceals the fact of bourgeois rule in our country. This criticism is fuelled by a number of imprecisions in the 1962 outline of CST. For instance, there is a mention of a 'white nation', while the majority are referred to as the 'oppressed people' which, in some interpretations, conjures up the existence of a second 'black nation'.

The 1962 programme does spell out the class divisions which cut across the national divide, but there are moments of ambiguity which could be understood as giving the latter emphasis almost to the exclusion of the former. This blunts

## The instability and crises of modern capitalism do not lead to its automatic collapse

the specificity of CST as a variant of bourgeois class domination.

In the new programme CST is more firmly subordinated to a class analysis of our situation and is treated as a variant of bourgeois domination. There is no abstract model of a capitalist society. Historically, bourgeois class rule has been exercised through different kinds of domination within different concrete societies. The bourgeoisie has also exerted its rule across frontiers. We locate the concept of CST within this broad family of variants, ranging from bourgeois democracy to fascism, from colonialism to neo-colonial rule.

CST is a South African variant of bourgeois domination exerted internally within a single social formation but exhibiting many of the features of bourgeois domination across frontiers.

The new programme considers the historical origins of this variant of bourgeois class rule, and the factors underlying its perpetuation. We note that this pattern of domination has been maintained, albeit through changing mechanisms, with many internal contradictions and counter tendencies.

However, the essence of our approach remains intact: CST is the mode in which bourgeois domination is exercised in our country, ensuring that all classes which make up the privileged group benefit, albeit

unequally and in different ways, from this special type of internal colonialism.

Conversely, all black classes suffer national oppression, in varying degrees and in different ways, and their colonial status has, broadly speaking, remained in place after the end of classical colonial rule. This reality is a matter of substance and not just of form. It lies at the very root of our political responses, providing the theoretical foundation for the conclusion that the main content of the immediate struggle is national liberation.

The most consistent group among those who have dug in against the CST thesis maintain that the socialist revolution is immediately on the agenda and that the CST thesis diverts us towards the false perspective of the national democratic revolution.

In the case of other critics of CST, events of the last five years have brought many of them closer to a realisation of the dominant place of the national liberation struggle in the present phase. They need to ask themselves whether it is not precisely the CST thesis which provides the theoretical basis for such a view, and stop dismissing it purely out of habit.

**I**n what way has your approach on vanguardism been re-examined?

The party's claim to represent the historic aspirations of our working class does not, in itself, give us inherent leadership rights either now or in the future; it merely imposes leadership obligations. Our new programme asserts that a communist party does not earn the title of vanguard merely by proclaiming it.

Nor does its claim to be the upholder of Marxism-Leninism give it a monopoly of political wisdom or a natural right to exclusive control of the struggle. We can only win our place as a vanguard force by superior efforts of leadership and devotion to the revolutionary cause.

This approach to the vanguard concept has not always been adhered to in world revolutionary practice. It was undoubtedly one of the most serious casualties in the divide which developed between socialism and democracy - a divide which not only distorted the inner life of working-class parties but also led to



the exercise of commandism and bureaucracy over society as a whole.

It would be idle to claim that we ourselves were not infected with this distortion, but the shift which has taken place is not a post-Gorbachev phenomenon. The wording of our new programme on this question is taken almost verbatim from our March 1970 central committee report on organisation. This document reiterated the need to safeguard, both in the letter and the spirit, the independence of political expressions of other social forces, whether economic or national. We exercise a vanguard role in relation to trade unions, not by transforming them into instruments of the party and engaging in intrigue, but by striving to give guidance in what we consider to be in the best interest of their members; and by individual communists winning respect as the most loyal, devoted and ideologically clear members. The same principle was stressed in relation to the national movement.

In short, the concept of vanguard remains in place. It is indispensable for the working class to have an independent political instrument which safeguards its role in the democratic revolution and which leads it towards a classless society. But such leadership must be won rather than asserted. And it must guard against conflating democratic dissent with counter revolution. On balance, the SACP has moved towards these positions both theoretically and in its revolutionary practices.

**You use the words 'on balance'. Are you saying that there are still murky areas?**

Our programme recognises that the commandist and bureaucratic approaches which took root during Stalin's time affected communist parties around the world, including our own. And it would be naive to imagine that a movement can, at a stroke, shed all the mental baggage it has carried from the past. This is a process calling for ongoing vigilance and re-examination.

Our congress noted some isolated reversions. The central committee report emphatically rejected the old purist concept that all those who do not agree with the party are

## **A communist party does not earn the title of vanguard merely by proclaiming it**

necessarily enemies of the working class. By and large, we have moved a great distance in the direction of non-sectarianism. As a result we have begun to win the admiration and even support of quite a number of revolutionary activists who had previously felt themselves dismissed with name-tags and old-style jargon.

**I**n view of the SACP's close identification with the ANC's objectives and strategies, what constitutes its claim to be a working-class vanguard at the present stage?

We must not confuse the need to mobilise and organise the working class as the dominant social force in the national liberation struggle, and to provide it with political leadership, with the formality of projecting the party itself as the 'leader' of the whole process. Whether it is correct for the party to strive to place itself at the exclusive head of a given revolutionary process depends on specific conditions. In some cases an attempt to do so may retard rather than advance a party's vanguard role. The most advanced class can rarely, if ever, bring about a fundamental transformation on its own. It must always relate to other social forces.

If correct leadership of the democratic revolution requires a strengthening of the national movement as the major

organisational force, then this is precisely the way in which a vanguard role is exercised in the real, and not vulgar, sense of the term.

As long as the party does not lose its independence and identity, then support for, and collaboration with, bodies like the ANC as the mass movement heading the struggle, is in no way inconsistent with the true role of a vanguard organisation.

The shared perspectives between the ANC and the party in the present phase do not diminish the independent role of party objectives. The party must help organise the working class and work to ensure that it occupies a dominant place in the alliance of social forces striving for liberation. At the same time it must spread an understanding of socialist ideology and the inseparable link between national-democratic and socialist transformation.

**W**hat about the period after the achievement of national liberation? Do you envisage a multi-party system and a parliamentary road to socialism and, if so, what happens then to the role of the party?

Our programme holds firmly to a post-apartheid state which will guarantee the basic freedoms and rights of all citizens: the freedoms of speech, thought, press, organisation, movement, conscience and religion; and full trade union rights for all workers, including the right to strike. A multi-party system is therefore clearly implied.

The struggle against capitalism and for an advance to socialism will obviously be taking place in a completely new context. Our programme was not called upon to speculate about struggle options in future hypothetical conditions. But it is clear that in a truly democratic post-apartheid state the way would be open for a peaceful progression towards socialism. Although not always adhered to in practice, Marxism has insisted that the working class must win the majority to its side: as long as no violence is used against the people there is no other road to power.

What you call the 'parliamentary road' can never be separated from extra-parliamentary struggle, but is certainly a possible projection. This would not alter the vanguard role of



a working-class party which, as already emphasised, does not imply exclusiveness or inherent rights to a political monopoly. In truly democratic conditions it is perfectly legitimate and desirable for the political instrument of the working class to lead its constituency in democratic contest for political power against other parties and groups representing other social forces.

In such conditions, state power should clearly vest in the elected representatives of the people and not through administrative command of a party. This requires a relationship between party and state structures which does not undermine the sovereignty of elected bodies. Departures from this principle have created serious gaps between the party and the people in many socialist countries in which the party's leading role was imposed rather than won.

**R**eports on the 1989 congress indicate a shift in views on armed struggle towards the perspective of national insurrection. Could you explain this?

There is a growing understanding, even in the regime's circles, that there is no middle road between a negotiated settlement and a seizure of power. The latter is an act of force usually involving mass upsurge and varying degrees of organised armed activities. History has thrown up a number of categories which illustrate the varied mix between armed struggle and mass insurrection.

In China for example, we saw a protracted people's war which led to the military defeat of the enemy forces.

In Nicaragua the breakthrough took a different course: in the words of Daniel Ortega, 'We thought of the people as a prop that would help us aim military blows at Somoza. Instead the armed struggle became the prop for the people to overthrow the regime through insurrection'.

The Soviet Union provides an example of an insurrection which was not preceded by armed struggle but in which arms played a crucial role at the insurrectionary moment. And in Iran the successful uprising was neither preceded by armed struggle nor did the armed factor play the crucial role. It follows that

## In a truly democratic post-apartheid state, the way would be open for a peaceful progression to socialism

while an insurrection is always an act of revolutionary force it is not always an armed uprising. Historical experiences are instructive but cannot provide exact models. Our programme insists that we must find our own way guided in the first place by concrete realities and our own experiences. We have concluded that ours cannot be a classical guerilla-type war primarily based on the winning, over time, of more and more liberated territory. Nor can our strategy be based on a perspective of inflicting a conventional military defeat on the enemy. These conclusions help to situate the armed element in the struggle for power more precisely, giving pride of place to the political factor.

But there is certainly no shift away from armed struggle itself. Its escalation is imperative in helping prepare conditions for an insurrectionary breakthrough. Armed struggle is designed to weaken the enemy's grip on the reigns of power, deepen the political and economic crisis, and reinforce political mobilisation, organisation and resistance.

An insurrection, unlike a coup, does not lend itself to blueprints: it can only be placed on the immediate agenda of struggle if and when a specific revolutionary moment has emerged. But this will not happen purely spontaneously: it depends on a convergence of subjective and

objective factors.

We believe that the insurrectionary potential is growing within South Africa. This, together with the increasing dimensions of the regime's crisis, suggests the possibility of a relatively sudden national upsurge.

We must therefore be prepared for this. But in general we continue to focus on protracted struggle in which partial and general uprisings propped up by armed support will lead to an insurrectionary breakthrough. In all this, our organised working class is the decisive force.

**H**ow does this notion of the place of insurrection relate to negotiations as an alternative route to the transformation of society?

Properly conceived, and at the right moment, negotiations can be regarded as part of the terrain of struggle. There is only one acid test for a revolutionary strategy, and that is whether it will advance revolutionary objectives. The test is not whether it sounds revolutionary. No serious movement can in principle reject all possibilities of negotiations or compromise in the course of struggle.

Our programme sees no conflict between the insurrectionary perspective and the possibility of a negotiated transfer of power. The exact form of the ultimate breakthrough should not be confused with the strategy needed to help create conditions for the winning of power.

The real question is usually not whether to talk to the enemy, but rather when and on what agenda. Some negotiations could be a prelude to surrender, other a recipe for victory. Most of the victorious liberation struggles on our continent had their climaxes at the negotiating table.

But especially at the present, when the air is thick with talk of negotiations, we should remember that they are also a terrain of struggle for the enemy. Its prime motivation is to pre-empt a revolutionary transfer of power by pushing the liberation movement into negotiation before it is strong enough to back its basic demands with sufficient power on the ground.

In determining our positions, we



must take other crucial factors into account. Whatever the enemy's intention might be, it is clearly making negotiation noises because of mounting internal and external pressures. It is trying to find a way out of its present political and economic crisis through achieving governability and legitimacy within its own parameters.

The enemy is also under growing pressure from its allies, which would like to see a transformation going considerably beyond the present reform limits. Within the regime's own ranks and among its white support constituency, there is growing division about the degree of acceptable compromise needed to stave off the internal and external pressures.

All this exacerbates the regime's crisis and adds another element to the terrain of struggle. In this terrain, our liberation movement must not just respond defensively, but rather ensure that we occupy the high ground.

Our party's position is that the basis for negotiations cannot be restricted to the dismantling of apartheid. We do not conflate apartheid with racial domination. Apartheid is clearly the most extreme form of race domination and, as such, helps focus popular revulsion, both inside and outside, against the whole system.

But it is not apartheid which fathered race domination; it is the other way round. We are not struggling to get back to the pre-1948 period. The bottom line of any negotiated solution must be a readiness to accept the principle of majority rule in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

If this is accepted as a starting point there should be room for tossing round questions such as the institutionalised protection of individual rights of culture, language and religion, and the interim mechanisms needed for giving effect to an orderly transition.

It is only through entrenching individual rights that there will be effective safeguarding for the legitimate aspirations of the diverse communities. It is interesting to note that the Olivier Commission makes this same point on a bill of rights.

Whatever prospects exist for a peaceful solution along these lines

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will depend on the intensification of internal struggle and the stepping-up of external pressures. It would be a mistake by those outside who support our struggle to reduce the regime's political and economic isolation in the hope that this will encourage it to move towards an acceptable negotiation agenda. This course would, in practice, hold back rather than advance prospects for a peaceful solution.

Finally, our programme stresses that whatever prospects may arise for a negotiated transition, they must not be allowed to infect the purpose and content of our strategic approaches. We are not engaged in the struggle with the objective of merely generating sufficient pressure to bring the other side to the negotiating table. While it is necessary to take up offensive positions on the negotiation front, we must guard against any form of demobilisation and against the diversion of our main energies away from the escalation of the struggle.

**What is the party's view on Soviet 'new thinking' concerning the resolution of regional conflicts?**

Soviet 'new thinking' in the area of international relations is correctly anchored in the reality of the interdependence of the world. This implies, above all, mutual dependence for the sake of survival.

This is primarily dictated by consequence of a nuclear holocaust which would respect neither class nor system.

We believe, however, that in many places there is a symbiotic link between the struggle for freedom and the struggle for peace. An attempt always to subordinate the struggle for liberation to the struggle for can subordinate the interests of the developing, unliberated world to those of the developed, liberated world.

It is true that every social and national liberation struggle will upset the equilibrium in the international area, and could be a source of irritation between those who support and those who oppose the transformations sought. But we have doubts that this consideration always requires an abandonment or toning down of conflicts in internal class and liberation struggles.

We do not go along with another, even more disturbing, thesis that there is some overriding human ethic which obliges every movement to renounce revolutionary violence as part of political struggle, even when facing a tyranny which gives it no other way forward.

Nor can it, in our case, be concluded that our continuing struggle by such means poses a risk of world conflagration.

Where a conflict lends itself to a justified negotiated compromise, there is no suggestion of a 'fight to the death'. Such a settlement may be judged correct by the internal forces for a number of reasons, both internal and international. The internal forces may even defuse or postpone an internal conflict if there is a risk of triggering off a global holocaust. But the struggle to assert the right of free choice, the struggle for self-determination and real independence cannot be contained or restricted.

We see no inherent contradiction between the struggle for peace and the struggle for liberation in South Africa. The very existence of the Pretoria regime is a permanent threat to peace and stability. Indeed, our programme states that our main contribution to the overall struggle for world peace is to put an end to race rule by the only means it has until now left open: mass struggle backed by revolutionary violence.



# Still committed to socialism

**F**relimo's fifth party congress - held in Maputo from 24 to 30 July - took place against the background of a new diplomatic initiative to end the South African-backed war of destabilisation in Mozambique.

The week before the congress, President Joaquim Chissano announced that a number of meetings had taken place in Nairobi between church officials and representatives of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR), and that Kenya and Zimbabwe had agreed to serve in a group of African mediator states.

The president also announced that his government was prepared to enter into a dialogue with the MNR without a prior ceasefire, provided it endorsed certain principles. These included acceptance that cessation of terrorism and banditry was an essential first step towards normalisation of life in the country; that former bandits should be integrated into the 'ongoing process of normalisation... through policy-making based on consultation, debate and consensus'; and that it was 'undemocratic for any group to use violence or intimidation to impose its views on society'.

In the same week, as part of the diplomatic process aimed at ending the war, Chissano became the first African head of state to meet with National Party leader FW de Klerk.

The central committee's report to congress documented some of the profound effects of Pretoria's continuing war of destabilisation on Mozambican society. More than 700 000 people have died as a direct or indirect result of bandit assaults. Currently 5.5-million Mozambicans are dependent on food aid. As many as 700 000 have fled to neighbouring

*Since independence from colonial rule, Mozambique has faced a sustained campaign of destabilisation, foreign interference in a draining civil conflict, sanctions, a crippling drought and economic austerity measures imposed as a condition of Western aid. In addition, the ruling Frelimo party has acknowledged substantial errors in its earlier programmes to build socialism. This was the context for Frelimo's fifth party congress, held during the last week of July. A Maputo correspondent reports.*

countries and 1.7-million are displaced within Mozambique itself.

The cumulative cost to the economy of the war and sanctions imposed by Smith's Rhodesian regime and Pretoria is calculated at US\$15-billion - more than three times the country's foreign debt.

There was no doubting congress delegates' strong sentiments in favour of a peace settlement which also guaranteed the country's independence, and congress endorsed Chissano's attempts to seek a negotiated end to the war. But the mood of delegates was strongly against any form of 'power sharing' or coalition government with the MNR 'bandits'.

On the domestic policy front, the fifth congress approved a number of

departures from established Frelimo positions, while reaffirming the party's overall commitment to socialism. This is defined in the party's new programme as 'a profound social transformation based on a scientific analysis of reality and the social base of the revolution, the necessity to guarantee the predominance of the interests of the vast majority and to ensure a just distribution of the fruits of labour'.

The congress recommended that state-owned rented property be sold to tenants and private companies, and that the establishment of 'community, factory and private schools' be permitted. Significantly, however, the report concluded that 'liberalisation' in the health sector would not bring any benefits under existing conditions.

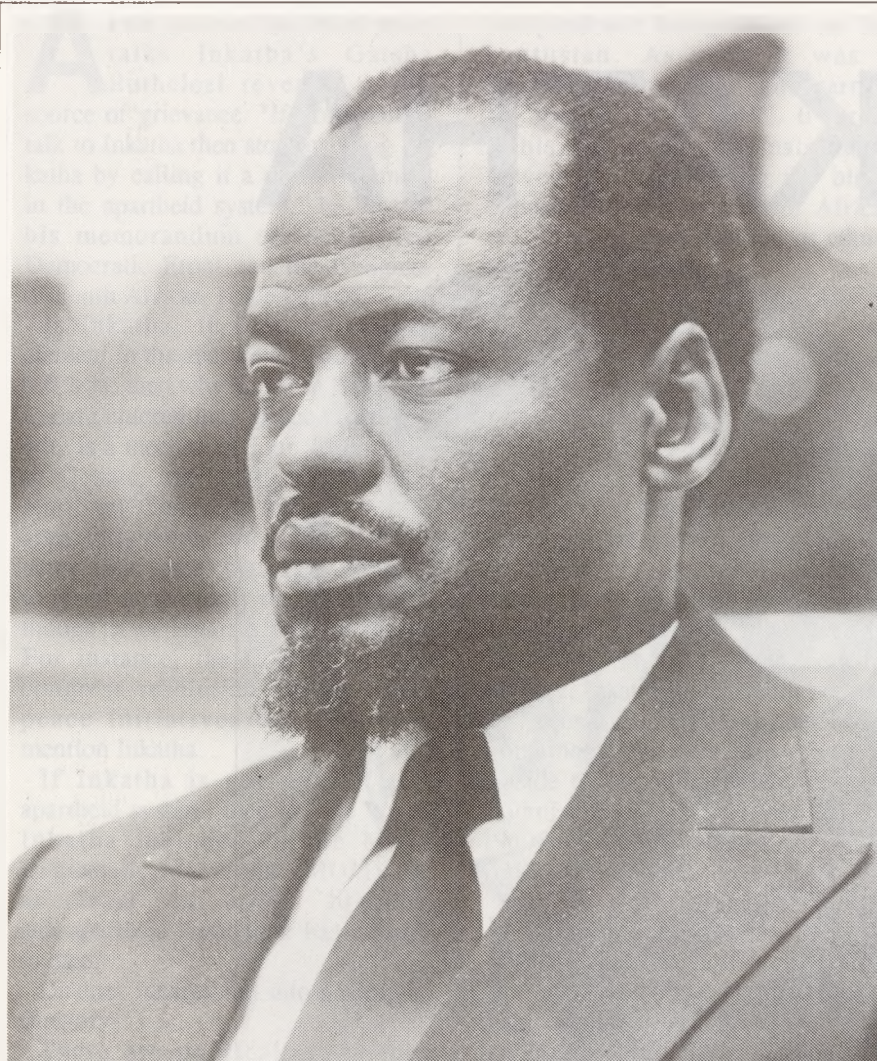
In addition, congress approved changes in party regulations to permit religious believers and 'property owners' to become party members. It also removed restrictions on existing party members becoming property owners and employers of wage labour in pursuit of activities which contributed to the development of the country.

These shifts are, in part, Frelimo's response to the 'new realities' created by destabilisation and changes in the regional and international situation.

The 'bandit war' has severely constrained Frelimo's options, and the destruction of the Mozambican economy has created a strong dependence on external aid, not all of which has been provided unconditionally.

The new departures also represent an attempt by Frelimo to correct what are now seen as errors in the party's past conduct and practice. Previous restrictions on the admission of religious believers to the party, for example, had excluded people who were positively disposed





Guy Tillim - Afropix

Frelimo's Joaquim Chissano

to Frelimo's goals.

Past policies had over-emphasised the potential of the state sector and under-estimated the contribution peasant households and petty capitalists have to make in what would necessarily remain for some time a 'mixed economy'.

A strong theme in debates was that the party needed to broaden its ranks and return to the original conception of itself as a front representing an alliance of all patriotic class forces. Congress documents thus described Frelimo as a 'vanguard party of the whole people' rather than a 'Marxist-Leninist vanguard party'.

But these factors are not sufficient to explain all the policy shifts endorsed by the congress.

**S**ince 1987 Mozambique has been following an International Monetary Fund-backed 'economic rehabilitation programme' (ERP). Measures taken since the introduction of the ERP have included

currency devaluations (which have taken the official exchange rate from around MT 40 to MT 756 to the United States dollar); stiff price increases; the removal of subsidies; and 'economic liberalisation', implying a withdrawal of the state from various areas of the economy and the creation of more space for private capital.

The ERP is widely credited with having contributed to the modest economic growth recorded in recent years and with having brought about a number of inescapable adjustments of 'financial imbalances'. Its impact on society has, however, been highly uneven.

Lower-paid urban residents, workers and the unemployed have experienced a squeeze on their living standards, while private capital has benefitted from the opening up of numerous additional opportunities for accumulation supported by more-readily available foreign aid.

Although the programme has been

in force for only two-and-a-half years it has visibly strengthened the position of a stratum of small capitalists, known as 'privados', based in both town and countryside. Their demands have had some impact on the party programme, while the changes in the rules of party membership will undoubtedly create new opportunities for this class force to develop influence within the party.

**R**egionally, Frelimo's perspective as outlined in the central committee's report adopted at the congress, is that the emergence of a new correlation of forces in Southern Africa is inducing South Africa to accept a path of dialogue.

This, however, is limited by the fact that the 'reforms of apartheid' have introduced quantitative but not profound qualitative changes in the apartheid system. Apartheid consequently continues to 'constitute a barrier to the consolidation of peace and progress in the region'.

Frelimo, nevertheless, considers 'that the new international conjuncture and the positive indications of a favourable evolution in Southern Africa are creating propitious conditions for the government of Pretoria to begin concrete action to dismantle apartheid'.

The party calls for the initiation of a dialogue between the South African government and the African National Congress and all patriotic forces in order that South Africa may become a 'just and democratic society in which all have equal rights and opportunities'. To this end the party calls for the lifting of the state of emergency, the freeing of political prisoners including Nelson Mandela, the legalisation of banned political and social organisations and a definitive renunciation by Pretoria of regional destabilisation.

Short of the early achievement of these goals, Frelimo's own efforts to promote peace in Mozambique will take place on a regional terrain still profoundly marked by the continuing crisis of apartheid. It remains to be seen what advances can be made in the face of the continued existence of a system which the frontline states have repeatedly characterised as the principal cause of instability and war in the region.



# INKATHA



Steve Hilton-Barber - Afpix

## Is your enemy's enemy automatically your friend?

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*The Natal peace talks highlight the anti-apartheid face of Inkatha and could serve as the organisation's greatest recruitment drive, GERHARD MARÉ argues. But this emphasis is ironic as Inkatha ambitions to secure a central role in a new national political scheme drive it even more firmly into the arms of the state.*

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**A**t the outset of the Natal peace talks Inkatha's Gatsha Buthelezi revealed a key source of grievance. 'If you want to talk to Inkatha then stop insulting Inkatha by calling it a central element in the apartheid system,' he said in his memorandum to the United Democratic Front and the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

Is Inkatha, in fact, a 'central element in the apartheid system'?

If it is, then why have the UDF and Cosatu entered into 'peace talks' and why is a meeting of four presidents - of Cosatu, the UDF, the African National Congress and Inkatha - apparently on the cards? And why do democratic forces blame the violence in Natal increasingly on the state, as though it is separate from Inkatha? For instance, the Cosatu national congress resolution on the Natal peace initiatives did not once mention Inkatha.

If Inkatha is not part of the apartheid system, then are we to see Inkatha included in the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), or at least in some broader anti-apartheid front than has existed to date?

Or does Inkatha fall into a separate category?

These are politically strategic questions. They are embraced in decisions such as the Cosatu congress resolution to set up an anti-apartheid coalition (to replace the banned anti-apartheid conference): the only specifically excluded parties are representatives of capital, and Inkatha is apparently included through mention of the 'peace plan'. The resolution stated: 'The process of building an anti-apartheid coalition has begun in practice through initiatives such as building peace in Natal'.

**I**nkatha was formed in 1975 to ensure that the kwaZulu bantustan's political leadership did not fall victim to the very system that it was infiltrating with the aim of changing it from within. Inkatha was meant to bridge the gap between notoriously manipulable apartheid structures (or have we forgotten the case of the suits for the Venda chiefs?) and a constituency of members outside of those structures to which it would be accountable.

An important goal was to prevent

independence being thrust on the bantustan. As such it was a 'liberation movement' and carried the approval of the ANC. It set its sights on becoming a nationalist movement, representing the black oppressed throughout South Africa, regardless of class position or ethnic affiliation.

But Inkatha carried the shackles of the system within which it was formed and in which its leadership had participated for many years. It was, after all, formed not to overthrow that system, but to change it through participation. As such, despite its relative success, it remained just another bantustan governing party.

Because it was the sole party in kwaZulu, and because it believed in the correctness of its liberatory strategy, Inkatha's leadership became very sensitive to criticism, especially from those who saw themselves as outside the system and who became organised so rapidly during the 1980s into unions, civic bodies and youth organisations.

**F**rom the start there was a tension between what Inkatha believed about itself and what many others believed about it. It saw itself representing the people in their striving towards liberation. But it was also widely seen as a participant in the hated state-created structures of fragmentation and control. Clearly both views were true!

Inkatha placed itself within the tradition of the old ANC, within which Nelson Mandela's centrality is accepted. At its formation the movement carried the approval of what it called the ANC 'Mission in Exile'.

But the fact remained, it governed a bantustan where conditions for the vast majority were no different to those of the people in any other bantustan. The only difference was that kwaZulu was not led into 'independence' by lackeys of the central state.

In fact, the conflict between Buthelezi, his supporters within the kwaZulu Legislative Assembly and Inkatha, on the one hand, and the agents of the central state in the early and mid-1970s reflected the inability of the NP to see any option other than apartheid 'independence', even for conservative proponents of

foreign investment, such as Buthelezi.

Inkatha's leaders have been unable to keep their dual roles separate: on the one hand participating in the kwaZulu government, on the other answering to a broad membership well able to distinguish between the movement's tactical and its essential participation in the apartheid system.

There are many examples of this collapse of functions. Inkatha claims endorsement for its policies from the bantustan electorate. The organisation funds party activity, such as the Buthelezi Commission and the Indaba, through the bantustan's coffers. Inkatha also fails to distinguish between Buthelezi in his various roles of Inkatha president, bantustan chief minister and even minister of police. It uses repressive structures, secured through faithful participation in the bantustan, in its battles with political opponents in the anti-apartheid camp. It also depends on the patronage potential of the bantustan in holding the support of various sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

The importance of the bantustan system to Inkatha, albeit as a temporary base, was evident in a recent newspaper advertisement setting out Inkatha's preconditions for national political negotiations. It omits any mention of dismantling the bantustans although it demands the demise of the tricameral parliament.

**T**he parameters of Inkatha's actions are set by its participation in the structures of apartheid, and also by its self-conscious regional and ethnic political consolidation in the 1980s and the dominant class interests which it serves. It is through an apartheid creation that the trading class can be protected and its access to finance guaranteed.

After Inkatha and the ANC broke their ambiguous relationship in 1979 and after the crushing of the 1980s school boycotts in kwaMashu, the movement decided to consolidate its regional base. It made kwaZulu and Natal as a whole into an ideological and political stronghold.

It pursued this aim in several ways:

- \* It set up the Buthelezi Commission (BC) which argued that Natal and kwaZulu, administered by the Natal Provincial Administration





Gedric Nunn - Afrapix

Peace talks in Pietermaritzburg on 9 June.  
To the left of the table Inkatha, to the right UDF and Cosatu.

and the kwaZulu Legislative Assembly respectively, were clearly inseparable. The BC report proposed an alternative to apartheid fragmentation - a model based on consociation and federalism. These proposals carried the support of an array of academics, political parties and powerful capitalists.

\* Inkatha was centrally involved in the Indaba which, with great publicity, gave further effect to the more academic suggestions of the BC. It is important to realise that, if implemented, the Indaba proposals will set up a regional legislative structure for the first member-state in a South African federation. It builds on the practical steps that have been taken over the years to create administrative co-operation, such as the establishment of a Joint Executive Authority.

The Indaba was much more than a set of proposals. It promoted alliances between Inkatha and capital as well as with a range of political and cultural bodies - alliances which demand ongoing confirmation. It also put in position certain structures and agents who sell Inkatha's message without being too intimately linked with the organisation. Indaba propaganda is aimed at schools, business, the general public, opinion-makers and foreign governments and pressure groups.

The Indaba has made great strides in gathering support, especially

among whites and capitalists. This is not only because of the impact of the state of emergency, but because of the lack of an effective counter-strategy by the MDM. It seems highly unlikely that Inkatha would willingly relinquish the Indaba option simply because it is involved in negotiations with the MDM - which stands for a unitary state and rejects regional solutions.

On the contrary, Inkatha would surely press ahead, establishing as many aspects of regional government as it can. This would give form to its regional base and, since the Natal Indaba will not be an apartheid creation, Inkatha would be able to discard the albatross of being linked to a bantustan.

\* Through participation in the bantustan, Inkatha has built networks of patronage that will not be shaken loose easily, especially in the absence of alternative services.

It is important to understand that this patronage is not confined to the trading petty bourgeoisie. It extends to civil servants, who depend for their jobs on Inkatha favour, and to the millions who are dependent for survival on the pensions, land and employment schemes made available through Inkatha and the KLA.

Anyone wanting to replace Inkatha in the political allegiances of the recipients of these benefits will have to be able to replace Inkatha's ability to offer means of survival as well. It

is exactly at this level that Inkatha's anti-sanctions campaign operates. It argues that it stands for the present and future survival of people, whereas Cosatu and the UDF wish to deprive people of their livelihood while promising a dubious strategy of short-term suffering for liberation.

\* Inkatha has created structures, no matter how hierarchical and personalised. It has set a pattern of political rejuvenation and direction-giving through conferences and frequent 'prayer meetings'. Inkatha can offer the ritual of repeated rhetorical mass commitment that the MDM has used so effectively.

\* Inkatha has access to an enviable media network, comprising both its own and sympathetic outlets. This includes *Ilanga*; SABC television and radio; mass meetings; distribution of speeches and reporting of speeches; the kwaZulu Bureau of Information and its publications such as *Umxoxi* and *Clarion Call*; slick overseas visits and maintenance of offices in foreign capitals.

\* It has control over the repressive bantustan apparatus of the kwaZulu Police through which it slots into the national security network.

\* It has access to large amounts of money, both through the KLA (which paid for both the Buthelezi Commission and the Indaba sittings) and sympathetic foreign and local





*The deaths in Natal continue, despite the peace talks*

donors. However, Buthelezi believes - probably with some justification - that he would have received much more foreign funding had it not been for the efforts by the MDM and South African Council of Churches (aided overseas by the support given to these bodies by the ANC) to both control funds and deflect them from Inkatha.

\* Since its inception Inkatha has called on important regional political and cultural symbols, such as the ANC and 'Zulu' ethnicity.

Inkatha argued it was formed to fill a vacuum that existed after the ANC was banned and, even if it did not succeed in doing so in the national political arena, it could fill the role regionally. It has created and recreated an appeal to being Zulu through several means, such as its control over education, which allowed it to introduce the 'Inkatha syllabus'; the central role granted to the King as the symbol of national unity; through stressing Buthelezi's traditionally determined role within the Zulu nation; through celebrating events, such as Shaka Day, with an ethnically specific focus.

Inkatha cannot, and probably will not want to, depoliticise ethnicity in the region. This is, after all, an essential part of ethnic consolidation.

\* Finally, Inkatha has remained immune from the effects of the state of emergency and will clearly continue to do so.

**W**hat are the likely implications of the trends outlined?

The 'scenario' presented below is anything but inevitable. The weaknesses of Inkatha are too numerous to permit confident prediction. But there is a reasonable chance of the following course being pursued.

The release of Nelson Mandela is of central importance to events within the country and within the region. Of course the fate and the actions of a single person cannot decide the future. But what is made of the 'symbol' Mandela will depend on the relative strength of those forces which define their positions and demands in relation to him. For instance, Mandela's release could influence the British government's estimation of those who can be shown to have been reasonable and successful in securing his release.

Buthelezi has always made Mandela's release a precondition for his own participation in negotiations with the central government or in its constitutional schemes. He has been careful to add that it does not matter what course Mandela chooses after his release; the issue is that he should have that choice. Inkatha's recent newspaper advert qualified its stance on the release of other political prisoners, apart from the Rivonia trialists.

Furthermore, Buthelezi has made it

clear that he is not willing to enter national negotiations with other bantustan leaders. He has just turned down another such meeting. It is clear that he will not, and should not, enter the national arena as one of six puppets created through the apartheid policy. His heated reaction to such accusations of manipulation frequently takes the form of claiming his own impeccable revolutionary and traditional credentials. The memorandum he released at the start of the peace talks is a pertinent example.

How, then, does he enter national politics after the release of Mandela?

Before the meeting between PW Botha and Mandela, Inkatha's representatives called for the release of Mandela during talks with cabinet ministers on obstacles to negotiation. This demand was relayed to Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee. There can be little doubt that Mandela's release will be laid at the door of the 'negotiation' politics advocated by Inkatha. What is less clear is what Mandela's reaction will be to Inkatha and Buthelezi.

Buthelezi enters the national solution from the stepping stone that he so carefully created - the Indaba. He enters with an agreement from the state that the Indaba proposals, perhaps with some face-saving changes, will form the basis of a new regionally based political dispensation. Talks between Inkatha



and the government around the Indaba proposals have formal and on-going status, along with the committee investigating obstacles to Inkatha participating in negotiations.

The Indaba option hangs on two major factors: Buthelezi's control over the regional population, with the support of important constituencies in the business and tricameral worlds; and a clear attitude that 'the gods' - in the form of foreign government aid - will provide to solve the immense problems of regional redistribution. For the latter, massive amounts of money are needed.

This is where the peace plan - or Buthelezi's version of it - comes in. The way the plan is set out in the letter to Catholic Archbishop Denis Hurley makes it potentially the biggest recruitment drive ever undertaken by Inkatha - one which may secure national and even international applause and financial support. More than that, it might make the UDF and Cosatu participants in this Inkatha campaign - conducted under the guise of peace - while these two groups do not have the structures to expose it, counter it, or make use of it as equal partners.

Buthelezi insisting on Ulundi as the venue for a meeting in which he would participate was not simply a fit of pique, but a reprisal for the years during which his strategy has been scorned and he has been labelled a stooge. Peace to him means more than an end to the killings. It also means an acknowledgment of Inkatha's strategy - and a victory for it.

The new element featured repeatedly in recent speeches by Buthelezi is that, like Shaka, 'we defeat to incorporate'. His advisors are on record over the past years as saying that the only war is that between Inkatha and the ANC.

In conclusion, Inkatha's weaknesses must be considered. Some of these are inherent in its structures and irremediable. Others arise from the situation in which it finds itself. Inkatha remains a regional body, lacking the organisational structures, let alone the legitimacy, to contest national support. This is not a weakness when it comes to negotiating with the state. In fact it is a strength in an arena where the state is trying to reshape

South Africa within an updated version of its old fragmentation policy. But in competition with national bodies Inkatha can only find refuge in a particular federal future, or one where 'groups' are given political power.

It would, however, be short-sighted to reject federalism simply because Inkatha supports it. There may well be federal options that deserve to be examined because they do not reinforce the state's ethnic fragmentation while allowing democratic decentralisation. The same holds for proportional representation.

Related to this is Inkatha's dependence on ethnic mobilisation. As with regionalism, of which ethnicity is usually an aspect, Inkatha's strength can also be its weakness. This is primarily because the essence of national politics, as exemplified by the ANC from its formation, is a denial of and struggle against political allocation according to state ethnic categories. While Inkatha remains tied to 'Zuluness' - and it is argued this link cannot be undone - it will suffer the tag of 'tribalism'.

Again, the danger of denying the strength of cultural sentiments simply because they are part of the manipulations of Inkatha must be stressed. A national identity and a national culture cannot be wished into existence. It is one of the most delicate areas of future reconstruction and present practice. The organisations of the working class, especially, have a central role to play here, despite the fact that ethnic mobilisation has featured in working-class organisations both locally and elsewhere in the world.

At some levels Inkatha is directly an extension of the state, albeit with greater autonomy than, for instance, local government structures. This means it suffers from the same crises as the central state and, like it, Inkatha cannot meet the material demands of residents in such fields as welfare, health and education. It is held responsible for these failures.

In the area of policing, Inkatha is forced to utilise the bantustan force as a branch element of the repressive apparatus of the central state. Here there is much less autonomy than in less contentious fields such as health.

The contemptuous invasion of Bophuthatswana by the SADF after the short-lived coup by the bantustan military indicates that even 'independence' does not place these armed forces beyond the reach of the central state. In kwaZulu the extension of control is voluntary, with Inkatha's leadership having established a close working relationship with officers in the South African Police.

Inkatha lacks control, or has only partial control, over sections of the regional population. This is especially important where those sections are organised. Examples are: the working class at the place of production; the working class where its organisational strength extends into the community; professionals who are increasingly dissatisfied with the inability of Inkatha, as a regional government, to fulfill its promises of patronage.

The recent strikes and threats of strikes by teachers and civil servants over wages and working conditions serve to illustrate this growing trend. Buthelezi has also been insensitive to the wage demands of kwaZulu state employees, arguing that the sentiments of service, development, and loyalty - to the King, to the nation or the liberation struggle - should outweigh mercenary demands for higher remuneration.

Inkatha has a greater degree of autonomy than any other conservative movement in the country. But its offensive towards national political involvement - tied to the state's own political fumbblings - demands that it co-ordinate with the state, make compromises and show itself to be a worthwhile, albeit reluctant, partner.

The peace talks are serving to remove Inkatha, symbolically, from being part of apartheid structures. This confirms the one aspect of the movement: that it is a very conservative force, but nonetheless against apartheid as a system of racial discrimination. It is ironic that this facet should emerge precisely when Inkatha has become more closely integrated into state structures - especially into security structures - and into capitalism than ever before. It is now part of what could be a future reform state that will outlive the present apartheid policy.





# The Chinese fight for democracy

**T**he massacre in Tiananmen Square was perhaps the worst attack on unarmed civilians in the last 40 years. But the emotive language used to describe it does not explain why it happened or its historical significance.

China's existing social and political order, and most importantly, the perspective of those who now control the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), will very directly influence the responses of individuals and groups, inside and outside of China, in the months to come.

It is commonly believed that a power struggle was raging in China earlier this year. But the truth is, the outcome of this 'struggle' was never in doubt. Deng Xiaoping and his allies have been in control all along. What *has* been happening is not so much a power struggle, but action for the consolidation of power.

In this context, for the party, the student movement and the people's movement for freedom and democracy were not important developments in themselves. For the CCP, they were simply the background against which the real struggle for party unity was being waged. The student demonstrations were allowed to happen, to run their course, to become increasingly chaotic. The authorities may well have been surprised by the massive support the student demonstrations

*On 4 June this year, Chinese army troops stormed students of the pro-democracy movement occupying Tiananmen Square in central Beijing. Hundreds died in the subsequent massacre which spilled over into the streets of the city. XING EN, who works with Chinese intellectuals and students, argues that the uprising, the massacre and the subsequent repression are part of a process of consolidation of power by the Chinese Communist Party leadership.*

generated, which would explain why extreme measures were used to suppress it.

Long before Tiananmen Square, Deng Xiaoping said turmoil was being created by forces 'inside and outside the party, inside and outside of China'. Importantly, the party and the government were not unified. Serious domestic and international contradictions have been developing for some time in conditions which made their resolution almost impossible. These conditions concerned relationships with international power blocs; the pace and direction of political reform; social unrest; and, most important of all, a growing economic crisis.

The recent uprising was not the first. In 1976 there was a riot in Tiananmen Square; in 1981 popular pro-democracy forces were repressed; in September 1985 students mobilised against undemocratic government practices.

In December 1986 student

mobilisation began at Hefei University in Anhui province and spread rapidly through Wuhan and Shenzhen, culminating in a series of mass demonstrations by over 150 000 people in Shanghai. Initial demands concerned on-campus issues like registration fees and SRCs. But students soon raised broader political issues such as the democratic election of municipal and provincial councils, press freedom, freedom of association and freedom to demonstrate. A popular slogan at the time was, 'No socialism without democracy'.

Ernest Mandel, describing these demonstrations, says their spirit was 'distinctly socialist, egalitarian and anti-capitalist'. They took the form of protest marches, wall posters, rallies, overnight sit-ins. Eventually, they were suppressed by the authorities.

There was also growing division and dissatisfaction among workers - mainly as a result of conflicts and



contradictions born of Deng's New Economic Policy. The NEP, according to Mandel, has produced a layer of richer and more enterprising peasants, with a marked tendency to create capitalist businesses.

The NEP, incorporating 'four modernisations' in the economic, scientific, technical and military fields, has improved the standard of living of the Chinese people. But the cost has been increasing economic, social and political contradiction.

There have been advances in industry, but these have been accompanied by spurts of inflation and unemployment which 'periodically dim the picture of the NEP in the eyes of a vast strata of workers'. Poverty survives in underdeveloped regions and even in localised instances in rich agricultural provinces and in cities. This and other social dissatisfactions led to strikes, including action by Beijing bus drivers and demobilised soldiers.

**T**he student uprisings this year exposed the extent to which dissatisfactions had spread, and also showed where government leadership and the party really stood in relation to demands for greater popular participation in government.

Officially, the demonstrations are said to reflect a 'counter-revolutionary' movement which must, by definition, be an 'enemy' of the 'people'. This the party defines as an antagonistic contradiction, much more serious than a non-antagonistic contradiction. While the latter can be resolved through consultation and dialogue, all necessary means are justified in eliminating antagonistic contradictions.

It was Lin Biao who said that 'great disorder' every now and then is helpful to expose the good and the bad. The great disorder over the past months has certainly done this for the CCP. There is little doubt the party leadership could have stopped the 'disorder' long before it did. But it obviously wanted the contradictions and conflicts to emerge, so that this time they could be effectively and thoroughly dealt with.

The suppression of the 1986 student movement was premature and too weak to serve this purpose. In contrast, recent repression is the

strongest action against intellectuals since the Cultural Revolution. Its effect is likely to be stronger than the Anti-Rightist Movement in the late 1950s, a movement which the CCP considers went too far to the left.

The CCP definitely did not stage the demonstrations, although people close to Deng Xiaoping, Yang Shangkun and Li Peng may very well have had a hand in manipulating key incidents, such as defacing Mao's portrait; instigating students or hooligans to commit violence; turning guns and ammunition over to student and union radicals.

For those in the CCP who saw the need to consolidate their power, the uprising served to identify the 'anti-consolidationists', the 'party-splitists' and the 'counter-revolutionaries'. The authorities claim the last group represents a 'very, very small minority' who will be harshly dealt with. Between the counter-revolutionaries and the consolidationists are waverers who, the party believes, can be won over, neutralised, and ordered about. The CCP also believes this group will be easily frightened by the current campaign of controlled terror.

The real issue, for leader Deng Xiaoping, is the strength and the unity of party leadership. Since intellectuals can never accept that this is the real issue their loyalty will always be in question. For the CCP unity and stability require resolution and strength, at whatever cost, or the centre will not hold. And if the centre does not hold, the country will fall apart, and the 'liberation struggle' will have been in vain.

Consolidation of the party leadership happened early on, certainly before the troops had moved in. There was never a real possibility of civil war. But for Deng, the perception that civil war was possible was useful because it fuelled disorder. And continuing unrest assists the party in the winnowing process at lower levels.

For the party, the clearing of Tiananmen was not an emotional response, or revenge against students who had insulted party leaders. It was a calculated act of political policy. Nor was the violence of the suppression an aberration - but essential to the thoroughness of consolidating the party. No one with

even the slightest sympathy for 'bourgeois liberalisation' could support such an action. And all these people have now been identified at the top levels of the party, the army and the government.

In the suppression of the students in 1986, one could have been sympathetic to the students' cause and still go along with the action against them. This will not be possible in 1989.

Zhao Ziyang's unforgivable offence was that he tried to work things out on his own. He went to Tiananmen to speak with the students, showing Deng Xiaoping that his chosen successor was a potential 'capitulationist' and far too emotional. It was reported that Zhao cried at Tiananmen. Certainly by then he knew his plan had failed, that many students would die, and that his period of influence was over. Leaders like Qiao Shi or Li Peng are unlikely to be caught crying over students.

**F**or the CCP the Tiananmen decision was a moral one, taken in the interests of unity and strong leadership. For the CCP leadership an impersonal knowledge of forces and events supersedes any personal sense of virtue. 'What are a few thousands students', one can imagine Deng Xiaoping say, 'compared to the hundreds of thousands who would die from starvation or civil war if we didn't have a strong centralised leadership?'

Morality, in the CCP lexicon, is a reflection of class relationships, and the best one can do is understand these relationships and act in the realm of necessity.

With party leadership consolidated, the iron fist started coming down on 'counter-revolutionary' intellectual activists. Few intellectuals declared where they stood in the months of demonstrations; they knew better. Now they will no doubt keep their noses to the grindstone, and congratulate themselves that they were not stupid enough to get involved.

But there were still many students, intellectuals and others who were galvanized by events and who have become a permanent opposition force. They may not be very well organised, but there are many of them. The new kind of Chinese



intellectual can, to paraphrase Gramsci, 'no longer consist in eloquence ... but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organiser and permanent persuader'.

Opposition forces already face the government campaign to discredit the democratisation movement. The story is told in terms of 'bad elements' - inside and outside the party, inside and outside of China - who undermined unity and created havoc. It is also about apparently corrupt officials like Zhao Ziyang and his two sons.

More than 80% of Chinese people live in the countryside, and they will readily accept the government's story, for it will be the only one that they are most likely to hear.

Many urban people, especially those who remember the Cultural Revolution, will slowly begin to 'understand' that the student movement created disorder which was manipulated by bad elements - especially as news broadcasts begin to highlight student hooliganism. The weeks since Tiananmen demonstrated how quickly appearances return to normal.

**T**he crackdown is likely to be directed against those who have gone beyond established ideological and organisational norms. The leadership and most members of the various non-Communist 'people's organisations' are probably safe from attack - but there will be those in the ranks of these organisations who are not secure. The Democratic Parties, the Women's Federation, or religious groups were rendered irrelevant to the political life of the country long ago. Many of these groups are even expected to represent blocs of bourgeois liberalism, and to serve as 'transmission belts' - to use a phrase coined by Lenin - between their membership and the CCP. They are small, without real power, and they accept the leadership of the party, as they have done for 40 years. They are unlikely to voice protest now.

But younger student or trade union activists who emerged during the disorder and who are associated with people's groups will be on record for their 'errors' and may be arrested. Expected reforms will probably not be forthcoming, and there is likely to

be far less tolerance for ideas and organisational relationships which depart from the party orthodoxy. The situation may also mean a growing distance between leadership and membership of the people's organisations.

This will mean new structures, leaders, and ideologies will emerge, quietly and over a long period. Currently, leaders of existing people's organisations are in their 70s and 80s - the generation which established the People's Republic in 1949. New leadership will be from the generation that took to the streets in May this year.

This new leadership has been emerging in some organisations over the last few years. These people tend to be patriotic, but unable to accept the stance of their elders. They will certainly be unwilling to agree to the positions which people's organisations have taken until now under the Li Peng government.

Overseas opinion did very little to restrain the Chinese government. The Tiananmen massacre showed foreigners that the Chinese government will do as it pleases with its internal affairs.

Ironically, the massacre will not necessarily be bad for business. Some in the Hong Kong business community are already predicting an improved investment picture for a newly stabilized China. With the power of the leadership firmly consolidated, steps will be taken to attract more foreign investments, probably on very favourable terms.

CCP 'liberals' may re-emerge - to win back overseas businessmen as the best kind of 'foreign friends'. They may merely be keeping silent, or they may genuinely be convinced that a particular provincial government 'wasn't really involved', and keep their joint ventures going.

The Chinese government will also want its cultural exchange programmes to continue. They do not threaten the new order and they help bring in foreign exchange and generate international goodwill. These programmes have minimal impact on the direction of Chinese policy. Overseas groups, however, may in future want to differentiate between helping the people of China and helping the government.

This kind of communication may be crucial to an outside world

understanding of what is happening in China. In the months ahead, what is said officially to foreigners will be increasingly different from what is said within China.

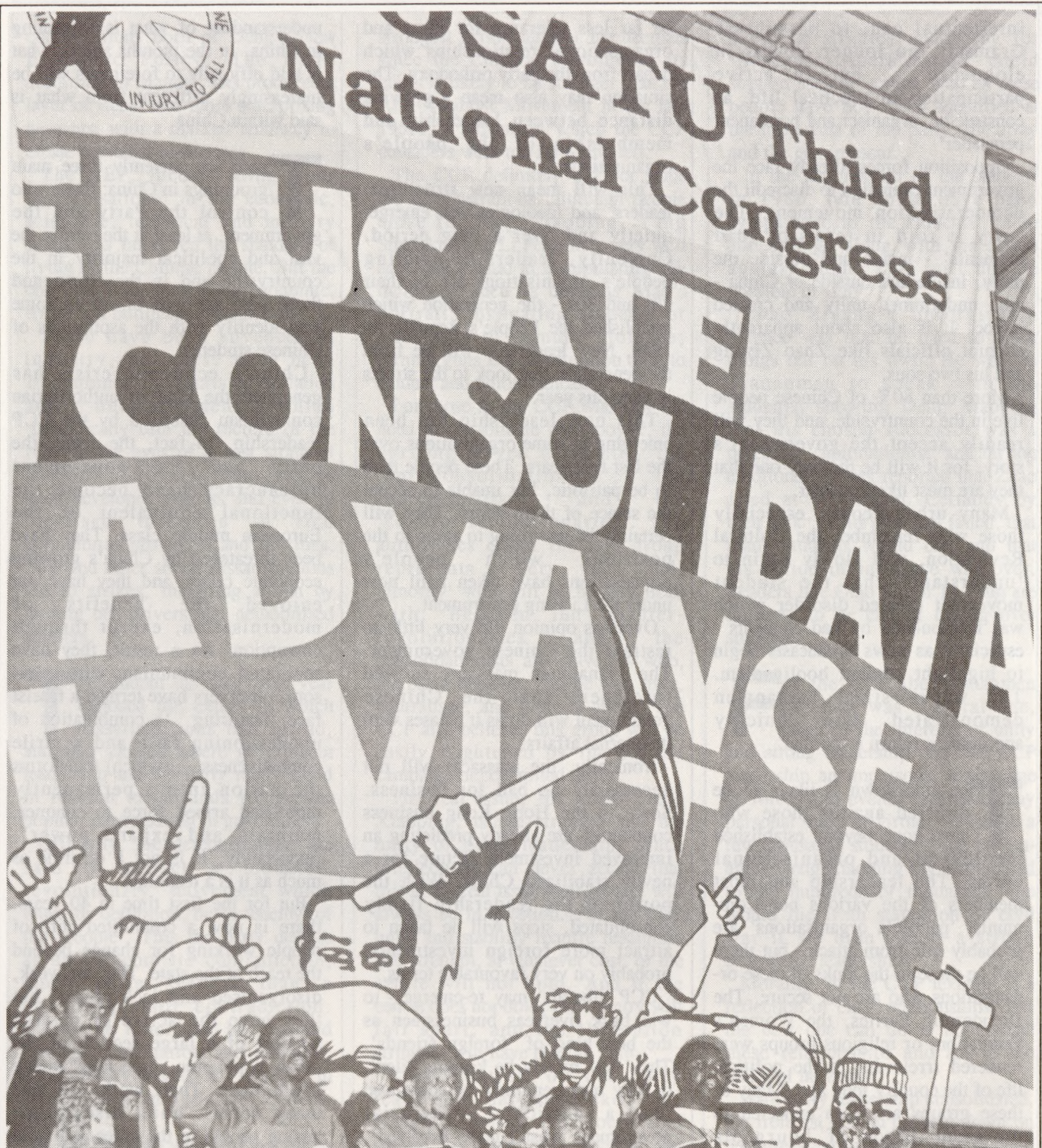
**T**here are currently three main groupings in China: those who control the Party and the government, at least at the centre; the vast and apolitical majority in the countryside and in the cities; and those who are part of, or in some way identify with the aspirations of Chinese students.

China's economic crisis has generated the kind of authoritarian communism practised by the CCP leadership. In fact, the army, the party and the government bureaucracy have become the functional equivalent of the European middle class. They have been threatened by China's growing economic crisis, and they have not enjoyed the benefits of modernisation, except through corruption. As a result, they have recreated communism with what some observers have termed a fascist face, featuring 'a combination of unquestioning faith and a virile combativeness ... (which) transforms the nation into a permanently mobilised armed force to conquer, maintain and expand power'. Importantly, it is not a doctrine as much as it is a technique.

But for the first time in 40 years, there is now a committed core of people working for change beyond the reach of the state. They are weak, disorganised and lack power, but they have the active or passive support of a large section of the urban population, especially among intellectuals. Their work will take many forms: quiet discussions among people in the cities and rural areas; propaganda; creating social unrest; peaceful demonstrations; and, inevitably, violence directed at those who are in control.

While there was not a 'counter-revolutionary' movement before 4 June, a dedicated anti-government movement has been formed since then. Overseas support will be important for this movement, for communication and publicity. But neither foreign countries, nor Hong Kong can serve as a base. Ultimately this is a fight of the Chinese people.





# Unity in diversity

*Pushed centre stage in the democratic struggle by factors largely beyond its control, the Congress of South African Trade Unions has to balance new political demands with ongoing responsibility as a trade union federation. INGRID OBERY examines how this balance is expressed in 'working compromises' forged during Cosatu's third congress.*



**A**s historical references go, Karl Marx's assertion that men make history, but not in conditions they themselves choose, seems especially appropriate to describe the situation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

The political context has thrust upon Cosatu a diversity of roles - a diversity which few labour federations are called upon to tackle.

For all but a few months of Cosatu's existence, the popular opposition groupings have been largely out of action. The parties and organisations of the working class and oppressed have long been banned and operate in exile.

As the fastest-growing trade union movement in the world - its membership in June was two-and-a-half times its size at the time of its launch less than four years ago - it has been called upon to develop and consolidate mechanisms and structures to deal with both the bread-and-butter and the broader concerns of the rank- and-file.

It has also been called upon to merge into a single trade union- force a range of worker groupings which bring into the federation vastly different levels of organisation and experience and markedly different perspectives and traditions of trade unionism.

Furthermore, circumstances outside of the federation have combined to demand of Cosatu that it simultaneously take on a range of additional roles.

From the outset Cosatu had willingly accepted both the right and duty of a trade union movement to engage in the national political terrain - both to achieve its members' factory-floor demands and to act in their broader, political interests.

But with the destruction of the organisations with which it had allied itself, Cosatu found itself, in the past two years, catapulted from playing a key political role to playing *the* political role at the head of the country's internally based mass resistance movement.

The demands of these diverse roles cannot be met without a price. This is particularly so when, in attempting to adjust to the needs of a massively increased membership, state and

employer actions have also required that union adopt increasingly centralised and nationally co-ordinated responses.

The stresses have been heightened by the fact that Cosatu contains a number of political traditions, positions and aspirations - as is normal in any trade union grouping representing the diversity of working-class interests. Yet its current political role demands allegiance to a single dominant strain in resistance politics.

Differences undoubtedly remain. But at Cosatu's third congress held in Johannesburg in July, the federation demonstrated a growing maturity in managing the tensions between its broad trade union role based on diversity, and a more defined political allegiance.

**T**he congress reflected some ability to weld these diversities, to unify them without detracting from what each has to offer to political struggle and the development of working-class organisation on the ground.

The congress was markedly unified, with all those resolutions that were adopted (ranging from the issue of negotiation with the state to Aids) agreed by consensus. Nor did this reflect dominance by any one union or position.

When the banning of a number of political, youth and community organisations in February last year pushed Cosatu into a leading political role, there was concern about its ability to fulfil this role and still maintain a strongly organised shop-floor base. At the time, the two strongest traditions of influence within the federation were just flirting with each other: there were signs of ability to compromise, but no guarantees of tactical compromise acceptable to most elements.

Cosatu had been simultaneously restricted by the state - although not as severely as the other organisations. Assessing its strength, and the need for a powerful popular voice to continue to be heard, the federation decided not to formally defy its bans. Instead, it simply ignored them. With its structures relatively intact, it was in a significantly better position to do so than the rest of the popular opposition.

As a result, the major force which survived after the February '88 crackdown was that of an independent working-class organisation.

And while the demands and dynamics of its new-found role at the head of popular resistance politics demanded of Cosatu that it address more seriously the question of national liberation, the union federation also brought to bear on this question a distinctly working-class perspective.

The massive and rapid growth of the trade union movement, combined with an emerging assertiveness by the outlawed South African Communist Party, had already ensured that working-class interests had begun moving up the opposition agenda. Other pressures combined to hasten this process.

**O**n the political front, the terrain of struggle was changing rapidly. International political and economic pressure on South Africa was increasing. 'Negotiation' became a frequently-raised route for change. Namibian independence finally looked on line as South African troops withdrew from Angola after a military defeat. ANC training camps were effectively expelled from Angola. The ANC and SACP were re-assessing the relationships between insurrection, negotiation, international pressure and mass politics.

As a major - if partially involuntary - political protagonist, Cosatu could not afford to be left behind.

The relative unity emerging from Cosatu's congress does not mean that differences and diversity have been eliminated. There remain within its ranks those who argue that working-class interests have been subordinated to nationalism and national liberation.

Yet many proponents of socialism within Cosatu feel their interests are best served by the compromises thrashed out at the congress.

At the heart of this historic compromise is the alliance between the federation and other organisations of the Mass Democratic Movement, a link which has received ongoing attention for some time. Representatives of sectors of the MDM have been present and



influential at many federation gatherings. And at local level there is evidence of co-operation between union locals, and local youth, community and women's groups.

Confirming this process, Cosatu resolved that the trade union movement should retain its independence and decision-making structures, but at the same time strengthen and extend its disciplined alliance with mass democratic structures at local, regional and national level and develop a joint programme of action around issues at all these levels to facilitate the rebuilding and strengthening of MDM structures.

**C**entral issues taken up at congress generally reflect worker concerns. But the living wage campaign, which sparked the strike wave of mid-1987, was not mentioned. This issue generated a militant offensive by workers, despite the federation's lack of direction in the campaign - a factor which leadership itself admitted subsequently.

However, if the planned campaign against the LRA achieves its objectives, these issues may be teased out in different forms. A number of actions are planned around the LRA, focusing on the elections, the process of political settlement, rebuilding the MDM, and union unity.

The Labour Relations Act - passed despite last year's three-day protest stayaway - remains a major issue for unions. A composite resolution calling for sustained action against this act was put to congress by Numsa and CWIU.

The LRA campaign is posed as Cosatu's most important offensive in the coming months. The resolution adopted presents it as an 'umbrella' which links 'Cosatu's immediate central LRA campaign to other struggles waged by the MDM against apartheid oppression and exploitation'.

In challenging the LRA in this way, organised labour is stating that any advances - be they around negotiations, the elections, or defiance of apartheid laws - depends on the ability of its organisations to define and control the overall terrain of struggle. The LRA campaign thus also attempts to define the terms in

which organised labour will relate to multi-class organisations involved in struggle.

Resistance to the most objectionable of LRA clauses - provision for interdicting strikes, suing unions for damages, undermining majority unionism, and dismissal and selective re-hiring of strikers - has continued with varying degrees of intensity.

A recent agreement between Mercedes and Numsa incorporated a 14-point code forming the minimum standards for labour relations and included contracting out of the LRA. The code, supported by West German union IG Metall, entitles workers to the same rights enjoyed by their West German counterparts. The agreement sets a precedent for other West German companies in South Africa - a demand that Numsa will push for.

The union also appears to have succeeded in rendering ineffective section 79(2) of the act - which gives the company the right to sue the union or union officials for damages during illegal strikes. Numsa refused to intervene in more than 40 illegal strikes until the affected companies waived their right to sue the union. Thusfar, no company is known to have effectively sued a union for damages in any of the major sectors.

Following talks between Saccola and unions on 7 July, Frans Barker, acting chair of the National Manpower Commission, said the NMC would 'urgently advise' the government on a possible review of section 79(2). Barker singled out 79(2) as one of the most 'urgent issues' on which the NMC would make recommendations, with a view to legislative change. He added that other aspects stemming from the talks would be submitted to the NMC for consideration during its consolidation of the LRA.

Legal sources confirm that there has been a large increase in the number of court interdicts against unions since the LRA was passed. The new act has simplified and sped up the process involved in obtaining such interdicts.

Last year's stayaway, endorsed by Cosatu, Nactu and UDF affiliates, was the biggest in South African history. The action demonstrated that despite setbacks, organised labour and popular opposition forces

remained militant. Saccola was forced to enter negotiations with union federations, and this resulted in some concessions on the bill. However, the stayaway marked the end of mass action on the bill, and negotiations between union leaders, lawyers and business representatives replaced direct action at grassroots level.

In his report to the third congress, Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo argued that this had been a mistake. A more powerful strategy would have sustained mass action, basing negotiations on ongoing activity by the mass of union and community members. Negotiations on their own were not able to win substantial concessions.

This may be the reason for a more diversified strategy in future. It is a lesson learned from the bottom up: unions and workers in dispute situations talk to management, withdraw their labour as a powerful tool to push management, talk again - with the strike action as concrete evidence of the power they wield.

**T**his strategy of 'diverse attack' shows conscious recognition that only a campaign on many fronts will allow Cosatu to maintain its central position, and keep working-class issues firmly on the national political agenda. But the final nature of sustained action to be taken by the unions will be decided at the August labour summit.

Some unionists are questioning whether workers are willing to sustain constant cuts in their pay packets at present. In the context of rising inflation and hardship it may prove difficult to sustain action beyond a month or two, especially if returns are slow in coming.

Management response is also being discussed within the unions. There is certain to be concern from capital that the elections protest - a separate 'political' issue in many eyes - will be at the cost of profits. And it remains to be seen whether the LRA protests will push employers to lobby for legislative change, or if capital will call on the state to suppress militant action on the shop floor.

For the unions, there is little expectation that harassment, detentions and police interference in labour actions will stop, particularly if worker militancy leads to increased



worker protests.

Earlier this year, Cosatu, Nactu and some independent unions approached Saccola demanding that harassment of workers and police banning of LRA protest meetings should stop. Saccola responded through Anglo American's Bobby Godsell, who argued that 'there is a challenge to the state and employers to demonstrate that peaceful protest is possible in South Africa and for black South Africans'. He added that 'protesting peacefully is a basic right in a democratic society...and the state has to think carefully before banning meetings'.

The labour movement felt this was too vague and did not indicate any commitment to the prevention of harassment by police and other state functionaries.

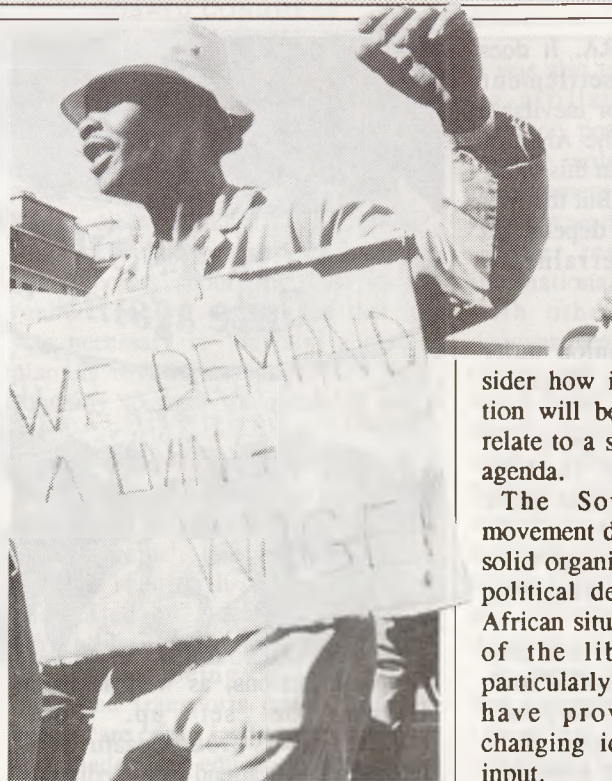
**C**osatu's ability to keep workers on the action track is not assured. If the pace of South African politics has placed demands on the federation, the pace of industrial development and sophisticated management strategies increase that pressure on the federation.

Over the past few years many Cosatu affiliates have been pushing, in their respective industries, for national industry-wide or sector-wide wage bargaining. Two years ago, for example, Fawu made major gains with SA Breweries. This year CWIU has an ongoing battle with oil companies for one negotiating forum in the sector.

Industrial councils have recently been scuttled in the printing, transport and hotel industries. This has created space for unions to push all the harder for national centralised bargaining to ensure across-the-board minimum wages for all workers in the sector.

In a number of sectors, agreements set wages above the official rate of inflation. On the mines recently, NUM won increases of between 13,5% and 21,3%, while in the metal industry increases ranged from 15,2% to 18,5%. However, this does not amount to much in rands: on the mines, for example, minimum wages range from R305 to R506 per month.

In the commercial catering sector, Pick 'n Pay granted an increase of 19% and OK Bazaars' workers



obtained 24%. Overall the average negotiated was a 16% wage increase.

Worker militancy appears to be on the increase. In the first six months of 1989 industrial action rose sharply above the level for the same period in 1988, with the number of work-days lost almost trebling. This may indicate that despite a federation stretched organisationally on all fronts, there is potential for sustained action by workers. And the momentum provided by the highly-publicised defiance campaign started by the democratic movement in early August may spur workers on.

The campaign against the 6 September elections also remains to be finalised. Cosatu, along with popular political organisations, opposes participation. The congress proposed sustained action, but a final decision on its form is to be finalised at the forthcoming workers' summit. Cosatu affiliates, Nactu affiliates, independent unions and representatives of popular opposition organisations will attend this gathering.

The summit will focus on actions by the organised working class, but these will dovetail with plans for the election being developed in various communities.

**C**osatu's present position as the key factor in the MDM is not in dispute, and the federation will inevitably have a

directing function in defining how the MDM is rebuilt. The politics of its dominant unions have placed issues of socialism and transition on the agenda. The October anti-apartheid conference will presumably con-

sider how issues of national liberation will be tackled, and how they relate to a specifically working-class agenda.

The South African labour movement draws on a rich history of solid organisation and a diversity of political debate unknown in other African situations. The organisations of the liberation movement - particularly the ANC and SACP - have provided extensive and changing ideological and political input.

Organisations on the ground and struggles such as rent and consumer boycotts have further consolidated understanding of the limits and parameters of struggle, but also have generated debate and discussion about what future paths to take.

The Freedom Charter, seen by many to be an inadequate document for transition to a new society, nevertheless gave workers and members of other popular organisations the basis on which to formulate ideas about that new society.

Cosatu's resolution on processes of political settlement in South Africa specifies similar preconditions to those spelled out by the ANC on negotiations. The resolution notes continued repression, the imprisonment and exile of leadership, and continued occupation of townships by SAP and SADF troops.

It was resolved 'to ensure in the event of negotiations taking place that the masses of our people are involved in shaping the process so that no negotiations take place above the heads of the people', and 'to stimulate debate and discussion on our demand that THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN in order to give it more meaning and content'.

This resolution cannot be seen outside of Cosatu's call for continued economic sanctions, political pressure and its intention to pursue a



campaign around the LRA. It does not see political settlement negotiations as a linear or inevitable process any more than the ANC or SACP do. Negotiations, in this view, are a terrain of struggle. But the way they are engaged will depend on outcomes in other terrains of struggle.

**T**he question of union unity remains high on Cosatu's agenda.

Despite its dominant position, Cosatu cannot go it alone. The LRA campaign needs support and active participation from Nactu and its affiliates. This, too, will be a priority issue at the forthcoming workers summit.

The congress recognised that only capital benefits from a divided trade union movement, and Cosatu's contribution to the unification of the working class under one federation was viewed as crucial.

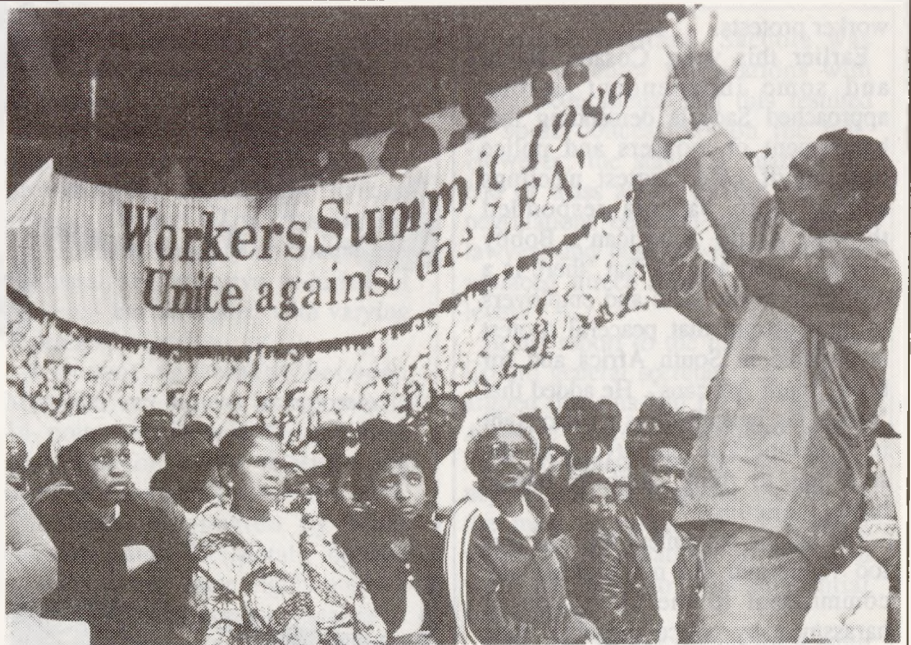
A composite CWIU and Numsa resolution called for a timetable to be agreed between Cosatu, Nactu and other independent unions to work towards one union, one federation.

The one dissenting voice at congress was Fawu's - expressing harsh criticism of Nactu and opposing any process of unity with it. But this position found no seconder.

While the congress was united on major issues of policy, the question of disunity within the federation was still a factor. Ccawusa, whose history of division has been well publicised and documented elsewhere, came to congress as one delegation with two parts. Because of this the union was excluded from proposing or seconding resolutions, although delegates still participated in debate.

The Mtwu grouping of Ccawusa was the single dissenting voice on the final composite resolution on negotiations. This grouping is also the only one within Cosatu not to have adopted the Freedom Charter.

Cosatu as a federation has taken a more interventionist position on the Ccawusa split. The congress agreed that the CEC decision in November to exclude the Mtwu grouping from Cosatu did not contribute towards unity in the sector. A resolution determined that a unity executive of six representatives apiece from both



Ccawusa factions, as well as from Harwu, be set up. Four representatives from Cosatu as a federation will attend in a mediating capacity.

The congress resolved that this process should be completed by 10 December when Ccawusa's congress is due to take place.

A new complication involves Harwu's recently expressed desire to go it alone in the hotel and restaurant sector - because the rest of Ccawusa has indicated little interest in developing organisation in this area. Harwu has considered remaining outside of Cosatu in order to build up this sector, before moving to merge with the unified Ccawusa. Its final decision on this strategy was due to be taken at its congress on 12 August.

**O**ver the years a number of unions have proposed a workers charter, and raised the question of independent working-class parties.

Opposition to these ideas have included the assertion that the only legitimate party of the working class is the SACP; and that the Freedom Charter is sufficient as a document on which to build a new South Africa. However, the formulation of a charter dealing specifically with rights, conditions and aspirations of organised workers has become a more generally accepted project. The debate within Cosatu is now about the nature of a workers charter, rather than about its necessity.

This shift is a result of unions

examining the problems faced by societies in transition, and finding examples of workers rights being eroded in other liberation struggles.

The ANC's draft constitutional guidelines examine worker rights carefully, argue in favour of a workers charter, and propose the constitutional entrenchment of trade union independence from political parties.

And the SACP's recent programme argues the importance of independent working-class organisations co-operating with and leading the broad democratic forces. Dominant Cosatu thinking has evolved in similar directions.

The final composite resolution on this issue - proposed by NUM and seconded by Numsa - agreed that Cosatu would spearhead a two-year campaign to involve and canvass the view of all sections of workers and the oppressed masses, culminating in the drafting of a workers charter. The campaign would seek to determine the 'protections sought by workers to be included in the laws and constitution of South Africa'.

An earlier motion at the congress outlined the sort of worker rights which could be embodied in a workers charter: to join a union of choice without being victimised; to engage in collective bargaining; to strike and picket; to protection from unfair dismissals; to fair termination of service; a 40-hour week; a national minimum wage; maternity rights; pensions; occupational health and safety; equal pay for equal work; representation on certain state



planning bodies; and to be involved in the management of production in each factory.

However, this Actwusa proposal was not passed by the congress, as other unions saw the need for a process of discussing worker demands as outlined in the NUM-Numsa resolution before producing a blueprint for such a charter.

Some Fawu delegates strongly opposed the idea of a charter: by enshrining workers' right to strike, they argued, workers in a post-apartheid society would be taking action against a government democratically elected by the people.

**T**he wide range of resolutions at Cosatu's third congress reflect many of the factors which will have to be faced in a society in transition.

Ironically, the motion which sparked the fiercest debate (lasting more than four hours) was finally rejected. It addressed the question of sexual conduct, noting that male unionists often get involved in relationships with new women members and that when these unequal relationships collapse the women often leave the organisation. This, the motion argued, was one reason for 'the lack of consistent participation by women comrades in our structures'.

This motion also noted incidents of sexual harassment of women members by male unionists, and called for tighter sexual discipline and a code of conduct.

On a different topic, TGWU noted that the constitutional guidelines raised points about South Africa's future economy, and argued that it was necessary to 'develop a clear plan as to how to restructure the economy to meet the needs of our people'.

The Sarhwalu resolution on privatisation noted that this involved selling 'the people's property to the private sector'. It argued that this would result in an economy controlled by a few individuals which would in turn result in thousands being retrenched, increased transport costs, higher health-care costs, inadequate housing and inadequate education for the majority of people. Cosatu was called on to educate members about the effects of privatisation.

Another resolution committed Cosatu to supporting the development of co-operatives and co-operative forms of organisation and production.

A number of resolutions attempted to deal with peace initiatives in Natal and urged Cosatu to 'take whatever steps are possible to end the reign of terror against the working class and progressive organisations' in Natal.

It was also resolved that 'Cosatu and its affiliates should work out common positions on the problems of state violence, vigilante violence, management violence and violence between workers'.

Other resolutions dealt with international policy and solidarity with other union movements; disinvestment; education on Aids 'to expose and eliminate the conditions which break steady relationships and thereby help to spread Aids'; and the need to reduce union dependence on foreign money. There were two resolutions on women, dealing with national women's organisation and female leadership in the trade unions, and pledging continued support for domestic workers and Sadwu.

In many ways, the congress was less controversial than expected. The 'working compromises' forged between hitherto antagonistic positions within the federation allowed for a high degree of consensus. Most observers do not believe that differences have disappeared within Cosatu. But a new organisational maturity within previously contending affiliates cut through much of the rhetoric, moved Cosatu closer towards a concrete programme for building the future, and placed working-class issues firmly on the national political agenda.

## Nactu - committed to unity

**U**nity in action, the Labour Relations Act campaign and in-depth discussions on the current political situation and the changing strategies of the liberation movement are some of the issues which will feature high on Nactu's agenda in the coming months.

'We have to address ourselves to the politics of the day. In Nactu this will involve organising workshops, asking members to fill in questionnaires and circulating discussion papers so that we can formulate our response on major political issues, including negotiations', says Nactu assistant general secretary Cunningham Ngukana.

The current political situation and the possibility of a negotiated settlement for South Africa places high demands on the trade union movement. In this context, trade union unity has become a priority and recent official positions from Cosatu and Nactu are indicative of a more concerted effort in this direction.

Nactu was invited to the Cosatu congress this year. 'The federation was welcomed with respect and in a comradely manner at the congress', aid Nactu general secretary Piroshaw Camay, who represented Nactu at the Cosatu congress. A strong anti-Nactu position coming from a small minority at the Congress did not affect this feeling.

Ngukana stresses Nactu's commitment to unity and to the attainment of one trade union federation: 'But building solid unity does not come about from an overnight decision. It is achieved through a process of talks, working together and engaging in joint action'.

\* On the issue of broader unity, Nactu asserts that, while it was firmly committed to trade union unity and addressing the current political strategies, it does not see itself as part of the mass democratic

movement.

'Several questions need to be answered before the federation decides on its position', says Ngukana. 'Firstly, we need a proper definition of the MDM. Who is involved in it, what structures does it have and whose interests are they serving in terms of the class struggle'.

Ngukana says it is necessary to discuss issues affecting the working class with other organisations but warns that unions should not abandon their socialist principles. 'The people led by the working class is the only vehicle for socialism and not the other way round', he said.

Following talks with the ANC, PAC, Black Consciousness Movement and the New Unity Movement, Nactu believes that no single organisation has the monopoly of the liberation struggle and the working class: 'It is in this context that the federation will approach the question of broader unity'.

A national shopstewards' workshop, scheduled for 19 and 20 August, will decide on whether to attend the anti-apartheid conference.

\* About 40 independent unions, Nactu, Cosatu and representatives from community, church and youth organisations will attend the second workers' summit on 26 and 27 August in Johannesburg.

As a run-up to the summit, the unions will be holding joint rallies on the LRA. Members on the shopfloor will also vote in ballots to decide on action. The results from the ballot and the report-back from the unions' meeting with Saccola will largely influence decisions, says Ngukana. Agreement was reached by the unions at a meeting in May on a Nactu proposal relating to contracting out agreements. Nactu motivated that the strategy of contracting out with employers to render the LRA ineffective will be divisive to the working class in any contemplated action against the LRA. The campaign should involve the whole working class and include sectors currently not covered by the Act.



## Labour trends

Strike action, measured in the number of workers involved and man-days lost, showed a dramatic increase in the first six months of this year compared with the same period last year.

The SARS labour monitor estimated that the number of strikers involved was nearly 70% up on last year's figure. It listed 91 strikes involving 75 518 workers in the period January to June this year, compared with 71 strikes involving 44 825 workers in the corresponding time last year.

Levy Piron and Associates, estimating the impact in man-days lost rather than workers involved, showed that working time lost due to industrial action rose by almost 200%. It gave the following figures: 76 strikes for the first half of last year resulting in 120 035 man-days lost and 87 strikes for the same period this year with 348 614 man-days lost.

As in the first few months of this year, wildcat and illegal strikes dominated industrial action in the current review period, from mid-May to July.

While most strikes and stoppages from January to mid-May were over wages, the current period reflected a radical decline in wage strikes. Of a total of 52 strikes, only 17 were over wages and 35 were caused by a broad range

of issues, including dismissals, retrenchments, union recognition, disinvestment, disputes relating to the Labour Relations Act (LRA), assaults on workers and disciplinary action.

Workers are clearly ignoring even contentious clauses in the LRA. Bosses are responding harshly by using court interdicts, lock-outs and eviction orders. The last three months have seen increased police intervention in strike situations, death threats to union activists and the killing of unionists during strikes. Some of these actions have left no doubt about the strong relationship between state and capital. (See repression monitor)

Public sector workers, after a long lull in strike action, have acted militantly in this period. Nehawu members at four hospitals went on strike and disputes are brewing at other hospitals and some educational institutions.

In the face of increasing levels of worker militancy management has intensified its repressive strategy, with new variations. A recent example is the Joshua Doore/Ccawusa strike where the company used prominent personalities in the democratic movement in an attempt to stop a strike by 2 000 workers at over 50 stores. (See briefs)

Also in the commercial catering sector, OK

Bazaars management used propaganda in the form of pamphlets and letters sent to workers during a wage dispute between the company and Ccawusa.

Pamphlets called on workers to think carefully and know the facts before balloting. The facts outlined in the pamphlet gave a false impression of the financial state of the company, reminded workers of the hardships of the 86/87 strike and stated that thousands of Ccawusa members had already accepted the wage offer. Letters were also sent to individual members urging them to accept the wage offer independently of Ccawusa. The strategy did not meet with much success, according to the union.

But at Gillette in Springs a similar strategy succeeded in ending a strike after two weeks. A large number of workers striking over the dismissal of a shop-steward returned to work after receiving telegrams from management.

Trade union strategy has remained more or less the same as in the previous review period. Numsa continues its tactic of refraining from intervening in illegal strikes or from accepting responsibility for the action. But the strategy has still not been taken up significantly by other unions.

The country's two most closely observed wage negotiations ended quite undramatically within about a week of each other. NUM accepted the Chamber's final offer of increases ranging between 13,5% and 21,3%, leaving black mineworkers with wages still well below conservative estimates of the basic subsistence level of R541,20. Percentage increases amounted to little in rands. Mining houses once again made split offers resulting in different rates at the different mines. (See strike table)

Metal industry negotiations between Numsa and Seifsa were settled with relative ease compared to last year. For the first time in almost ten years, all 15 of the industry's unions agreed to sign the wage agreement. Wage increases of between 15,2% and 18,5% were agreed upon. This brought minimum rates in the industry to between R3,56 and R8,31 an hour. But the most significant gain for Numsa was recognition of 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays.

Some facts and figures:

- \* a total of 52 strikes from mid-May to July;
- \* there were nine cases of lockouts;
- \* in 11 instances police intervened in strikes;
- \* there were 11 sympathy strikes;
- \* most strikes lasted more than five days.

### Strikes and Disputes: 20 May to 28 July 1989

#### Strikes and Disputes: TRANSVAAL

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Afro Projects Modderfontein	Bcawu	70	01.06.89	Workers held a work stoppage to protest against management's unilateral decision to withdraw company transport facilities. The issue occurred pending an Industrial Court hearing.
Beares	Ccawusa	800	June-July 89	Over 800 workers went on strike at 60 Beares stores on the Reef. The six-week strike was sparked off when management refused to negotiate a central recognition agreement for all subsidiaries of the Beares group. A compromise was reached when Beares agreed to national negotiations with individual Beares subsidiaries.
Cera Oils Boksburg	CWIU	120	06.06.89	Workers downed tools and demanded that the company agree to industry-wide bargaining in the oil and petroleum sectors. They returned to work the following day when management agreed to negotiate the issue with the union.
Concor Technicrete Olifantsfontein	Bcawu	97	July 1989	Police arrested striking Concor workers on charges of intimidation. According to Bcawu, a skirmish broke out between two workers after a misunderstanding, and management fired one of the protagonists. The rest of the workforce downed tools and demanded that both workers be suspended and the disciplinary code applied.
Corobrick Crown Mines	Bcawu	80	July 1989	Bcawu members ended their two-week strike for a 70c across-the-board increase after management threatened a lock-out. Management's final offer was 48c an hour for the A grade and 58c for the B grade. The union was planning Industrial Court action.
Dorbyl	Numsa	7 000	July 1989	Numsa prepared a strike ballot for its 7 000 members at 50 Dorbyl plants to determine the extent of worker dissatisfaction over the

				LRA. Numsa demanded compulsory arbitration in disputes of issues such as dismissals; four-weeks' pay for each year of service in retrenchment cases; and paid time-off for shopstewards to undergo training. The union demanded that arbitration replace the Industrial Court on matters such as these.
Dunlop Industrial Products Benoni	CWIU	500	07-11.07.89	Striking workers at Dunlop Industrial Products were locked out by management. The police were called in and 16 workers were injured in the confrontation between the police and strikers. One worker was hospitalised. Workers went on strike over the alleged assault of a shopsteward by a foreman and returned to work after management agreed to hold a disciplinary enquiry.
Edworks	Ccawusa	600	14.04-30.06.89	A seven-week strike at Edworks which resulted in the closure of at least seven of the company's stores and prompted a hunger strike by six workers ended after a settlement between Ccawusa and Edworks. Ccawusa accepted the company's offer of R105 across-the-board increase and a minimum rate of R520 a month. Although the increase was not substantially higher than the union's final offer, the union did succeed in getting recognition at Edworks in Bophuthatswana. Both parties agreed that the new LRA would not be used when determining workers' conduct during the strike.
Everite Transvaal, Cape & Natal	Cawu	3 000	29.05.89	A legal wage strike at Swiss multinational Everite entered its ninth week with no signs of settlement. Management obtained a court interdict restraining workers from entering company premises at the Durban and Kliprivier plants. Workers were demanding an hourly increase of R1,03 across the board against management's 50c-an-hour offer on the current minimum of R3,35 an hour. All 4 plants employed scabs to replace the strikers. Management called in the police at two plants when scabs arrived at work on their first day. During the course of the strike, the company converted its East London plant to a depot without consulting the workers or the union. More than 200 workers were retrenched. Management said they were prepared to transfer some workers to plants in other provinces but refused to organise accommodation for them. Active union members received death threats by phone and a few workers' homes were visited by unknown people who demanded to know their whereabouts. A key shopsteward was also shot dead on his way home from the union office. CAWU was preparing for a meeting with shopstewards and workers to assess the strike and consider new strategies.
Gillette SA Springs	CWIU	150	03-18.07.89	Gillette workers went on strike over management's alleged unfair dismissal of a shopsteward. CWIU said the company threatened to use the controversial LRA to interdict workers from continuing the strike, following the failure of union attempts to resolve the issue by negotiations. About two weeks into the strike, management sent telegrams to workers urging them to return to work. This strike-breaking tactic worked as some workers returned to work. The striking workers decided that it was useless to continue the strike divided. CWIU is looking into the issue of the dismissed shopsteward.
Iscor Vanderbijlpark	Numsa	133	21.07.89	The Industrial Court ordered the re-instatement, with six months back-pay, of 133 Iscor employees dismissed last year after taking part in the June 6-8 stayaway. The re-instated workers were among 7 000 Iscor workers who participated in the stayaway. Management, however, only dismissed 133 workers, claiming their disciplinary records regarding absenteeism made them liable for dismissal.
Johannesburg Hospital	Nehawu	300	25.07.89	About 300 hospital workers stopped work for two and half hours in protest against conditions of service. The workers, mainly cleaners and kitchen staff, held a placard demonstration calling for an end to temporary staff, all forms of segregation and tax deductions. They returned to work after management agreed to investigate the issues and to discuss the tax issue with the receiver of revenue.
Joshua Doore	Ccawusa	2 000	20.06.89 -	About 100 stores of the Joshua Doore group were hit by a strike following the retrenchment of 500 colleagues on the Witwatersrand. (SEE BRIEFS)
Lion Match Rosslyn	Ppwawu	300	24.05.89	Production was stopped for three hours at the Lion Match plant in Rosslyn after a white staff member threatened to shoot workers who had defaced an AWB sticker on his car. Workers resumed work after management suspended the staff member.
Morningside Clinic Sandton	Nehawu	107	14-25.07.89	Workers were dismissed from the Morningside Clinic in Sandton following a work stoppage. Workers stopped work when a worker was told to leave the premises for misusing the telephone. Management claimed the dismissed worker had continually transgressed rules of using public telephones during working hours. After negotiations with Nehawu, management selectively re-instated the workers, leaving out eight key union activists and shopstewards. The union planned to go to court to secure the re-instatement of the eight workers.
Multi-serve	Ccawusa	350	03-28.07.89	Ccawusa and Multi-Serve reached a wage settlement, ending a 25-day strike by over 350 workers in Transvaal. The parties agreed on a R120-increase to split into two payments - R40 from the 1 April 1989 and a further R80 on 1 January 1990. At the time of the strike, management's final offer was an R80 and the unions demand was an increase of R160.
Nampak Corrugated Rosslyn	Ppwawu	300	19-24.07.89	Workers staged a work stoppage after management appointed a worker from outside without advertising the post internally. The union said management had acted against an undertaking given to workers that all vacancies would be advertised internally. Workers returned to work while the issue was being investigated. Management suspended the worker in the interim.



Nissan, Samcor and Toyota Pretoria	Numsa	4 000	May 1989 -	Workers at motor companies organised by Numsa were involved in a series of work stoppages, demonstrations and strikes to pressurise managements to agree to join the Industrial Council to facilitate industry-wide bargaining. Numsa and the companies concerned were discussing the issue.
National Bolts Boksburg	Numsa	500	11.07.89	Over 500 workers at National Bolts went on strike over a job- upgrading dispute with the company. The union claimed fork-lift drivers were being asked to do extra work and had been doing it for the past three months. It said management did not upgrade the workers' jobs as expected. Numsa was discussing the issue with management.
OK Bazaars	Ccawusa	9 000	June-July 89	A massive nation-wide strike at OK Bazaars was averted after a settlement was reached between Ccawusa and the company. However, workers did stage a one-day strike during the course of the dispute at over 40 stores on the Witwatersrand. After a 15-hour mediation session, the parties agreed on an increase of R100 a month with effect from 1 April 1989 and R8 from February 1990. The minimum wage will also be increased to R620 a month from February 1990. A hostile atmosphere developed during negotiations with both parties accusing each other of being unprofessional and heavy handed. OK used various tactics to entice workers and to prevent a strike. (SEE TRENDS)
Perskor	Mwasa	228	July 1989	Perskor lost a case in the Supreme Court against an Industrial Court ruling for the re-instatement of 220 dismissed shopstewards. The company dismissed 228 workers in May following a wage strike. Mwasa referred the dispute to the Industrial Court which ruled that the workers should be reinstated. Perskor, however, re-instated only 28 workers and tried to get a reversal of the Industrial Court ruling.
Philips Martindale	Numsa	233	14-28.06.89	The Rand Supreme court reinstated 233 workers dismissed by Philips management following a strike. Workers went on strike over a dispute relating to the company's time-management system which resulted in the dismissal of one employee and the issuing of warnings to a few others.
Plascon Tarranova	Sacwu	250	08.05.89-	Workers who were locked out on the fourth day of their sit-in wage strike at Plascon Tarranova have been formally dismissed by management. The union's final demand was for an across-the-board increase of R200 and management was offering increases ranging from R115 to R148 a month. SACWU was planning legal action.
Plascon Polycell	Sacwu	70	June 1989	Management dismissed workers who staged a wage strike. The union was taking legal action. Because Plascon refused centralised negotiations, the union had separate disputes at the individual plants.
Pilkington Flat Glass Springs	CWIU	150	10.07.89	Workers staged a one-day work stoppage at Pilkington Flat Glass over an issue relating to promotions in the company. Workers expressed dissatisfaction over management's employment of outsiders to jobs they believe could be filled by internal promotions. The company agreed to discuss the issue with the union.
Plasmould Injector Wadeville	CWIU	200	11.07.89	Workers stopped work to support their demand for an 80c across- the-board wage increase against management's offer of 60c. They returned to work and applied a for conciliation board after management threatened a lock-out. The strike was illegal.
Pretoria Central Post Office	Potwa	100	20-22.06.89	Potwa members stopped work for two days following management's decision to transfer their shopsteward committee secretary to another branch. Workers accused management of trying to disrupt union leadership structures.
Prices Candles - JHB	Sacwu		July 1989	Workers staged a wage strike and a settlement was reached.
Rand Rubber Boksburg	CWIU	120	17-18.07.89	A strike was sparked off when management employed an ex-convict instead of a retrenched worker. The dispute was resolved after management re-employed the retrenched worker.
Reckitt and Coleman Elandsfontein	CWIU	350	14-22.06	CWIU members went on strike and occupied the office block for a few days after management dismissed 8 workers without an inquiry. The eight were dismissed for singing and blowing car hooters on factory premises. Workers decided to return to work and apply for a conciliation board while management applied for a court interdict against the strike. The union was awaiting a conciliation board hearing.
Seifsa	Numsa & 14 other unions	350 000	14.07.89	Annual wage negotiations in the metal industry between Numsa and Seifsa were settled with relative ease compared to previous years. For the first time in almost a decade all 15 unions involved in the negotiations accepted Seifsa's final offer and agreed to sign the agreement. The agreement provides for wage increases ranging from 15,2% for artisans to 18,5% for labourers backdated to 1 July. This amounts to an across-the-board increase ranging from 56c for labourers to R1,11 for artisans raises the minimum rates to R3,56 and R8,31 an hour respectively. Numsa also succeeded in winning 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays - an issue the union had been fighting for many years. Seifsa also agreed to restructure the industry's Sick Pay Fund and extend sick pay provisions.
South African Breweries Rosslyn	Fawu	900	20.06.89	About 900 SAB workers were locked out by management following their strike over the dismissal of a fellow employee who allegedly made false allegations against a Fawu member.

South African Red Cross Society Johannesburg		35	08.05.89	The dismissal of Bongani Khumalo, SA Red Cross Society's assistant regional director in Transvaal, sparked off a strike by black staff members in the Southern Transvaal Region. The strikers were dismissed by the Society in the ninth week of their strike after ignoring several ultimatums to return to work. Workers were also protesting against the organisation's racist policies and view their dismissal as an illustration of this.
TMS Magnum Pretoria	Numsa	9	29.06.89	Nine scooter drivers were dismissed at TMS Magnum after failing to meet management's ultimatum to return to work. The workers went on strike after management suspended three scooter drivers who refused to sign an undertaking committing themselves to repay missing cash-on-delivery money. Numsa was investigating the issue.
Transvaal Bag Company Pretoria	Ppwawu	25	17.07.89-	Workers went on strike for over a week to get union recognition. Ppwawu said the union had been battling to get recognition at the company for the past 18 months.

#### Strikes and Disputes: CAPE

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
African Products Bellville and Meyerton	Fawu	200	15.05-13.06.89	Workers at two African Products plants went on a legal strike over management's wage offer which was about half of last year's increase. Agreement was reached after a three-and-half-week strike. Workers received a 52c increase on the current minimum rate of R3,56 an hour.
Desiree Quilted Products Atlantis	Actwusa	219	06.07.89	A long-standing wage dispute between Actwusa and Desiree Quilting was settled at arbitration. Workers were granted an across-the-board increase of R23 a week, May Day and 16 June as paid holidays and paid maternity leave was set at 32% of basic pay for 16 weeks.
Goodyear Uitenhage	Numsa	1 200	June 1989 -	Over 1 000 Goodyear workers were involved in a series of work stoppages and protest actions including a one-week strike following the company's decision to disinvest from South Africa. Goodyear, an American company, sold its local interests to Consol, an Anglovaal subsidiary. Numsa expressed discontentment at the way disinvestment had taken place in South Africa. It said that foreign firms often continue to gain by licensing arrangements which ensure that they continue to profit from a hidden involvement in South Africa. The union demanded that the company meets the following: each worker must be paid at least R5 000 separation pay; guaranteed conditions of employment; maintenance of existing labour agreements; pay-out of pension benefits and the writing off of housing loans before the sale goes through. Workers also demanded a meeting with Goodyear in the US and called on the company to set up a trust fund for community projects. Talks are still continuing.
Hextex Textile Mill Worcester	Actwusa	1 020	18.05-03.07.89	Over 1 000 workers at Hextex, a Barlow Rand subsidiary, were involved in a 46-day strike - the largest strike yet in the Western Cape textile industry. The company was brought to a virtual standstill, with 1 020 out of a total workforce of 1 060 on strike. Workers were demanding a 50c weekly bonus for each year of service to be implemented after the first year of service. Management was offering a 25c weekly bonus to be implemented after four years service. The strike paid off - workers won their demand.
Plessey SA Retreat	EAWTU	450	July 1989	Management at Plessey SA threatened to lock out workers who did not accept the company's final wage offer averaging 17%. Workers were demanding a 25% minimum wage increase amounting to a minimum wage of R955 for a worker with five years experience.
Premier Wire Cape Town	EAWTU	120	15.06.89	Management at Premier Wire sacked 120 striking workers who demanded that the company grant workers 16 June as a paid holiday in place of Kruger Day.
Renown Fresh Meat Maitland	Fawu	180	17.05.89	Fawu members went on a wage strike. Workers at Jungle Oats and Renown Food Products went on a sympathy strike with their colleagues at Renown Fresh meat.
Timber City - Bellville	Ppwawu	20	29.06.89	Workers were ordered to leave company premises and told 'casuals' were doing their jobs.

#### Strikes and disputes: NATAL

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Bifsa Marianhill	Nehawu	120	14.06.89	Training centre workers at the Building Industries Federation of South Africa went on strike for a few hours to pressurise management to discuss union recognition with Nehawu. Management agreed to the demand and meetings with the union have already started. The workers were former members of Uwusa. The company has a recognition agreement with the latter.
Elangeni Hotel Durban	NLCTU	100	30.03.89	Workers walked off the job following a pay dispute. Police arrived at the hotel shortly after the walkout. Talks between union and management were continuing.
King Edward Hospital	Nehawu	400	June -	Nurses sporadically boycotted meals in protest against poor diet and living conditions at their hostel.
Midlands Medical Centre Pietermaritzburg	Nehawu	16	27.07.89	Workers went on strike over the dismissal of a worker without any reasons given by management. The worker was reinstated after a few hours.
Mobil	CWIU	2 800	27.06.89	Mobil and CWIU resolved a two-month-old disinvestment dispute with an agreement on a R6,5-m payout to employees. In terms of



				the agreement, each employee would receive R2 000 or one month's salary, whichever was greater. The dispute arose after Mobil announced the sale of its South African interests to Gencor. The agreement also included an undertaking by Gencor that there will be no adverse changes to the conditions of employment and that Mobil's agreement with CWIU continue under the new management. The local Mobil management also committed itself to arrange a meeting with a senior executive member of Mobil Corporation US and the union to discuss the union's two outstanding demands: receipt of a copy of the agreement of the sale with Gencor, and the establishment of a trust fund to finance social projects.
Natal African Blind Society		200	21.06.89	About 200 workers, most of them blind, went on strike for more pay at the Natal African Blind Society in Umlazi.
Putco Durban	TGWU	900	13.06.89	More than 150 000 commuters were stranded when Putco bus drivers and workers in Durban stopped work and demanded the dismissal of a white employee who allegedly assaulted his black colleague. The workers returned to work on the same day while talks with management and worker representatives were continuing.
St Augustine's Hospital Durban	Nehawu	200	22.06.89	Over 200 workers, most of them women, at St Augustine's Hospital stopped work in protest against warnings issued to fellow workers. Workers complained that hospital authorities warned workers about their work performance without following the correct procedures. Management and union agreed that workers should return to work while talks continue. Working hours were also reduced to 42 hours per week.

### Strikes and disputes: MINES

Company	Union	Workers	Date	Events and outcome
Chamber of Mines	NUM	400 000	04.07.89	NUM and the Chamber of Mines reached agreement on 1989 wage increases affecting over 400 000 workers after a one-and-a-half month-long negotiation process. The union accepted the Chamber's revised final offer ranging from 13.5% to 21,3%. The agreement provided for some differential increases according to mining house, job category and sector - ie gold or coal. The NUM warned of future industrial action aimed at eliminating continuing wage differentials between the different mining groups. Commenting on the agreement, NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said the union's general satisfaction at the outcome of the negotiations was marred by the increased gap between wages paid in the lower categories by the different mining houses. He said NUM was going to make a concerted effort to bring about a uniform wage structure. Minimum wages at JCI and Anglo mines were increased to R420 a month for surface workers and R480 for underground workers. At Gencor, workers will get R356 and R420 respectively and at Gold Fields R323 and R357.

### REPRESSION: 20 May to 28 July

25.05.89 - Workers who were locked out by management at Renown Meat in Maitland were harassed by police on a daily basis. On 25 May, workers were beaten up by police and 21 workers were injured. During the confrontation, police arrested a 65-year-old worker but released him the following day. Assault charges were being prepared by police.

14.06.89 - Two NUM officials, Solomon Rasmni and Howard Yawa, were detained and held for five days under state of emergency regulations. Security police alleged they were organising a stayaway on 16 June.

16.06.89 - Police clashed with strikers at Premier Wire in Cape Town.

16.06.89 - The windows of Cosatu's Vereeniging office were smashed on the

night of 16 June.

16.06.89 - Police video-taped the entire proceedings of the 16 June rally held by Cosatu, Nactu and community organisations in Sebokeng. A large contingent of riot squad and SAP were gathered outside the hall in Sebokeng.

17.06.89 - Cawu's office in Vereeniging was broken into. Posters were removed from the walls and a petty cash box was broken into.

29.06.89 - Numsa's Tembisile Jack and Joseph Mjonjile from the Eastern Cape were arrested and charged with intimidation.

30.06.89 - Police grabbed placards from demonstrating workers at Gatesville Shopping Centre during a strike.

Two members from Numsa's Eastern

Cape branch, Thabiso Msimang and Mpulelelemo Matshoba, were detained by Ciskei police and released after a few hours.

July - Clement Nene, a shopsteward from Everite, was shot dead on the way to his Umlazi home in Durban. The company had been on strike for five weeks at the time of the killing. Several other active union members received death threats by phone.

July - The house of Joe Sapotela, Numsa's chief shopsteward at Uitenhage's Goodyear Tyre company, was fire-bombed. He managed to escape, but his brother burnt to death. At the time of the bombing, Goodyear workers were out on strike.

July - John Gomomo, Numsa co-ordinator of the Volkswagen shopstewards council, received a threatening letter signed

by White Wolf 11. He was warned that if he didn't change his attitude, he would be killed.

July - An active Nehawu member employed by the Department of Justice in the kwaZulu government in Pietermaritzburg was detained by police, allegedly for fraud. He seems to have disappeared since his arrest. Police claim they do not know of his whereabouts. The union is investigating.

11.07.89 - Carletonville police raided the NUM office and confiscated pamphlets on the consumer boycott.

17.07.89 - Police walked into Numsa's office in Vereeniging, browsed around and left after a few minutes.

19.07.89 - Ccawusa official Elizabeth Letshwiti received a telephone death threat.



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