

THE TEACHERS' LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA



**MAJORITY RULE:
SOME NOTES**

SARAH MOKONE

**Reprinted from *The Educational Journal*
Second Edition — Complete**

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FOREWORD

Majority Rule: Some Notes is a collection of articles which formed an extensive series in *The Educational Journal*. It is an earnest attempt by a serious scholar to strip the concept of majority rule of all its political tinsel and trappings and to lay bare its actual meaning in the South African situation. This concept was invented by imperialism and taken up avidly by various elements in liberatory movements not only in South Africa but in other countries in Africa as well — at a time when, in the post-World War II anti-colonial revolts, the cause of national independence and the creation of new democracies in which freedom from exploitation and oppression would flourish fired the imaginations of millions of people and spurred them on in long and bitter struggles for their ideals. The tragedy of the African continent today lies in the fact that the old imperial masters were able, with the deception of 'majority rule', to impose upon their colonies a new form of colonialism — neo-colonialism — which was the death knell of the struggle for independence and democratic government.

Majority Rule: Some Notes traces the history of the development of independent political objectives and an independent political ideology among the oppressed in South Africa from the time of fragmented opposition to the pre-Union settler colonies to the emergence of a national liberatory movement with its concept of a single South African Nation and a single non-racial parliament based upon a common, universal franchise and a programme of minimum demands — as against the rulers' racist, locationised colour-bar society. Ideas that today are common counters in the thinking of the oppressed were built up painfully and painstakingly, and their acceptance battled for, as the struggle advanced from that fragmented opposition of pre-Union years to a programmatic, national struggle for full democratic rights for all in the post-war period. The series provides the salient features of these changes. It places in perspective the rôles of the ANC, the SAIC and the Unity Movement and examines the significance of the call for *majority rule* in the South African context.

With this publication we wish to place in the hands of all serious participants in the struggle for democracy a critical survey of the course of past struggles and of the vital importance of ideological clarity and ideological independence on central issues such as that of the franchise. It is not a mere history, and it is not a full history; it is a *guide* and a *means to more effective participation* on the part of those who absorb the lessons of "Majority Rule" in that struggle. That, in essence, is the purpose in publishing this volume. It is to be hoped that all who read it will find within its pages, and pass on to others, insights into the nature of our struggles and an inspiration to even greater efforts in the cause of freedom.

In the first edition of *Majority Rule: Some Notes* three articles in the series had to be omitted because the issues of *The Educational Journal* carrying them had been banned. These issues have now been unbanned, and the three affected articles are included at the end of this edition.

H N Kies

Editor, *The Educational Journal*

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Majority Rule: Some Notes (I)

The Franchise, Citizenship, Imperialist Strategy in Southern Africa

The South African air is filled with the sounds of plans for bringing about a new political dispensation. There is talk about "moving away from discrimination", "moving away from the Westminster Model", "majority rule", "full African participation", "full participation", "the cantonal system", "presidential rule" and "sharing in the decision-making process". Indeed, the formulas are many and varied but they have one common element. Each one of them has been designed to "save South Africa".

It is not necessary, and definitely not profitable, to take seriously each one speaking on this subject, for the spokesmen (and their plans) range from the substantial and significant to the insignificant and lunatic. They include Lord Caradon (Sir Hugh Foot, a former Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Britain's permanent representative at the U.N. from 1964 to 1970), Henry Grunwald (Managing Editor of *Time*), Carter (President of the U.S.A.), Mondale (his Vice-President), Vance (the U.S.A. equivalent of Foreign Affairs Minister), Young (American Ambassador to the U.N.), the two Bothas (Defence and Foreign Affairs), Koornhof (Sport), Mulder (Interior), and, of course, the likes of Sonny Leon and Bergins, the Matanzimas, Buthelezi and Mangope and 'ever' Reddy.

There are certain overall conclusions that can be drawn from this multitude of proposals taken collectively. Firstly, there is general acceptance, here and abroad, that the South African order cannot, as at present constituted, hope to survive. It has ceased to be viable. Secondly, it is generally accepted that if the time for adaptation has not already run out then it is fast doing so. Lord Caradon is reported to have said that "time is desperately short" (*Cape Times*, 15/7/77).

The View from the Bridge

Generally speaking, too, one can say that the overseas captains of Anglo-American imperialism appear to be more acutely aware than their crew of the urgency of mounting a salvage operation on the South African ship of state and of the far-reaching measures needed to repair and refit it, if it is to be kept afloat. They have been making strenuous efforts to bring this urgency home to the South Africans, who seem to believe that huffing and puffing will be enough to still the storms and bring their ship to port. They have reacted with fear and hysteria to the lengths to which imperialism expects them to go.

Their attitude, predictably, is that the cure being proposed is worse than the disease and is, in fact, a

fate worse than death. One could easily gain the impression from the violence of their reaction that The West is proposing that they should share full and equal citizenship with all people in South Africa. Which is, of course, far from accurate.

Because of the importance of this matter in the context of change, and especially to enable us to distinguish between real and cosmetic change, let us take a closer look at some of the ideas involved here and especially at the ideas of the vote, the franchise, a qualified franchise and citizenship.

Sharing Shadows

Time's Grunwald provides a convenient starting point. He said: "For the near term, some form of qualified black suffrage should be the goal. Even most black spokesmen in South Africa plead only for a form of 'sharing in the decision-making process'." Grunwald thus makes the point that 'sharing in the decision making process' is just a formula for hiding the essential inequality of a qualified franchise. A qualified franchise is by nature a fraud. It is called a *franchise* to give the impression of a granting of political power, but it is *qualified* precisely to prevent the exercise of real political power. To qualify a franchise is to emasculate it, to destroy its essential character — which is, to enable the exercise of political power. It is a show that is without substance.

The present order in South Africa denies the overwhelming majority of the people the right to education. To limit or qualify the franchise on the basis of education is to entrench the effects of this educational oppression. Because the majority participating in the law-making processes of this country would remain the White section, as at present. Likewise, to limit the franchise on the basis of income or property is to entrench the effects of oppression, poverty and exploitation. Any qualification of the franchise is in fact a denial of equality to the oppressed and exploited people and an attempt to entrench their oppression and exploitation. A qualified or limited franchise is in real terms no franchise at all.

Full Franchise

The franchise is the right to elect people of one's choice to represent one in parliament, and also to be elected by others to represent them in parliament, the place where the laws are made: that is, the right to elect and be elected. To be democratic the franchise can have no restrictions based on "race", colour, creed or sex. Nor can it have qualifications based on property, income or education.

As the programme of the Angolan Liberatory Movement declared in the section dealing with the democratic system it stood for: "All Angolan citizens, regardless of nationality or ethnic group, of sex, race, social level, cultural level, profession, economic condition, and religious or philosophical conviction, shall have the right to vote as from 18 years of age and the right to be elected as from 21 years of age."

It is true that the full franchise is the most important right of all and, indeed, is the fundamental political right. He who has no franchise has no political rights whatever. The franchise makes a person a citizen and without the franchise he or she is a non-citizen. Of course, the franchise is not the whole story. But it is basic to citizenship.

Citizenship

Citizenship is the body of rights any person is entitled to. These rights should include what are termed civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, movement and assembly, the right of equality before the law and the right to have these rights protected by the law. Indeed, in an earlier epoch it was generally held that the citizen had an inalienable right to rebel against tyrannical princes.

When there is a demand for full and equal citizenship, what is being demanded is that all the rights of citizenship should be universally enjoyed. It does not follow, however, that those who do have the franchise necessarily and automatically have equality with everybody else in the state.

There is the whole history of the working people of Europe and America, for example, that we could look at to underline this point. *In theory* every American citizen has the right to be elected to the presidency. A poverty-stricken Negro worker in Harlem has the same theoretical right to become president of the United States as has a millionaire peanut farmer from Plains, Georgia, but the fact that the cost of a successful presidential campaign runs into literally millions of dollars makes the presidency the preserve of those who can afford millions of dollars. *In practice*, the poor in America have the *vote* or the right to elect one or other of the rich candidates offering themselves for election, and do not exercise the right-to-be-elected part of the franchise, which in constitutional theory they

have. The franchise has brought to the Negroes and Puerto Ricans in America, for example, equality neither in education nor in housing, wages or jobs.

The Franchise and National Liberation

It is in colonial countries, however, that we can see more starkly that the franchise does not automatically and by itself bring real equality. There is universal suffrage in India and Pakistan but has it brought real equality for the starving millions of that sub-continent? There is universal adult suffrage in Ghana, in Kenya, in Zambia, in Nigeria, in Lesotho, in Botswana, in Swaziland and in Uganda and yet the workers of these states are as poor and underpaid as they were before the days of "Independence", and the farmers and peasants are as poor and as landless as they have been since the days of colonial conquest of their territories. Moreover, in most of these states the working people do not enjoy civil liberties and are denied the right to fight and organise to change their miserable conditions. The franchise may be the key that can open the doors to full citizenship but unless those doors are in fact opened, unless political power is indeed used to establish equal citizenship, the condition and way of life of the mass of the people remains the same. In Africa and in Asia "Independence" conferred by the former colonial power, accompanied as it has been by the granting of the full franchise, has not meant national liberation for the populations of these countries. They have remained in economic bondage to their former masters and this has meant, necessarily, the continued wretched poverty and exploitation of the peasants and workers of these countries. Actually, it has often brought an intensification of this wretchedness because, apart from having to continue to produce wealth for their former colonial masters, the peasants and workers now have also to produce wealth for the greedy "independence" elites that were brought to power inside these countries and whose indigenous faces are used to mask the continuation of the old colonial exploitative relations.

Conferred independence, or Neo-Colonialism, has taught the bitter lesson that unless there is the deliberate and conscious abolition of the inequality that is rooted in the foreign domination of the economic life of the country and in foreign appropriation of the wealth that is produced in the country, the majority of the people remain poverty-ridden and starving. The economic life of the country cannot be separated from the question of the distribution and ownership of land and, in colonial countries in Africa especially, the poverty and inequality of the mass is directly related to their landlessness,

their land hunger, and the system of land tenure to which they are subjected, usually in reserves or so-called tribal areas. So that the rooting out of inequality of necessity demands an abolition of all the unequal land relations, of all the restrictions on acquiring land, and arranging for a new distribution of land. Indeed, if national liberation is to be obtained then there has to be the establishment of an equal citizenship by abolishing the old colonial land system, the old unequal legal system, the old exploitative system of taxation, indeed every form of inequality — educational, social and economic. A change that is concerned only with the political, that is, only with the franchise, far from abolishing the yoke of oppression and exploitation results in a double harness. The burden of carrying the independence elite is added to the old heavy load of exploitation by the Colonial masters.

Ringling the Changes

Such a change does not lead to the creation of a new state. What changes is merely the personnel of the state. The Ministers of State are changed, with the leaders of the national movement replacing the old Ministers. *They* now pluck the fruits of office. The civil service is "Africanised" and new faces are seen in the old offices but otherwise the civil service continues basically as before except, perhaps, that generally speaking the bribes increase. The "independence" elite is greedy and is determined to be poor no more. The trappings of the State change. There is a new flag, a new national anthem and the soldiers get new uniforms. So the state continues as or worse than before, regulating the lives of the mass of the population as before.

Imperialism in Southern Africa

It is with this recent experience of the fraud of "independence" added to their generations of experience of colonial rule and mastery over their own working classes that the imperialist strategists that we mentioned at the outset approach the problems that South Africa poses for them.

And they come to this problem area not in humility but in righteous anger. When they embarked on their "independence" strategy in the fifties there was opposition from only two sources. Portugal and South Africa denied the necessity of an adaptation to "the winds of change". South Africa stubbornly, even after MacMillan had specially come to address the South African parliament. Today Portugal has gone, and Mocambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau are independent and constitute the only real reverses that imperialism has suffered in Africa in this generation. And, in the imperialist book, South Africa is going the same way. Indeed, it believes that post-Soweto South Africa is going the same way, at an accelerating pace precisely because of

the effect of Mocambique and Angola. It was Oppenheimer himself who drew attention to the enthusiasm of the South African oppressed for the revolutionary regimes in Angola and Mocambique.

Beginning in about the middle fifties there was on the part of the indigenous middle classes and the intellectuals a definite inclination to the Ghana magnetic line. Today, and among ordinary folk, there is a definite inclination towards the Angola-Mocambique axis.

So the masters of imperialism have come in anger to deal with those who blindly opposed the solution that worked, those who have demonstrably advanced the ends of "communism" in Southern Africa and who are blindly and stubbornly sticking to their position. The strategists of the West regard this situation as urgent. And they are not afraid to consider a variant of the independence fraud for S.A. Not that they have finally made up their minds on how far to go politically and economically, for they have not yet decided the details of the changes they will support. They are clear, however, about the *purpose* of the changes: they want such changes as will give at least a key sector of the indigenous population (the 'middle class' and the intellectuals is what they often refer to) a stake in the *status quo* which they will be prepared to defend against all invaders, even if these are Cubans or Angolans or Mocambicans. What these changes will be has not finally been decided. Grunwald speaks of a qualified franchise — at least initially. Mondale is prepared to go further. Young, (on his "private" visit) when as Oppenheimer's guest he addressed the South African businessmen, proposed the creation of a black aristocracy of labour or managerial class with a substantial stake in the consumer society. Lord Caradon, who (as indicated earlier) warned that time was desperately short, called upon the South African Government to summon immediately a national convention "fully representative of the whole population" in order to "co-operate in working out a new constitution for South Africa providing for full African participation". (*Cape Times* 15/7/77).

Afrikaner Frankenstein?

However it is not simply for imperialism to decide. When British Imperialism by military, political and economic means created (after 1902, when it had defeated the Boers) "the White bloc" as the political base for its Union of South Africa, it reserved political power for "persons of European descent" and this group received formal political independence by the 1927 Statute of Westminster. Now imperialism has either to convince or to coerce this group into acting. At this stage it is still attempting to convince.

The South African regime views the position differently. The crucial question as far as it is concerned is: "Who will wield political power?" The rulers are not prepared at all to share political power with blacks. This they regard as certain *suicide*. They believe that to give in on this question is to end the world. For this reason they are prepared to fight, if necessary, the whole world, for they believe that if they fight they at least have a *chance* of surviving, while if they give in it is all over. Besides, many of them believe that the West is not really serious — indeed, cannot be serious — about giving political power to "blacks" because that would be, according to them, handing over South Africa to communism. They further believe that when the chips are really down the West will be forced to fight on their side.

And so, they believe, they can be intransigent. What they overlook, of course, as they did with Angola, is that the West's South African connection is one that it cannot always afford, especially not if it loses the West the rest of Africa and what is left of Asia. Thus the West might well consider moving from persuasion to coercion and even in the direction of forcing a change of regime in South Africa.

The Short term

At this point it is difficult to predict how the

situation will develop in the long term. The short term position is simple. The conflict and tension between the South African rulers and Anglo-American imperialism will escalate. The factors that will shape the outcome in the long run can be summarised thus:

- (a) the shape and condition of the South African economy and the South African reaction (including the cohesion of the various layers of the ruling class front) as its foreign capital starvation grows and is intensified;
- (b) the fate of the current initiatives by Imperialism to stabilise the Rhodesian and Namibian situations and to destabilise the Angolan and Frelimo Regimes;
- (c) the reaction of the oppressed and exploited people inside South Africa and, in particular, the growth and development of the indigenous South African liberatory movement.

Naturally these factors not only influence the relations between the West and South Africa but interact on each other. The crucial and generative factor will surely prove to be liberatory developments within South Africa itself.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (IV) The I.C.U. and Kadalie: Early Beginnings

The struggles of the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa have generated many organizations but none so spectacular, significant and instructive as the phenomenon named the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa and known as the I.C.U. The I.C.U. was the first trade union of the oppressed workers of this country and was by far the biggest ever. When it was formed in 1919 it had a membership of 24. By 1924 it had a membership of 30 000, by 1926 39 000 and at its zenith (1927) 100 000.

If account is taken of those who regarded themselves as members or supporters of the I.C.U. then, it has been suggested, the 'membership' should be put at 250 000. By the early 1930s, however, the I.C.U. had virtually ceased to exist. In its brief decade it became a truly mass organization; indeed, the only real one in the history of South Africa so far.

Historic Development

As a trade union, whatever limitations it did suffer, it marked a historic development. Trade unions are a mark of industrial society and the emergence of a trade union from the ranks of the Non-European workers indicated that the fruits of the industrialisation of South Africa — for which mining had provided such a powerful impetus — the fruits of enormous wealth were not going to be plucked only by those who owned and controlled industry. It indicated that those who had been forcibly driven into

this industrialisation to provide the labour at the base of this vast accumulation of wealth were preparing to have their say on the distribution of this wealth.

At first the owners of mining and industry had decided on their own how to divide the enormous wealth produced in South Africa. Then the "white" workers had had their say and staked their claim for a fat share. Now, the emergence of a national trade union signified the ultimate demand by the oppressed and exploited workers for their share of the control of this wealth. No matter that they still had far, very far, to travel before they could reach that point. The emergence of the first trade union was but the *beginning* of the road. But the beginning nevertheless.

Background: Industrialization and Unrest

When the 1920s opened the signs were unmistakable that the time for Non-European trade union

activity had arrived.

The first World War had brought not only intensive industrialisation but, one of its results, also greater dislocation in the lives of the oppressed work force. Larger numbers were drawn to the towns but though they worked there were not allowed to become part of them. Regimentation under the pass laws was intensified. Wages were miserably low: the average wage for Non-White unskilled workers (the bulk of the wage force, that is) was between 2s. and 2s. 6d. per day. This miserable wage was further hugely eroded by the war-time and post-war inflation.

Even before the end of the war, in February 1918, there was a spontaneous boycott of shops by Africans on the East Witwatersrand as a protest against rising prices. In June (1918), in the wake of a successful strike of "white" municipal workers in Johannesburg, 152 African "bucket boy" sanitation workers struck for the small raise in pay of 6d. a day. The authorities drafted in "Native Constables" as scabs but there were not enough of them to attend to more than the hospitals and schools and "the growing stench in the city assailed the nose of all citizens". The strikers were arrested, charged under the Masters' and Servants' Act and sentenced to two months' imprisonment. The spirit of this prosecution can be gathered from the remarks of the magistrate in passing sentence: "While in gaol they would have to do the same work they have been doing, and would carry out that employment with an armed escort, including a guard of Zulus armed with assegais and white men with guns. If they attempted to escape and if it were necessary they would be shot down. If they refused to obey orders they would receive lashes as often as might be necessary to make them understand they had to do what they were told."

African reaction to this sentence was quick and widespread and a series of protest meetings was called, initially under the auspices of the Transvaal section of the South African Native National Congress. At these meetings a decision was taken to call a general strike of African workers, demanding an increase of 1s. a day. In order to break this strike, the Congress leadership was pressured into dissociating itself from the strike and the "bucket boys" were released. Nevertheless, on July 1st some 15 000 mineworkers refused to go underground. With police and troops armed with fixed bayonets, the government crushed the strike in one day.

Yet, less than a year later, in February 1920, 40 000 African mineworkers went on strike. Again the strike was broken, with the white miners scabbing against the black workers. Compounds (where the strikers lived) were cordoned off by the police and the military and the men told that the other

workers had gone back to work.

These strikes and demonstrations on the Rand reflected the depth of discontent among the workers, *but was not connected with any form of trade union organisation*. They were "spontaneous" in the sense that they were not called by an organisation and reflected a popular mood and feeling rather than organised strength. There was a trade union formed in 1912 by the International Socialist League, in imitation of the American Industrial Workers of the World, called the Industrial Workers of Africa — with the slogan "Sifuna Zonke!" (We Want All); but it was so isolated from the workers that it recruited more police agents than workers and did not even know about the Sanitation Workers' Strike.

Likewise, the unrest that erupted in the Bloemfontein area and was associated with Selby Msimang's activities was not then concerned with organised workers. Msimang, a lawyer's clerk and court interpreter, was associated with Dr. Pixley Ka Seme in the South African National Congress (S.A.N.C.) and was concerned with organising Congress. His main base of operations was the Advisory Board in the location and on this basis he was drawn into the wage dissatisfaction. He addressed a number of public meetings and advocated a minimum wage of 4s. 6d. per day. The municipal authorities arrested Msimang and he was charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act. His arrest provoked demonstrations in Bloemfontein, where his arrest was seen to be an attempt to frustrate the wage demands. When Msimang appealed and won the case brought against him, the publicity made him a national figure and the acknowledged spokesman for the Bloemfontein Workers.

At this time Kadalie had begun to organise the I.C.U. and invited Msimang to the Cape where the two of them agreed that a national convention should be held in Bloemfontein to establish a nationwide Non-White trade union organisation. It was only after this Cape Town meeting with Kadalie that Msimang approached Congress, reporting on his Bloemfontein activities and urging Congress support for the organising of African workers. "The president of Congress, S. M. McKgatho, rebuffed Msimang's overture on the ground that African workers should not be organised separately."

At this time, too, there was unrest in Port Elizabeth and East London, with the workers demanding higher wages.

The social matrix

Against industrialisation proceeding on the basis of increasing poverty, dislocation and regimentation, the oppressed workers began to manifest signs of "unrest", began to express their dissatisfaction

with their lot and began to combine and stand together, to act together in demonstrations and strikes. Clearly the time had arrived for Non-European trade union activity. The particular conditions obtaining in South Africa gave this activity its special features and it may prove useful, before we review the mechanics of the birth of the I.C.U., to mention some of the particular conditions that influenced the dynamics of its growth.

Trade Unionism in South Africa has had to base itself on a sundered and fractured working class, a working class segmented by the Colour Bar.

On the basis of the Colour Bar in the South African constitution the working class can be divided into "White" workers who enjoy all the rights of citizenship in the state and who can fairly be described as citizen workers, on the one hand and, on the other, "black" workers who are excluded from all political and civil rights and are rightly described as non-citizen workers.

In addition to the rights and privileges granted to the citizen-workers in order to cement them to the "White" ruling group, the workers have themselves waged a struggle to secure and extend their privileged position. In mining especially, but certainly not exclusively, they waged bitter and determined struggles to create and extend colour bars which reserved high rates of pay and better jobs

(jobs that were easier to perform or carried higher wages) for themselves. These struggles were directed not only against the interests of the Non-White workers but often physically against them as well, as happened with the vigilante attacks on black miners or the shooting of demonstrating Port Elizabeth Workers by vigilantes. The struggle of the "White" workers for the supremacy of their narrow interests in all labour matters culminated in the 1922 Rand "Red" Revolt which brought the Witwatersrand to a standstill and which could be broken only by the armed might of the state. The strikes called upon "Workers" to "Unite for a White South Africa".

As the A.P.O. Newspaper's bitter comment of January 1922 indicates, the Non-White workers' struggle is not only against the employing class:

"With such emphasis and success has the white miner exploited the 'White South Africa' policy that he has given up hard work and is now filling the position of a mere overseer on the gold and coal mines. He is no longer a worker — a producer — but a mere parasite sucking the life-blood of the black man, and sustaining himself in that position by the labour of the Native . . .

"The total wages paid to the 20 000 white miners in the Transvaal amount to 10½ million while 200 000 Natives have to be content with 6½ million.

In other words, the average wage per annum paid

to the white miner is £525, and to the Native mine. £32. How, then, could anyone not wholly devoid of all sense of justice possibly sympathise with the white striker? Certain it is that no decent Coloured man will do anything to help these parasites of black labour, misnamed white miners, who has crawled into his exalted position on the backs of the Native. As long as he sucks the life-blood of the Native, so long will the latter remain the beast of burden on the Rand mines." (A.P.O. Newspaper 14/1/22 p. 9.)

The extent to which the question of the White aristocracy complicates and bedevils the position can be grasped if we compare the attitude of the A.P.O. leadership, usually described as "middle-class", with the claim made by spokesmen near to the South African Communist Party in 1923, that from the ranks of White labour there would arise a "true revolutionary socialist party" because, they argued, "the rank and file of both the Labour and Nationalist parties must sooner or later refuse to follow their bourgeois leaders, and will form a real workers' party not to be side-tracked either by British Imperialism or reactionary bourgeois Republicanism, but organised, drilled and determined to unceasingly work for the overthrow of the capitalist system".

The point is of course that the Communist Party, having grown out of the party of White Labour, never really overcame its origins (not that it did not try) while the liberal and reformist leadership of the A.P.O., because it suffered national oppression, understood that the White workers were maintaining a colour bar. In South Africa, because of the relationship between national oppression and economic exploitation, there are no clear-cut class struggles.

Apart from the position of the sundered working class, the other major factor that shapes dynamically the character of trade union struggles amongst the oppressed is the fact that because of their national oppression there are no pure trade union issues for them.

The right to do a job, because it is involved in the policy of segregation, immediately becomes a political question. The rate of pay for the job is immediately a political question for the rate is determined in a colour-bar society not by the job but by the classification of the person permitted to do the job. The right to be where the work is is also a political question because it involves pass laws, influx control, special taxes, urban locations and labour compounds. The very right to organise in and as a trade union is a political question and so forming and joining a trade union becomes a political act, whether the worker realises it or not. Apart from the fact that there are hardly any pure trade union questions there is the consideration that the imme-

diate concern of the members of the union might not be things happening at the work place, and the union then must either become irrelevant to the concerns of its members and risk withering away or become involved in questions like pass laws, inferior education and the like which "Normal" (?) trade unions do not concern themselves with.

Formation of I.C.U.

Although the I.C.U. was a new type of organisation, was breaking new ground, this was not immediately apparent. Like many major organisations it began essentially as a vote-trading machine.

Clements Kadalie, born in Nyasaland in the dying years of the 19th century, was mission-educated and qualified as a teacher. He taught for a year or two and then left Nyasaland for Rhodesia, where he was a mine clerk for some time, and ultimately Cape Town in South Africa — all, as he says, "in quest of higher civilised life".

In Cape Town he met A. F. Batty, a labour politician and socialist, who stood for parliament for the Harbour constituency. Kadalie joined Batty's election team but Batty still lost. "After the election Batty called me to his shop where we discussed the advisability of forming a trade union. He informed me that he was satisfied I could be useful to my people if I could embark on trade union activities instead of politics. I readily agreed to his suggestion, although I anticipated difficulty in getting people together. We planned to invade the Cape Town docks, as the Harbour Constituency fell in that area.

"Our first meeting was staged in the Excelsior Hall, Buitengracht Street, on January 17, 1919. The majority at the meeting were Coloured men engaged at the docks. There were about half a dozen Africans, including myself. Batty, who was a good platform speaker, presided. In his address he stressed the necessity for the Non-Europeans to help themselves instead of depending on politicians like himself. He strongly advised the formation of a trade union, *although one should not forget that he wanted to solidify the non-European vote in the harbour constituency for the next election.* By a unanimous resolution the meeting decided to form a union with the name 'Industrial and Commercial Union'. Twenty-four members were enrolled that first night; they each paid a shilling entrance fee, making twenty-four shillings in all, with which the first banking account of the I.C.U. was opened. At this first meeting it was resolved that weekly meetings of the new union should be held." (*My Life and the I.C.U.*, Clements Kadalie, emphasis added.)

In December 1919 the I.C.U. achieved prominence. The export of foodstuffs became a public issue in Cape Town and it was argued that this export was raising the prices of food. The ("White") Cape Federation of Labour Unions (to

whom Batty belonged) declared that it was necessary to halt the export of food. The Federation approached the I.C.U. for support, which was needed to prevent the loading of the goods. The I.C.U. declared itself prepared to strike but insisted on putting in a further demand for a minimum of 6s. a day. The National Union of Railwaymen agreed and it was arranged that the Federation would assist the I.C.U. with strike pay.

The I.C.U. brought the Docks to a standstill and within a week the Government announced the stoppage of exports to Europe. The White workers ended their strike, withdrew also the promised strike pay and in fact scabbed on the strike. Nevertheless the I.C.U. continued to strike.

The Government then tried to split the workers: "The so-called European 'experts' on Native Affairs, officials from the Johannesburg Central Pass Office and from the Transkeian Territory, were rushed to Cape Town to advise the Natives not to be misled by the I.C.U. and the Coloured people," reports Kadalie; but their efforts were to no avail.

The government then tried a show of force to intimidate the I.C.U. It marched troops through the city, but the strikers stood firm. Then the government again tried to break the unity. As Kadalie recounts: "The Natives, having refused to betray their Coloured fellow-strikers, were forcibly ejected from the Docks location and were sent to Milnerton camp. We made arrangements to buy food, which was daily sent by wagons to feed the strikers." (*My Life and the I.C.U.*)

After three weeks, because their funds were exhausted, the I.C.U. called off the strike.

However, the struggle had not been in vain. Barely six months later, threatening to strike, the I.C.U. got all the Stevedoring Companies, with the exception of the Railways, to agree to a minimum wage of 8 shillings per day for labourers; nine shillings per day for winchmen; twelve shillings and sixpence per day for foremen (generally known in the docks in those days as 'serangs'), with double pay for overtime". (*My life and the I.C.U.*)

Descriptions of Kadalie tend to be eulogistic. Thus W. Stuart, who claims to have known "every African leader since 1904" describes him: "Clements Kadalie was and is a phenomenon. No others are like him. He combines colossal self-assurance with colossal self-sacrifice — an African Xavier. He is utterly devoid of hypocrisy. He blows the trumpet he knows, his own. He knows his worth and states it unequivocally and vocally, and the proof of his worth is his work."

Nevertheless, exceptional person that he was, it was the strike and the subsequent wage increases that 'made' Kadalie and the I.C.U. From a small obscure group the I.C.U. became a famous union widely accepted and Kadalie, who had been an

unknown foreigner and Honorary Secretary of an untried and small union, emerged as the leading

trade union figure amongst the oppressed. A number of embryonic Cape Unions now coalesced into the I.C.U.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (V) The I.C.U. and Kadalie: The Later Years

As Kadalie and the I.C.U. became known among the oppressed, so too he became notorious amongst the oppressors and moves were soon afoot to put paid to his agitational activities. In a notice dated the 24th November 1920 the Principal Immigration Officer, acting on information supplied by his brother, Robert Victor Kadalie, with whom Clements had quarrelled, declared him a prohibited immigrant.

He appealed against the order but also waged a campaign on many levels to have the order cancelled. By now, the 1921 election was in prospect and the following extract from a Parliamentary debate reported in *The Star* and found among Kadalie's papers is significant: "Mr. Rayburn (Labour, Umbilo) took the opportunity of reading the correspondence recently laid upon the table relating to the deportation order against Clements Kadalie. He read a letter from a Cape Town firm of solicitors to the Minister of the Interior in 1920, after the order had been made, but ordered to be stayed. It read: 'Please state whether proceedings against Kadalie withdrawn or only stayed. Meeting of Native Labour Union to be held here tomorrow night to decide whether to support the South African Party.' A confirmatory letter followed written on this letter: 'Reply to say man will be allowed to remain. Arrange refund of deposit. — H.V.S.'"

As a parting comment on this incident, a quotation from Abdurahman, who had been involved in this matter. In Abdurahman's "Election Notes" in the A.P.O. February 26, 1921, the following appears:

"Mr. A. Batty, as usual, was again defeated. It must have been a great disappointment to him when he found that the I.C.W.U. which he founded and nursed dropped him like a hot potato and would have nothing to do with hybrid labour Parties."

First Trade Union Conference

In 1919 Kadalie and Msimang had agreed to attempt co-ordination of local African Workers' Associations. Such a conference was duly held in Bloemfontein in July 1930. The conference decided to launch the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa and declared its aim to be: "to bring together all classes of labour, skilled and unskilled, in every sphere of life whatsoever . . . to obtain and maintain equitable rates of wages and reasonable conditions of labour, to regulate the relations between employer and employed, and to endeavour to settle differences between them by amicable and conciliatory means, and to promote

co-operation, insurance, sick and out of work benefits, old-age benefits."

The constitution had been jointly prepared by Kadalie and Msimang. They further declared that the new organisation would devote special attention to organising agricultural labourers and women workers. They declared that White capitalists and protectionist White labour unions were the main foes of the union.

Msimang was elected President but Kadalie was defeated for the post of general secretary by a relatively unknown delegate from Kimberley. At this stage the Cape Town delegation withdrew and Msimang suggested that it was because Kadalie had received no official position. The truth is probably that the A.N.C. supporters who dominated the conference did not want Kadalie and the snub to him was probably planned and deliberate. At this first national trade union conference there was also, representing the Port Elizabeth area, Sam Masabalala, a trained teacher working as a chemist's assistant in Port Elizabeth and Secretary of the Native and Coloured Workers' union there. This organisation was renamed the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union and reached a membership of 4 000. In September 1920 the union secured an increase of 6d. in the daily wage, raising it to 4s. a day. Masabalala urged the workers to demand 10s. a day and to back their demands with a strike.

Shootings

This frightened the Municipal authorities and they summoned the Rev. Walter Rubusana, a leading member of the Congress and hostile to Masabalala's position, to come and assist them. Angry Masabalala supporters assaulted Rubusana and although Masabalala and members of his executive went to Rubusana's aid he laid charges against Masabalala who was summarily arrested on 23rd October. A large crowd gathered outside the prison and demanded his immediate release. White vigilantes joined the police and probably started the shooting on the crowd. Twenty-three Africans and Coloureds and one White person were killed. Anger at the shootings spread throughout the ranks of the

oppressed and the government promised a commission of enquiry. The I.C.U. (Cape Town) demanded that a Non-White should be included on the Commission and Dr. Abdurahman was named one of the commissioners. When it finally reported the Commission found, in the words of the A.P.O., that the shooting had been "brutaal, gevoelloos en niet te regverdig" (11/6/1921 page 16, i.e. brutal, unfeeling and unjustifiable).

Meanwhile in Port Elizabeth the workers decided to call a general strike. Msimang, who had been sent for after Masabalala's arrest, got the workers to agree to postpone the strike pending a meeting with the employers convened by the Mayor. Msimang called for a wage of 5s. a day, while the employers refused to exceed 4s. and 6d. This was rejected by the workers, who actually preferred going back at 4s. a day so that they could fight for their demand at a later stage. They therefore refused the compromise.

Bulhoek massacre

In May 1921 the oppressed people were again angered by shootings. The government of the day massacred the Israelite Sect at Bulhoek near Queenstown when they refused to move from land where they were waiting the Second Coming. One hundred and sixty-three were killed and one hundred and twenty-nine wounded in one morning's shooting. The popular solidarity was based on the recognition that it was because of the implications illegal squatting on land could have for the policy of smoking the people off the land and into the mines that the government was not prepared to make a concession to this sect. At the root of the massacre, it was felt, was the land question.

Second I.C.W.U. Conference

The second conference of the I.C.W.U. was held in Cape Town in July, 1921. Msimang in his presidential address and again in his final summing up, apparently referring to the Port Elizabeth and Bulhoek shootings, harshly criticised those Africans who had, he alleged, in some instances rashly pressed their demands without resort to peaceful negotiation. He inveighed against "wild talk which serves merely to arouse the passions of the people" and called upon the people "to learn the secrets of passive resistance and the virtues of Moderation".

Kadalie, who had unreservedly condemned the killings at Port Elizabeth and Bulhoek and who had continued to agitate militantly when the Congress leadership had clearly been intimidated by the harsh repression, did not speak at the conference, but he and Masabalala seemed to have had discussions during this conference.

In the latter half of 1921 he spent some months organising in Port Elizabeth and himself led the

demonstrations in commemoration of those killed the previous year. He and Masabalala sponsored a conference of the I.C.W.U. which Msimang did not attend but did not challenge. At the Conference a Cape Town delegate William Fife was elected President, Kadalie General Secretary and Masabalala National Organiser-in-Chief. James la Guma, who was later to become the General Secretary and most prominent Communist in the I.C.U., was installed as Port Elizabeth branch secretary.

Kadalie announced that the I.C.W.U. as numerically by far the strongest union would demand that its representative be sent overseas by the government instead of White trade union delegates to represent the interests of the Non-White workers of South Africa.

This conference marked the ascendancy of Kadalie in the I.C.W.U. (though still known as the I.C.U.) and the ascendancy of this organisation in the country. It absorbed all other trade union organisations and for all its insistence "that this organisation does not foster or encourage antagonism towards other established bodies, political or otherwise, of the African people" it virtually eclipsed the A.N.C. and the A.P.O.

The 1923 Conference

The 1923 Conference in Cape Town consolidated this position. Johns (*the Birth of Non-White Trade Unionism in South Africa*) reviewing this conference says:

"In the election of officers the conference seemed to underline the claim of the I.C.U. to be an organisation for all non-whites and not merely an African organisation. More importantly, the elections confirmed Kadalie's leadership of the I.C.U. The office of President-General went to J. G. Gumbs, a Coloured native of the West Indies whom Kadalie had come to know during the dock strike of December 1919. M. E. G. Johnson (probably a Coloured) became Assistant President-General, and J. A. la Guma, another Coloured, was elected Assistant General Secretary . . ."

Johns further reports that "the Conference throughout appeared particularly concerned with the continued hostility of the White worker to the African in the wake of the 1922 strike. The reaction of the conference was a new resolve to expand the I.C.U. throughout South Africa:

"That in view of the selfish policy of the white workers of South Africa, who of late have openly propagated an anti-trades unionist spirit, intentionally aiming at the utter extermination of the African workers through their influential propaganda upon the Government and employers of labour, more particularly on the Railways, to replace the African workers by poor whites in the industries and commerce of the country, this Con-

ference therefore resolves that the I.C.U. immediately embark on a campaign of counter propaganda throughout the country of educating the Africans to organise themselves into one Big Union movement, with a view to protect our people.

"To strengthen its position the Conference endorsed moves to acquire a press and a printing plant; in May it commenced publication of its own newspaper, *The Workers' Herald*."

And in the course of the next three years the I.C.U. established itself in the Eastern Cape, in the North Western Cape, in Natal and especially in the Transvaal. 30 delegates attended the 1923 Conference and could not have represented more than 10 000 members. By 1924 there were 30 000 members.

The "veld fire"

The I.C.U. was spreading, in Kadalie's own illuminating term, like a "veld fire". But it was by now a trade union only in name. It no longer conducted strikes. It conducted agitational meetings and the matters it agitated on differed from time to time and area to area. It concerned itself with what concerned its audience or members and so in the Eastern Cape, Northern Natal and the Transvaal it was the organisation that would bring land. Whole tribes joined. In Natal membership of the I.C.U. often meant mainly getting legal assistance on a host of matters. In the Western Cape it was still a trade union of dock workers. In all areas members joined to fight the pass laws. Some of the staunchest supporters were farm workers who believed the I.C.U. could protect them in their feudal thrall and who were often victimised because of their membership of the I.C.U. The I.C.U. became something between the sort of political pressure group that the A.N.C. and the A.P.O. were and a National movement-cum-general trade union.

It generated massive support but did not know what to do with the support. It could not even enrol this support efficiently and collect subscriptions from these members without huge sums making their way out of the coffers of the organisation into the pockets of local officials. More serious than its organisational inefficiency was its inability to take a political direction.

For all his talents, Kadalie did not know where he wanted to go and the I.C.U. was Kadalie writ large. This can be well illustrated by the Kadalie-Hertzog alliance.

In 1924 Hertzog's Nationalist Party and the party of "White" Labour formed an electoral pact to oust Smuts' South African Party which formed the government and which was regarded as the government of the mining companies.

Enter "vote politics"

This electoral pact set out to achieve what had

eluded the 1922 strikers so correctly opposed by Kadalie and the I.C.U., yet Kadalie came out in support of this electoral pact. This was supposed to show opposition to the government of the mining houses, the government that was responsible for the massacres at Port Elizabeth, Bulhoek and Bondelswarts. It actually showed support for the extension of the industrial colour-bar or job apartheid, inferior pay for "Non-White" workers and 'for the extension of social services for Whites' as the "White" Labour Party described its policy of educational, pension, old age and other privileges for "White" persons.

In this respect Kadalie and the I.C.U. were the children of their time. Like the A.N.C. and the A.P.O. they could think only in terms of supporting one or other ruling class party. This was the tragic heritage of vote politics — the political alternatives were seen in terms of the political parties of the ruling class for whom one could vote. There was as yet no independent course for the oppressed. If the I.C.U. had discovered such an independent course it could, indeed, have opened fresh possibilities for the oppressed and exploited masses of South Africa.

Kadalie went to the annual conference of the A.N.C. to obtain the endorsement of the Nat-Labour pact and succeeded. Hertzog and Arthur Barlow also paid their trainfare, Kadalie himself faithfully records, to travel to King William's Town to secure the support of the Cape Native Voters' Association for the Pact. Which they did.

This rallying of traditional S.A.P. support for the Nationalist White Labour Pact Kadalie pathetically describes as "my first major political victory".

The "Communists"

This victory turned sour in Kadalie's mouth when it became apparent what the Pact was doing and Kadalie coupled his intensive agitation during 1925 and early 1926 with a left turn. He could hardly so early return to support the S.A.P. nor could he continue to support the Pact. He now fell more and more under the influence of the "Communists" in the I.C.U., especially that of La Guma and Gomas. One uses the term "Communists" here with some trepidation because the Communist Party itself, as we indicated earlier, were still tied to "White labour" and this orientation made it impossible for them to provide an ideological base for the I.C.U. that would have made an independent struggle of oppressed and exploited workers possible. La Guma and Gomas were at loggerheads with their party on the question of the White workers but were unable to provide the I.C.U. with an ideology on their own, especially as they tended, probably in reaction to their "White" comrades, to support the reactionary doctrine of the "Black Republic" and were tied to the views of the Second

International on two revolutions, and could not accept a directly progressive role for a National Liberatory Movement. However, Kadalie in his own bankruptcy now leaned very heavily on their socialist criticisms of capitalism.

Thus, for example, the I.C.U. adopted a rather radical preamble to its 1925 constitution. This preamble posited that there could not be peace between the working and owning classes until the workers had obtained control of "the means of production" and this "for the benefit of all".

The kind of speech Kadalie was making showed the same kind of influence. He said, for example, as reported in the *Workers' Herald* of May 15, 1925:

"We are aiming at the building up in Africa of a National Labour Organisation of the aboriginals, through which we shall break the wills of white autocracy. We must prevent the exploitation of our people on the mines and on the farms, and obtain increased wages for them. We shall not rest there. We will open the gates of the Houses of legislation now under the control of the white oligarchy, and from this step we shall claim equality of purpose with the white workers of the world to overthrow the capitalist system of government and usher in a co-operative commonwealth one, a system of Government which is not foreign to the aboriginals of Africa."

Attacks from two fronts

It is not surprising, therefore, that the activities of Kadalie and the I.C.U. should be the subject of parliamentary attention during 1925 and 1926 and, indeed, not surprising that the government at this time begins to intensify its attacks on the I.C.U. through the "hostility clause" of the Native Administration Act and the Riotous Assemblies Act and that local policemen and authorities step up their harassment of the I.C.U.

However, more significant than the official reaction from the authorities is the reaction that comes from the ideological censors of the colour-bar society, those who are concerned over the development of an outlook on the part of the oppressed that may prove inimical to the South African Colour Bar society — the reaction, that is, from the political liberals.

They move in on Kadalie. As Ethelreda Lewis reported, "since Kadalie would not come to the Joint Councils we took the Joint Councils to Mr. Kadalie".

Kadalie himself lists as his regular visitors Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis, Miss Winifred Holtby, Miss Sybil Thorndike and Miss Margaret Hodgson (later Margaret Ballinger) and he was in contact with Mrs. Mabel Palmer, a Fabian friendly with Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

They were deeply concerned over what they

called Kadalie's "Bolshevism" and soon turned him in another direction. They convinced Kadalie (and this could not have been difficult) that the Communists were out to capture the I.C.U. and since he, Kadalie, was in their way, it would be necessary for them to get rid of him first. They counselled Kadalie to get rid of the communist plotters before they got him. When La Guma, on the record quite justifiably, launched an attack on corruption among officials and did not spare Kadalie himself, this was seen to be the attempt to get rid of Kadalie. Assisted by his behind-the-scenes advisers Kadalie moved against the "communists". By a majority of six against five at an Executive meeting communists were banned from holding positions on the National Committee and by the next year they were barred from belonging to the organisation. Kadalie made dual loyalty the issue and argued that the Communists had to choose between their party and the I.C.U. In the lobbying against La Guma and Co., great play was made of the fact that these people were not "full-blooded Africans" and their criticism of Kadalie was made a Coloured vs. African dispute. This relapse into sectionalism and racial thinking which the I.C.U. had been free of till then was a sure sign that the decline of the I.C.U. had started. Likewise, when Champion rallied Natal against Kadalie in order to maintain his personal control of I.C.U. *yase* Natal, he made an open appeal for "Zulu" support and made the point that Kadalie was a foreigner. La Guma and Co. refused to resign from either the I.C.U. or the Communist Party and were expelled.

They tried to fight back but had been outmanoeuvred. Kadalie's liberal advisers not only plotted the defeat of the communists but sold Kadalie on the idea of reforming the I.C.U. on the lines of a British Trade Union so that it would be acceptable overseas. International pressure would then force South African white labour and the government to revise their attitude to the I.C.U. As the leaders of the A.P.O. and A.N.C. were tied to the Liberal Statesmen in Britain so the Liberal Ladies who descended upon Kadalie tied him to the leading figures in the British Trade Union Movement. Kadalie was, for example, soon in correspondence with Creech Jones.

At the inspiration of these ladies Kadalie travelled to Europe to put the case of the I.C.U. to organised labour and spent many hours with the British Trade Unions who worked out a new constitution and approach for the I.C.U. and who promised to send Kadalie an adviser and assistant to South Africa to help to re-organise the I.C.U.

While Kadalie was being feted and trained in Europe Champion, who also was befriended by the same charming circle of liberal ladies, was in charge

of the I.C.U. Champion already controlled Natal. In a clash between Champion and Kadalie allegedly over the administration of funds, Champion led the secession of Natal from the I.C.U., forming his own I.C.U. *yase* (of) Natal. By now the I.C.U. was in fatal decline. W. G. Ballinger who came out from England as Kadalie's adviser soon clashed with Kadalie and virtually kicked him out. Kadalie formed the Independent I.C.U. which became in practice the former East London Branch of the I.C.U. The various splinters carried on for a while but while the shell was still seen the I.C.U. had

already died.

In part the I.C.U. died because of organisational weaknesses such as the absence of dedicated people to organise its branches; in part because, it being the child of its time, personalities were more important than principles; it died in part because the liberals organised it out of existence. But basically it died because it could not acquire real viability: it was neither trade union nor national movement and fell between the two trying inchoately and without a clear ideology to be both. It remains, however, an historic beginning.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (VI)

“White Fusion, The Hertzog Bills, Birth of The A.A.C., Rejection of The Boycott”.

In 1925 General Hertzog introduced a series of four Bills into parliament. These Bills were intended to complete the policy of segregation, politically and territorially, and to establish South Africa, once and for all, as a white man's country. In 1927 these Bills were referred to a Select Committee and, with a significant exception, were finally passed in 1936. These Hertzog Native Bills, notorious among the oppressed as the Slave Bills, mark a watershed in the history of South Africa.

The 1930's: White Unity and Fusion

Originally there were four Bills. Two of them dealt with what was called “Native Representation”. One proposed the abolition of the “Cape Native Male Vote” and the other set out to create a “Native Representative Council”. The third Bill developed the provisions of the 1913 Land Act to give final form to the landlessness of the people. The fourth Bill, the “Coloured Persons Rights Bill”, sought to abolish the “Cape Coloured Male Vote” but, in accordance with the policy of divide-and-rule, this Bill was “dropped” (actually stored till the 1950's) and in its stead came the Native Urban Areas Bill which sought to complete the locationising and regimentation in urban areas.

The 1920's had seen the struggle of the “white” workers for a permanently privileged position in South African society, for a secure place in the ruling “white bloc” established by the 1910 Act of Union. And they had been successful. The protective Colour bar on the mines was firmly entrenched by the 1930's. The paramountcy of their interests in matters of labour was protected by the Industrial Conciliation, Wage, Factory and Apprenticeship Acts. By the early 1930's their political position was secured by the abolition of all property and sex restrictions on the franchise of “white” persons, restrictions that had discriminated against the “white” working class. Their final acceptance into the “white” bloc was reflected also in the steady decline of the separate “white” Labour

Party and the absorption of the “white” workers into Hertzog's National Party and Smuts' South African Party.

On this level, too, there was growing unity within the white bloc after the division over the status of “white” workers had been settled. Thirty years after the Anglo-Boer War and forcible unification, there was now growing acceptance by the Afrikaner element of the basic pattern created by British Imperialism for Union. This was so more especially when they came to understand that it was part of the Imperial design to give the South African “white bloc” self-government and independence; when this was actually done through the Status Act and the Statute of Westminster and when they were permitted to make Afrikaans an official language. The two language groups had become increasingly aware of the bonds that united them — their political and economic privileges and especially their common interest in keeping black labour cheap, freely available, and subservient. They had been brought closer together by their common fear of the I.C.U. and by the threats to their economy that they saw in the depression and the Gold Standard crisis of the late nineteen-twenties and early-thirties.

The spirit of unity between the Nationalists and the South African Party is exemplified by the pleas for a Hertzog-Smuts coalition at the Nationalist Party Congress held in Port Elizabeth in October

1933. R. B. Hattingh, for example, speaking on coalition, said: "We want a White South Africa. We want to solve the Native Question and we want to get rid of the Native vote. We can never do these things by ourselves."

Out of this unity came Fusion — the merging of the Nationalists and South African Parties into the United Party. Outside of Fusion were two small extremist parties: Dr Malan's *Herstigte Nasionale Party* that rejected Fusion as a betrayal of Afrikaner interests and Col. Stallard's *Dominion Party* that rejected Fusion as a betrayal of British interests. There were also some insignificant remnants of the Labour Party. The main currents amongst the white citizens, however, had flowed into the mainstream of Fusion. On the basis of "white" unity the *Herrenvolk* camp was ready to "settle the Native question for all time"

The 1930s: Splintered non-citizenship

The oppressed were woefully unprepared for the attack that was being launched against them. They had no organizations, only remnants and splinters. There were only scattered debris left of the once mighty I.C.U. and these little bits were engaged in fighting each other: The Independent I.C.U. of Kadalie against the I.C.U. of Ballinger against the I.C.U. *yase Natal* of Champion. The A.N.C., though still a name that featured in the political columns of the newspapers, especially since it was backed by the liberal IMVO and the *Umteteli* owned by the Mines, was nothing more than a small clique that existed in and around the Joint Councils and the Institute of Race Relations. It had collapsed in the face of the 1913 Land Act and the First World War and had thereafter been totally eclipsed by the I.C.U. The Joint Councils and the Press kept the ghost alive and waved the names of Professors D. D. T. Jabavu and Z. K. Mathews, Dr Ka Seme, R. V. Selope Thema, H. Selby-Msimang and the like always before the people.

When in early 1935 Parliament was ready to make the Slave Bills law, there was no organization that could take up the struggle on behalf of the oppressed people. The seriousness of the threat posed by the three Bills was widely understood and there was grave concern for the future amongst virtually the whole population, but there was no organization that could give coherence to this concern, that could unite the multitude of scattered communities strewn all around South Africa into a national movement against the Slave Bills.

Convening Convention: The A.N.C.

In this situation the Congress leadership was the first to react. Acutely aware of the ferment and unrest brewing up and down the country, they moved to set themselves at the head of the dis-

satisfaction. In June 1935, they announced, mainly on the initiative of Prof. D. D. T. Jabavu and Dr Ka Seme, that an All African Convention of all African organizations would be held in Bloemfontein on the 16th December 1935 to consider the Hertzog Bills.

On that day there was an enormous turnout. According to all reports "every leader was present and every organization was represented". The most conservative report puts the number of delegates at 400, while some responsible reports put the figure at over 500. In any event it was the most representative political gathering up to that time.

Two streams: (i) Popular opposition

From the beginning there were two streams at the conference. The delegates had come to oppose the Bills. They voted for lengthy resolutions which, so they thought, expressed their opposition to the Bills and they instructed their Executive to travel to Cape Town to inform the Government that they were against the Bills and to report back to them by the following June. This was the one stream: popular opposition to the Bills without any conception as to how to make this opposition manifest and meaningful. They trusted that their educated and experienced and ever so eloquent leaders would know how to lead their opposition. There was talk of boycott and they listened to the talk as they listened to all the other talk. They did feel somewhat disappointed in that they were not told how to oppose the Bills, except that a day of prayer was to be held on Sunday, the 19th January.

(ii) Bargainers

The other stream was that represented by the leadership. Jabavu, Ka Seme, Godlo, R. V. Selope Thema were fully in control of the conference. They formulated the agenda, they drafted the resolutions and in fact did everything at the conference except give a lead as to how the Bills could or had to be opposed. Their interest in the conference was to maintain their positions of leadership; in fact, to have their positions refurbished by the support given them by the Convention delegates so that they could strengthen their bargaining position with the rulers. From the beginning it was their intention to bargain with the rulers and that is why they had themselves elected as the Convention Executive and mandated to go to Cape Town to inform the Government that the people were opposed to the Bills — as if the Government did not know of the widespread and restive opposition to the measures. They formulated resolutions that suited their bargaining intentions as the resolution taken on the franchise clearly indicates: "The denial to the African people of participation in the government of the country, of which they are an integral part, on the basis of

common citizenship, is not only immoral and unjust, but will inflame passions and fertilise the soil on which propagandists will sow the seeds of discontent and unrest". Such reasoning! Clearly the intention was to speak to the Government on the basis of what was in the best interests of the rulers, not to formulate a policy based on the real interests of the oppressed.

The Jabavu leadership did not think in those latter terms. That is why they made no analysis of the real reasons for the Bills, their real provisions and their real dangers and weaknesses. They had their eyes on the opportunities offered by the new legislation, especially the positions of paid advisers to the Government being created in the guise of Members of the Native Representative Council, and they were going to use the opposition of the people to blackmail extra concessions out of the Government.

The N.R.C.

During the 1936 Session, this leadership — as the Executive of the All African Convention — went to Cape Town to interview the Government, and the "Compromise", as it was called, was hatched. By now the Representation Bill contained the following provisions:

- (a) While no new voters would be registered, the approximately 10 000 African male voters would remain on the roll — the abolition, thus, of the vote gradually rather than in one fell swoop;
- (b) The "election" via electoral colleges of four white Native Representatives in the Senate and the election on a separate roll of two Provincial Councillors; and
- (c) The establishment of a Native Representative Council to be chaired by the Minister of Native Affairs and to consist of the five white "Native Commissioners", four "Natives" to be appointed by the Government and twelve "Natives" to be "elected" by electoral colleges consisting of Chiefs, headmen, Bunga and Advisory Board Members. The function of this clearly dummy body would be to "advise" the Government when asked to do so. Which advice could, of course, be accepted or rejected as the Government thought fit.

Compromise and betrayal

The "Compromise" was to the following effect:

- (a) All existing voters were to be transferred onto a separate roll of "Native voters", to which roll would be added all those who became qualified. These voters would then elect three "white persons" to Parliament, there to represent "the Natives" in the House of Assembly of 152 members — the introduction, therefore, of Dummy Parliamentary Representation; and

(b) the other provisions of the Bill were to remain.

On the basis of this "compromise" which thus preserved the category of "Native Voter" (even though his vote had been abolished and replaced by a dummy vote and even though the provisions of the Land and Trust Bill and the Urban Areas Bill were to strip off the substance of the privileges that the voters had enjoyed in relation to land purchases and pass laws) the Bill was given its two-thirds majority and, so the Liberal Press claimed, the blessings of the Convention leadership.

Now this leadership are on record as denying that they gave the Bill their blessing. They deny that they agreed to the "Compromise".

The fact is, of course, that almost all of them gave the Act their blessing because they worked the Act, they participated in, supported, organised and fought the elections under the Act. And so the majority of them betrayed the opposition to the Act. They may or may not have endorsed the Compromise but they were indisputably guilty of betrayal.

Second meeting of Convention

Convention met again from the 29th June to the 2nd of July, 1936, in the Community Hall, Bloemfontein. The disappointment felt at the first Convention meeting combined with the news of the compromise had reduced the number of delegates by half. There were now only 206 delegates representing 112 organisations. Again the old leadership was firmly in control, permitting discussion only on matters which they wanted discussed. They were not called on to account for their failure to oppose the Bills nor did they allow from the floor any dissection of the Bills that would reveal the fatal weakness of those Bills. That is, they would not allow any discussion on the boycott of the elections under the Representation Act, although the boycott was much in the air and was greatly feared by the Government.

Hertzog himself had declared in Parliament that unless the people affected accepted the legislation it would remain a dead letter. Pirow, in criticising the liberal wing for their opposition to the Bills, repeated the warning and called upon them not to be irresponsible. The liberal *Cape Times*, commenting editorially on the 8th April 1936, wrote: "It will be easy to go among the Natives denouncing the Bill as wicked, illiberal and repressive and working them into a mood of sullen resentment. By doing so, the Bill will be wrecked as completely as if it had been defeated on the third reading."

The *Cape Times* would not use the term boycott but it made the telling admission ("the Bill will be wrecked as completely as if it had been defeated on the third reading") that the Act could be defeated by the people's refusing to work it. The *Cape Times*, like the rest of the liberal establishment, might have

opposed the Bills, but insisted that the Acts must be obeyed.

As Jabavu himself put it in an article in *Umteteli* of 8th August 1936, "... The law [that is, the Native Representation Act - Editor] must now operate as it is for some years, until we can induce Parliament to repeal it, if we succeed."

Even at this early period the Communist Party of the time showed itself to be indistinguishable from the liberal establishment in this matter. A source that faithfully followed and supported their line said: "... the Native organizations would now have to decide whether to follow a policy of abstention, i.e. have nothing to do with the working of the new law, or to use the Native Representative Council as a propaganda platform from which to demand the extension of the franchise and the vote for all South Africans, black and white, on the same basis."

The Leadership had their eyes firmly on these elections and would brook no opposition. Clements Kadalie, always keenly aware of how the masses were feeling, and hoping to relaunch his popularity, submitted the following resolution: "... Therefore now this Assembly of the All African Convention declares itself in favour of a policy of Non-co-operation with the Government as far as the working of the Natives Representation Act is concerned. Members of this Convention and all organizations here represented pledge themselves as follows:

1. Not to stand as candidates or support candidates to the Native Representative Council, and to persuade others to do likewise.
2. Not to vote or participate in any way in the elections for the Native Representative Council, and to endeavour to organise a complete boycott of such elections and council.
3. In the Cape Province, to refuse to take part in the election of three Europeans for the Legislative Assembly, and to organise a complete boycott of such elections.
4. To refuse to participate in the election of Europeans to the Senate, and to organise a complete boycott of such elections.
5. Similarly to boycott the Cape Provincial Council elections.

In the event of retaliatory measures on the part of the Government, we pledge ourselves to extend the principle of non-co-operation to the non-payment of taxes, in support of the principle of *No Taxation without Direct and Equal Representation*."

Kadalie comments: "The resolutions were referred to the Standing Committee, but as confusion reigned at the Convention, no consideration was

accorded them. Some of the delegates were definitely in favour of my resolutions."

That Kadalie submitted these resolutions more because he knew they would get grass-roots support

than as an earnest of his own firm views is borne out by the fact that Kadalie, too, sought to become a member of the N.R.C. as he himself faithfully records in his autobiography.

Kadalie's resolutions were never discussed, not because of the confusion, but because the leadership clique were determined not to permit discussion on it for they had already rejected it on behalf of the Convention. As Jabavu had put it: "The law must now operate as it is for some years..." The Convention could only come to the Boycott by rejecting the old leadership, and this the rank and file were not yet ready or able to do.

A permanent body

This June Conference decided that the Convention would become a permanent body and adopted a constitution for the Convention making it the mouthpiece of the African people, thus establishing for the first time a national federal organization linking the whole country.

It also decided to meet again in December 1937.

By that time the N.R.C. elections had been held and virtually the whole executive of the A.A.C., which was dominated by the A.N.C., was involved in working the elections. This Conference was smaller even than the June Conference.

Convention was shrinking fast as it was losing the confidence of the mass of the people.

At this Conference the A.A.C., bowing to the political vested interests of its predominantly Congress leadership, really abdicated. It amended Section 12 of its Draft Constitution so that the Constitution now recognised the N.R.C.'s as the "accepted mouthpiece of the A.A.C."

The A.A.C. that had been called into existence to fight the Native Representation Act now declared itself an appendage of the collaborationist creature of that very Act. The only positive feature of this Conference was its rejection of Max Jabavu's Motion to write a Colour-bar into Convention and to make it, like the A.N.C., an organization restricting its membership to Africans. Otherwise, the unrelieved gloom of betrayal prevailed. This betrayal, the signs of which were present in 1935 already, was now complete and the Convention declined even more rapidly. This decline ceased only when Convention began to shake itself free of its A.N.C. incubus and developed a new direction and a new leadership; when it began to march along "the New Road" which we propose to consider in the next in this series.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (VII)

World War II, the New Era Fellowship, the T.L.S.A. and the new Vanguard

For the oppressed people of South Africa political struggle began with their participation in the electoral politics of the Cape Colony in the final quarter of the 19th century. From that time until late in the Second World War when they took to "The New Road" it is difficult to discern progress along the path of political maturation. One may ask, for example, what growth is there to be seen from the time of the antics of John Tengo Jabavu to secure the election of James Rose-Innes in 1884 to the manoeuvres of the A.N.C.-A.A.C. leadership in 1937 to secure their own election to the Natives Representative Council (N.R.C.) and that of Ballinger and Molteno as 'White' "Native Representatives" in parliament? In fact the 1937 election campaign marks retrogression, for it amounted to accepting in practice the Hertzog Acts while the voters of 1884 were asserting their theoretically and legally equal rights.

And yet there was growth and development. Slowly the people acquired an understanding that their disabilities were on a national rather than local scale. And an allegiance to "national" organizations such as the African National Congress and the African People's Organisation replaced their former purely local concerns. At the base of their support for the I.C.U. was the understanding that they had to fight also as workers. The I.C.U. showed, too, that significant layers of the rank and file had moved beyond the sectionalist and divisive leadership and were ready to unite as Non-Europeans. The decline of the A.N.C. and the A.P.O. and the magnetism which the "militant" stance of the I.C.U. leadership had for the rank and file were indicative of the disillusionment of the popular masses in the servile, petition-bearing, allegedly responsible, old style leadership. So, below the surface and primarily amongst the rank and file, there was a slow process at work. This largely subterranean process was enormously speeded up by the Second World War.

The background to World War II

This war did not suddenly "begin" on a day in September 1939. It was more the culmination of what may be described as a drift, building up to a rush, to war. This drift began at least with the "Great Depression" of the 1930's, that severe crisis for the capitalist world order. The instability of this order, the enormous suffering it brought even to the metropolitan working classes (in Europe and America this was the period known as the "Hungry Thirties") and the push it gave to the growth of Fascism (the thirties saw the rise of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco) made this a period of fundamental questioning into the very nature of the social fabric. It produced a generation of intellectuals radical in their criticisms of dying capitalism and with a rooted hostility to fascism. Thousands of them from all over Europe and America

rallied to the Anti-Fascist cause, establishing the International Brigades that fought with such indomitable courage against Franco (assisted by Hitler and Mussolini) in Spain. Hundreds of them went willingly 'to die in Madrid' to show that Fascism should be fought every inch of the way. This wave of deep dissatisfaction, with unemployment, hostility towards social injustice and a total rejection of Fascism that carried the students and intellectuals of the metropolitan countries forward was not without effect in the colonial countries. The South African students and intellectuals, for example, were certainly not exempt from the ferment that drove so many to Spain, but they did not have to go abroad to fight fascism. The fascist danger was not a far-away Franco but Hertzog and Pirow and Smuts here at home. There is no doubt that amongst our students especially, as amongst those who could take a deep interest in it, the Spanish Civil War had a profound effect, helping to clarify the issues over which the coming world war was to be fought. Those who watched the duplicity of England, France and America and saw how their policy of "non-intervention" ensured the defeat of a democratically elected government in Spain and guaranteed the victory of Franco could never become enthusiastic about a world war led by these same powers, allegedly to defend democracy against Fascism.

There is an ironic twist to the Civil War. The backbone of Franco's army were the Moroccans recruited in North Africa. Amongst the broad masses of the people in South Africa the fact that black soldiers were the main component of the victorious army was not lost. Though they fought on the wrong side, their victories undermined the current ideas of the inherent superiority of white people.

The conquest of Abyssinia

Before Spain, the Italian invasion of Abyssinia

sparked off enormous interest amongst the oppressed in South Africa. It has been suggested that this widespread interest was the first signs of a political revival after the apathy following the collapse of the I.C.U. into warring splinters. Be that as it may, the war in Abyssinia aroused intense interest and widespread discussion.

Relevant to this interest was the fact that the Abyssinians were black people defending their country against a white invader. There was naturally a great deal of identification with the Abyssinian struggle, especially as the justice of this cause was so transparent. Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Ethiopia, became a national hero amongst the oppressed and his picture vied with that of British royalty for pride of place in their homes. The fact that black people ruled their own country and filled even the highest posts in the state with ability and dignity were not lost upon them and certainly helped to undermine the attitude current here that black people were destined, and indeed were fit only, to be menials and inferiors.

They felt the defeat of Abyssinia as a hard blow. They never forgot the failure of Britain to come to her aid. The myth of Britain as the friend and protector of "people of colour" was severely damaged by the impunity with which Italy invaded Abyssinia.

The run-up to the Second World War (the great depression, Abyssinia, Spain, the rise of the Third Reich, the instability of a world tottering on the brink of war) had helped to loosen the chains of conservatism, habit and the belief in the fundamental unchangeability of society. It had taught people that the world and their lives were not only capable of change but were, indeed, in the process of change. This whole situation had helped to set their minds in motion and helped to erode ideas which had tied them to the *status quo*.

The Colonies and World War II

That is why, when imperialism officially launched the war in September 1939, it was faced by people in the colonies who looked at its actions and the ideas and ideals for which it was claiming to go to war with critical minds and with a rapidly developing awareness of the real issues being fought out. The extent to which political growth had taken place in the pre-September 1939 period can be gauged, for example, by the scant success which the South African rulers had in their campaign to enrol the Non-Europeans (except the unemployed, especially from rural areas) in their army (naturally, on a segregated and inferior basis). It can be seen, too, in the refusal of Congress in India to support Britain at war and their declaration that the struggle for Independence was the first priority. It can be seen also in Japan's initial and dramatic

successes in Malaya, Singapore, Java and Burma where, because the colonial populations regarded both their Allied rulers and the Axis would-be rulers as enemies, they would not defend the one against the other. Instead, they bided their opportunity to assert their independence from both sets of masters.

The actual official war period itself accelerated the process. The war popularised ideas of democracy and of fundamental human rights because, so said the Allies with all the might of their war propaganda machine, this was why the war was being fought. In South Africa, as in the rest of the colonial world, the oppressed people accepted these ideas with an alacrity and a seriousness that for all its not being intended, was a consequence that could not be avoided. The Allied propaganda directed at destroying the myths on which the Nazi doctrines of the Master Race (of the *Herrenvolk*, that is) were based, necessarily undermined also the South African variant of that ideology.

Japan, Smuts and Segregation

The initial Japanese victories in the East already referred to had a special interest for the oppressed in South Africa. The defeat of the "white" Allies gave the lie, stunningly and dramatically, to the pretensions of white superiority. It was almost as if one could hear the oppressed cheer at the defeat of the white armies, as Malaya, Singapore, Java and Burma fell in rapid succession. The conduct of the South African rulers in this situation was also solidly instructive. In 1942 when Rommel dominated North Africa and when the Japanese invasion of Madagascar seemed imminent, with the invasion of South Africa itself an alarming possibility, Prime Minister Smuts, using the platform provided for him by the Institute of Race Relations, declared that it was "outrageous" to think and talk of "the population of South Africa as two million" for this implied, he said, that "the Africans did not count or were not worth counting." Continuing, he said: "Isolation has gone and I am afraid segregation has fallen on evil days too." It was in this climate that there was talk of reviewing the pass laws and Madeley, Minister of Labour, spoke about recognising African trade unions. However, Rommel was decisively beaten at Alamein and "the tide of Japanese aggression dried up on the frontiers of India" and the rulers of South Africa felt safe once more. And so "the retreat from segregation" remained a speech, the pass laws were intensified and African trade unions remained as unrecognised as they are today.

Lessons from the Resistance

The war affected the outlook of the people in too many ways for a full catalogue to be practical. But

no catalogue can be even partially satisfactory without at least some reference to the lessons learned from the war in Europe and particularly from the Resistance and the anti-Nazi underground. This arena taught and re-taught the lessons of non-collaboration with the oppressor, the need and the advantage of resistance where the opposing force is and seems likely to remain, from a military and police point of view, far stronger than the resistance. How resistance can be, and often has to be, secret. It taught also how important the collaborators were to the enemy and how the war against them had to be as hard and unremitting as the war against the Nazis and their Gestapo. It is indicative of the significance of this area of education that Vidkun Quisling, the head of the Norwegian puppet and collaborationist government during the Nazi occupation of Norway, contributed his name to those, even in South Africa, who had acquired infamy and popular hostility by their collaboration. In 1943 the C.A.C. (Coloured Advisory Council) collaborators were branded as quislings by the Anti-C.A.D. Movement and the term quisling is still today an important weapon in the Non-Collaborationist arsenal.

The term collaborator itself still retains the air of sharp condemnation that it acquired when used against those who served the Nazi *Herrenvolk*.

Of course, different layers reacted with differing intensity to different events and currents. There must have been few teachers and students who were not inspired by the heroic resistance of teachers and students in Occupied Europe to the attempts to make them tools of the Nazis by forcing the teachers to indoctrinate the students with the Nazi doctrines of race and racial destiny and superiority. The declaration of the Norwegian teachers giving the solemn assurance that they would never teach lies to their pupils remains, even at this remove in time, a magnificent and moving document. There is no doubt that this tradition of refusing to become an indoctrinator even when such refusal could result in the ultimate penalty was an element helping to shape the philosophy of the oppressed teachers in South Africa, especially in the crisis period of the introduction of Bantu Education (and we include here its Colouredised and Indianised versions).

The New Era Fellowship

A factor which helped the oppressed to assimilate and act upon the lessons they were so rapidly accumulating in this period — and act upon them they did in the period ushered in by 1943 — was the coming into existence of a political vanguard drawn largely but by no means exclusively from the ranks of the oppressed intelligentsia. A body that made a major contribution to the growth and development of this mainly young vanguard

was the New Era Fellowship founded in Cape Town in 1937. The N.E.F. was founded as a discussion club committed "to the spread of enlightenment" on matters of educational, cultural, social and political interest. This open forum was the form finally agreed to after an initial suggestion that the Non-European students at the University of Cape Town should form their own Non-European organisation had been effectively criticised and rejected as a voluntary acceptance of segregation. The history of this body merits some attention.

The N.E.F. was founded at an important conjuncture of international and national events. It came after the Depression, after Abyssinia, after Hitler and Mussolini's rise to power and as Franco was brutally marching to power. The ominous clouds of the Second World War were gathering for the storm. At home the oppressed were in the midst of the crisis precipitated by the Hertzog Acts, with the youth in revolt against the betrayal of the people by the old A.N.C. leadership. Already the Wilcocks Commission had reported (1937) in favour of the development of the Coloured Affairs Department.

It is not surprising that in this atmosphere the N.E.F. soon became an important focus in the intellectual and political life of the Cape.

Initially very many political currents flowed through it, contributing a wide diversity of political outlooks, attitudes and approaches to be propagated, debated, examined, criticised and evaluated. There was the initial nucleus — the group of U.C.T. students — and then there were people from every political grouping: These included young members of the T.L.S.A. dissatisfied with the Van der Ross-F. Hendricks bureaucracy. There were also elements from around the A.P.O., increasingly sceptical of Abdurahmanism. And even Abdurahman himself on occasion went to the N.E.F. to teach youngsters their place. There were members of the National Liberation League and the Non-European United Front [episodic organisations running into each other, formed at the instance of the Communist Party of South Africa at this time in pursuance of their policy of "popular fronts". In these instances the organisations actually provided a home for the disaffected Non-European members whose complaint was that their "white" comrades behaved not so much as comrades but as typical South African "whites", considering themselves in practice as superior to "black" communists. In accordance with their understanding of the Moscow directive that a popular front should be formed of all progressive forces against fascism, the leadership of the C.P., ever the left wing of the white working class, sought an alliance with the (white) Labour Party.

In this alliance their black members were a hindrance and an embarrassment and the decision to let them work in a Non-European United Front provided a convenient solution.] Members of the Western Province Committee of the All African Convention who rejected the path of collaboration of the old A.N.C. leadership, contributed yet another current to the N.E.F. As did more critical A.N.C. members. In and around this open forum also moved spokesmen for other radical and non-radical associations, some of the former proving not at all as radical as they had hoped or claimed to be.

The Vanguard

Out of the many currents that flowed through it, through study, analysis, polemic and discussion there emerged gradually a character and direction that was new and significant in the political life in South Africa. By 1942 we can say there existed in and around the New Era Fellowship a political vanguard drawn from all sections of the oppressed Non-Europeans, largely but not exclusively young, that had acquired a high degree of political sophistication and was articulate. They rejected the sectionalism of the A.P.O. and the A.N.C. and were already "striving to build a national organisation which will be the mouthpiece of all of us, Africans, Indian and Coloured, and will rally us to a militant fight for our rights". ("On Behalf of the Non-European", written by "A Few Non-Europeans", published by Trek, August 1942.) They understood the need for a programme for National liberation and had, indeed, progressed very far in the formulation of such a programme and were uncompromisingly non-collaborationist in outlook. This latter principle was very evident in their attitude to the war where their point of departure was that the interests of oppressor and oppressed could not be reconciled and that the oppressed had to follow an independent path dictated by their own interests. The oppressed, they argued, could support neither the Allies nor the Axis "because they know they will still have to fight for their freedom from the victor, whoever he is" (*ibid.*).

The spirit of the approach of the emergent leadership can be gathered from the declaration in *Trek* quoted above:

"Our wants are very simply explained, because we wish for *nothing less than full democratic rights*. Liberals want to give us promises and the Communist Party arms. But we are not interested in either offer however well it may be intended. When we have full citizenship rights we will wax as poetic about the democratic idea as the most fulsome Liberal and we will defend it as well as any Soviet man or woman defends the U.S.S.R."

This vanguard had already acquired substantial influence in the T.L.S.A. and in the Western Pro-

vince section of the A.A.C., and some of them were becoming known on the National scene. Their aims were open and avowed:

"... Our most urgent need at the moment is a national organisation like the All African Convention. We need it not so much to formulate our demands. You ought to know them well by now and we do not intend to compromise on any part of them. We need such an organisation to have all the Non-Europeans united solidly behind our demands. Every Non-European wants full democratic rights... So we are determined to get every Non-European united to state our demands with one voice... The nature of our times makes it imperative that we should muster all our forces and strive to build our national organisation here and now."

We made the point earlier that the young vanguard, itself largely formed by this period, in turn contributed to the speed and effectiveness with which the lessons of the war period were assimilated. Their work in the T.L.S.A., up to that time a veritable bulwark of Abdurahmanism and the preserve of a reactionary bureaucracy, is a case in point.

The T.L.S.A.

Members of the N.E.F. were active in the T.L.S.A. from 1937 onwards and helped to intensify the impact of the war on the political understanding of its teachers by interpreting events, analysing developments and articulating moods and feelings that otherwise would have taken long to surface. The young vanguard, themselves part-product of this period, thus helped to compound its influence.

By 1940 their influence and support was such that the arrangements that the T.L.S.A. bureaucrats had made for the conference to be addressed by Army Recruiting Officers had to be called off under pressure from the rank and file. By the June 1942 conference the growth had been so rapid that the conference accepted that the educational disabilities were the result of deliberate policy and not of hatred or ignorance or misunderstanding. And the conference did not shy away from the implications of this standpoint. The following excerpt from a contemporary review of the conference makes the point: "J. S. Marais in *The Cape Coloured People* concludes that 'we have in fact done a great deal since Union towards strengthening the foundations of a castelike system with the Bantu and the Coloured in the lower castes and the Europeans at the top.' We are only too well aware of this, and the conference created political and not merely educational history, when it adopted the view-point that the low educational subsidy paid to Coloured and African children is one of the chief methods of building and preserving this caste system, and that educational

starvation is what Prof. R. F. A. Hoernlé has called 'an instrument of domination' and what several of the delegates styled 'modern slave chains.' Indeed, the conference went further and decided that since the low educational subsidy was intended to retard all the non-European people, the task of raising it could only be successful if the efforts of all the non-Europeans were invoked in the struggle. Thus it was agreed that through Press, pamphlets and public meetings the non-Europeans were to be told the truth about this 'instrument of domination' and to be shown that the fight for educational equality will never achieve its end if it is separated from the general fight for full democratic rights for all non-Europeans. The T.L.S.A. is to go to all the organisations of the African and Coloured people, including the All-African Convention, the African

Teachers' Leagues and the Trade Unions in order to harness them to a concerted effort for educational democracy." (The Stepchild Steps Out, by Saul Galant. Trek, July 1942.) With this rate of development, it is not surprising that the bureaucracy felt itself embattled and threatened. The events of the following year indicated how well grounded their fears were. In playing a key role in the reorientation and cleansing of the T.L.S.A. the young vanguard made a fundamental contribution to the political development of the whole Coloured section of the oppressed because of the leadership role that the teachers played in this oppressed community. To what extent the ground had been prepared for progress by the reorientation of the T.L.S.A. would be shown in the crisis year 1943.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (VIII)

1943: The Anti-CAD, beginnings of the NEUM

The year 1943 saw the most dramatic and far-reaching changes in the political prospects of the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa. The closing weeks of that year saw the laying of the foundations of an indigenous national liberatory movement committed to establishing an equal citizenship for the whole population of South Africa and abolishing the rightlessness, poverty and inequality of the nationally oppressed and economically exploited mass. It saw the political leadership of the oppressed wrested from those layers of the oppressor class, the liberals, who had captured it right at the time when the oppressed first began to react politically. It saw this leadership pass to a vanguard drawn from the ranks of the oppressed and exploited themselves so that for the first time in their political history the oppressed led their own struggles.

And, as part of this process, the year 1943 saw also the whims, predilections, beliefs, ambitions, prejudices, aspirations and conceptions of this or that individual leader being replaced by clearly formulated demands and principles as the basis and guide of the movement and struggle.

On the surface

Yet, on the surface of things, 1943 began much as 1942 or 1941 had begun. The oppressed were divided, disorganised and demoralised. The majority sector was still reeling under the impact of the body blows inflicted by the Hertzog Acts and by the betrayal of the old A.N.C. leadership whose desertion had been given concrete organisational expression by the disaffiliation of Congress and its branches from the All African Convention (A.A.C.). Before leaving they had consigned Convention to total ineffectualness by prescribing that it should meet only every three years. The South African Indian Congress was firmly in the grip of a conservative bureaucracy drawn from the highly sectional merchant class. There was hardly any interest in the Congress from the Indian poor, the town and farm workers. The A.P.O. was

discredited and rejected by broad layers of the Coloured people who had become completely disillusioned with it. Abdurahman had died but his ghost had not quite gone to rest. The Non-European United Front and the National Liberatory League, never organisations of substance, had virtually disappeared from the scene as the members of the Communist Party had become active campaigners for the Smuts War effort ever since the Soviet Union had entered the War. (In fact there was a working arrangement between the C.P. and the Government in terms of which C.P. speakers were licensed to criticise certain discriminatory laws and practices provided their speeches also supported the war effort. In terms of this agreement Colin Steyn, Smuts's Minister of Justice, often intervened to secure the release and non-prosecution of Communist Party activists, even people like Moses Kotane). The C.P. attempted to camouflage its support for the Smuts Government by demanding that Non-European soldiers, too, should be armed.

This was the position on the surface of things. As was indicated earlier, the gloom was in fact

relieved by the growth in and development of the political awareness of the oppressed and this growth was speeded up enormously by the Second World War.

Articulate vanguard

Convention was wounded and weakened but not dead. It had a small but nevertheless real band of progressives who kept the organisation alive. To get around the three-year sleep, they petitioned annually for conferences. At these conferences they articulated the ideas of Boycott and of struggle against the Hertzog Acts and they propagated the idea of Non-European Unity. This band came largely but not totally from the Western Cape and were part of the new vanguard that had developed in and around the New Era Fellowship which was naturally an affiliate of the A.A.C. Prominent in this band were people like Dr. G. H. Gool, Messrs. I. B. Tabata, S. A. Jayiya, C. M. Kobus, B. M. Kies and Miss J. Gool.

This group was woefully small and even sympathetic sources doubted their ability to intervene successfully in the affairs of Convention and the people. But the very weakness of Convention engineered by the A.N.C. leadership worked in their favour, for while they might possibly have been crowded out in a huge mass organisation, in the depleted ranks of Convention they were a force to be reckoned with. More importantly, however, events were moving for them, for the political ideas that they expressed were already in the process of crystallising out in the minds of wide layers of the population. They were not freaks born out of their time but a vanguard articulating an awareness and a mood that was already widely felt and was growing, even though as 1942 came to an end passivity and demoralisation still seemed to hold the political organisations of the oppressed, such as they were, in a choking grip.

The C.C.P.C.

In February 1943, Harry Lawrence, the Minister of the Interior, after the preparatory work had been done by the South African Institute of Race Relations and liberal "friends of the Non-Europeans" like Bishop Lavis, and after behind-closed-doors consultations with Dr. Gow and the remnants of the A.P.O. bureaucracy, announced the setting up of a Cape Coloured Permanent Commission (later known as the Coloured Advisory Council, the notorious C.A.C.) and a special Coloured section of the Department of the Interior.

"At that time there was no organisation which had enough independence or authority among the Coloured people, or which was sufficiently representative to rally them against these measures. So the New Era Fellowship (founded in 1937 as a discussion club) called a meeting to discuss the

proposed C.A.C. and C.A.D. At this meeting it was decided to invite all organisations among the Coloured people in the Western Cape to send delegates to a further meeting for the purpose of setting up the machinery to oppose and struggle against the new measures to set up a C.A.D. and to disfranchise the Coloured people. And so the Anti-C.A.D. Movement came into existence with local Anti-C.A.D. Committees or branches or associated organisations throughout the Cape (where the majority of the Coloured people live) and the other provinces". ("The Anti-C.A.D. Movement". Issued by the National Anti-C.A.D. Committee, February 1958.)

The Anti-C.A.D.

The Anti-C.A.D. Movement clearly expressed the new awareness that had spread amongst the populace, for there was an immediate and enthusiastic response to its call "AGAINST the C.A.D.: FOR FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS" made in its very first pamphlet. This pamphlet breathes the new spirit of aggressive equality and the sloughing off of the sectionalist, segregationist mentality that had characterised Coloured political organisations up to that time and is worth quoting at length:

"In this pamphlet the 'Anti-C.A.D. Committee' is going to tell you the TRUTH about the Government's latest moves against the Coloured People, a section of the Non-European oppressed of South Africa.

"We tell you this so that you may be WARNED of the new danger threatening the non-European people, so that you will PROTEST AND FIGHT against it in your trade unions, in your Civic Associations, your Vigilance Societies, Churches, and in any political, social, benefit or sporting organisations to which you belong. . . .
"WHY WE OPPOSE THE C.A.D. AND THE COMMISSION.

"We oppose and unconditionally reject the C.A.D. and the Commission because:

(i) We are men and women with the same needs and desires as any other men and women in this country, but these proposals are based on the despotic idea that we are not fit to be governed by the ordinary law or to take part in the ordinary legislative and administrative institutions of the country;
SO WE ARE INTENDED TO OCCUPY PERMANENTLY A PLACE OF INFERIORITY OUTSIDE OF THE ORDINARY CIVIC SYSTEM OF THE COUNTRY. . . .

(ii) The Native Affairs Department carries out the Government policy of keeping the African in a permanent position of servility and the Native Affairs Commission does the

scouting to find out whether to go 'Full speed ahead' or 'Half speed ahead'. THE COLOURED AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AND THE CAPE COLOURED PERMANENT COMMISSION WILL DO THE SAME FOR THE COLOURED PEOPLE.

"WE ARE STRIVING FOR FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS. When we say this we mean that we struggle for:

(i) FULL AND EQUAL POLITICAL AND CIVIC RIGHTS FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE UNION.

This includes:

- (a) The granting of the vote to all adults irrespective of race, religion or sex.
 - (b) The right of all voters to be elected to a National Assembly.
 - (c) The right of all persons to travel freely and without restriction through any part of the country — this implies the abolition of the Pass System.
 - (d) The right of all persons to reside wherever they wish and to purchase land or other property in urban or rural areas — this implies the abolition of the segregation of the African (which already exists) and of the Coloured and Indian (which is almost complete).
 - (e) The release of more land for African, Coloured and Indian peasants.
- (ii) Full and equal rights for all workers to form Trade Unions for the purpose of protecting and furthering their interests — this implies the abolition of all discrimination in industrial legislation based on colour.
- (iii) Full and equal rights in, and access to, all skilled occupations and professions.
- (iv) Equal taxation of all persons according to their income — this means the abolition of the Poll Tax and other discriminatory taxes.
- (v) Equal, free and compulsory education for all children and the abolition of the present discrimination in subsidies.
- (vi) Equal rights in, and access to trade.
- (vii) The equal rights of all persons to hold office in any governmental, administrative, juridical and educative institution of the country.

WHY EVERYONE MUST OPPOSE THE C.A.D. AND THE C.C.P.C.

"Do not fool yourself that the C.A.D. is 'not your concern'. It is very much your business whether you are Coloured, African, Indian or White. These proposals are part of a process which aims at keeping the non-European politically voiceless (except for ventriloquist dolls like the N.R.C., the C.C.P.C. and the Indian Commission), and economically segregated and controlled, and

then at reducing the relatively high standard of the White worker.

"This process affects all of us. It was 'completed' for the African by the 1936 Acts; it is being completed for the Indians by the Indian Commission of Natal (which will soon be extended) and for the Coloureds by the C.A.D. and the C.C.P.C. Then it will be the White workers' turn.

"So we must all realise that while these proposals are aimed at one section of the non-European oppressed, they are the direct and vital concern of ALL NON-EUROPEANS, for an injury to one limb is an injury to the whole body. We must not allow ourselves to fall into the trap of being artificially divided into three groups, oppressed African, oppressed Coloured, oppressed Indian — segregated even in suffering. . . .

"So we have formed the 'Anti-C.A.D. Committee'. This Committee consists of all organisations which are opposed to the C.A.D. and the Permanent Commission. On this Committee we have political parties, branches of political parties, civic associations, trade unionists, churches, welfare societies, teachers' organisations, students and past-student societies and sporting bodies. There are Coloureds, Africans, Indians and Whites, men and women, old and young, on the Committee — in fact, all people who are opposed to the C.A.D. and the C.C.P.C."

"A militant national organisation"

Before leaving this first pamphlet of the Anti-C.A.D., we might quote the attitude of the Anti-C.A.D. on the crucial question of "a militant national organisation". The pamphlet says unequivocally: "Unfortunately there exists no militant national organisation of the non-European people taking up and fighting bravely any and every issue concerning the rights of all non-Europeans, African, Coloured, or Indian. If such a national organisation did exist, there would be no need for an 'Anti-C.A.D. Committee' — in fact the C.A.D. proposals would never have been made. More unfortunate still, such a militant national organisation cannot be created overnight, and certainly cannot be created just to fight the C.A.D. and side-step the fundamental issues that we outlined in the section headed 'What We Really Want.' . . . We are to fight tooth and nail now, but we must realise clearly that we will never be safe from such legislation and we will never obtain full democratic rights until we have built up a militant national organisation which will take up the struggle of all the non-Europeans, African, Coloured and Indian."

Clearly the Anti-C.A.D. was never a Coloured organisation in the segregationist sense. It welcomed in its leadership ("the Anti-C.A.D. Committee") "Coloureds, Africans, Indians and

Whites" and likewise welcomed into its ranks *all* people opposed to the C.A.D. and the C.C.P.C. It never regarded the Anti-C.A.D. as a national organisation but as a movement having a contribution to make towards achieving, in fact a duty to build, the militant national organisation of all the oppressed people. Indeed, this was regarded as being the most urgent and responsible task.

The campaign begins

The response to the call of the Anti-C.A.D. was as dramatic as it was widespread. The Minister's announcement had been made on the 28th January 1943. The N.E.F. public lecture on "The C.A.D. — The New Fraud" was delivered on the 11th of February 1943, where it was decided to call a meeting of representatives of organisations. This meeting at which the "Anti-C.A.D. Committee" was constituted (among those elected were Dr. G. H. Gool, Miss H. Ahmed, A. J. B. Desmore, B. M. Kies, E. C. Roberts, Rev. D. M. Wessels, I. B. Tabata, S. Edross, A. Fataar) took place on the 28th February and virtually immediately a massive and intensive campaign was launched. At the beginning of April the Anti-C.A.D. Committee could, in defiance throwing the Minister's claim that the Anti-C.A.D. was but a "small noisy coterie" back in his face, point out that "from all over the country mighty protest meetings against the C.A.D. and C.A.C. have taken and still are taking place, where the people are unanimous against these measures. BUT NOT ONE MEETING HAS TAKEN PLACE WHERE THE PEOPLE SUPPORTED THE SCHEME. The quislings dare not call a meeting . . ." (Bulletin No. 2, 5th April '43).

Such indeed, was the response to the Anti-C.A.D. lead that they could militantly reply to the Minister's threat to use his power to confine them to concentration camps: "The Coloured community is not going to be frightened by his threat. There are far too many that he will have to intern. Because it is not a movement of just 'a small, noisy coterie', as he says, but a spontaneous mass movement of a whole people roused in wrath and anger to defend their last remaining rights. . . ." The same Bulletin reported "There are at present 43 organisations represented and their number is still increasing." Bulletin No. 3 (8th April 1943) reported that the following Branches of the T.L.S.A. had rejected the C.A.C. and its Men and were affiliated to the Anti-C.A.D.: Kimberley, Cradock, Orange River, Athlone, Claremont, Saron, Goodwood-Vasco, Wellington and Cape Town. This Bulletin also advertised the following list of Public Meetings:

Thursday, 8th April, Maitland Town Hall.
Saturday, 10th April, Foresters Hall, Paarl.
Monday, 12th April, A.M.E. Church Hall.
Diep River.

Thursday, 15th April, Grand Hall, City Hall,
Cape Town.

Friday, 16th April, Malmesbury.

Monday, 19th April, Stellenbosch.

Tuesday, 20th April, Vigilance Hall, Grassy
Park."

This gives some idea of the intensity of the campaign waged by the Anti-C.A.D., relying totally on voluntary, unpaid part-time workers. By the 20th May 1943, it could claim the affiliation of 81 organisations and the first Anti-C.A.D. conference held in Cape Town on the 29th and 30th May was clearly the biggest conference in the history of the Coloured sector of the oppressed.

The boycott at work

By then the ferment had worked through the whole Coloured section of the population and virtually every family and certainly every organisation had declared or was busy declaring itself on the question of the C.A.C. and the C.A.D. The decision was a massive one in favour of the Anti-C.A.D. Every single C.A.C. man was opposed and boycotted by at least some of his immediate relatives; it was literally brother against brother and children against father. The majority of C.A.C. men were reduced to a miserable minority even in their own families.

They were subjected to a massive boycott personally, socially and organisationally. They were repudiated by the organisations to which they belonged and given the option to resign or be expelled. The organisations then refused to have anything further to do with them or with the C.A.C. or C.A.D. In some organisations this process proceeded with greater speed than in others but ultimately there was not a single organisation of repute that accepted the C.A.C. or its men. In order to be able to pretend to have some support amongst the Coloured people, the C.A.C. men were instructed by Minister Harry Lawrence to form their own organisations. It is in this way that Golding's Coloured People's National Union (C.P.N.U.) and Van der Ross's Teachers' Educational and Professional Association (T.E.P.A.) were formed. The C.P.N.U. long ago evaporated and the T.E.P.A. changed its name into the Cape Teachers' Professional Association (C.T.P.A.) and is still trying to rewrite its history to attempt to escape the infamy that clung to the T.E.P.A. from birth.

The first Anti-C.A.D. Conference called for the intensification of the boycott against the C.A.C. and the C.A.D., and there is no doubt that the campaign totally defeated the C.A.C. It was rendered totally useless to the rulers. It could not be used to make a single Government scheme acceptable to the people and, on the contrary, the intensive campaign waged against the C.A.C.

raised the whole level of political consciousness of the Coloured sector of the oppressed, placing their feet firmly on the road to Non-European Unity.

Just as the defeat of the African people through the treachery of the old leadership in 1936 affected the morale and understanding of all the oppressed people (the issues would not have been half as clear cut for the Coloured sector, nor their determination so strong if they did not have the bitter experience of the majority sector before them) so, too, was the success of the Anti-C.A.D. campaign not restricted to the political growth and morale of the Coloured sector. Far from it.

The Anti-C.A.D. campaign was based on the boycott. For the first time in the history of the oppressed people they used the boycott and they won. For the first time in the history of their political struggles they defeated a major scheme of the Herrenvolk. Naturally all the oppressed people shared in this blow directed at the common enemy. The victory was the more significant for the rank-and-file Conventionites, for in 1936 already the rank-and-file were for the boycott and so they could not but be most receptive to the lessons of the success. Besides, the correspondence between the N.R.C. and the C.A.C. was so clear that a defeat for the one was a blow at the other in much the same way as today a blow at Gatsha would make K.D. virtually duck; or, turning Gatsha, Leon and Hendrickse away from a funeral would make Reddy and Mangope squirm. *Inkundla*, for example, reported: "A campaign of great interest and importance to all Non-Europeans has recently been launched in Cape Town and is likely to spread throughout the country. This is the Campaign to fight the newly established C.C.P.C. and C.A.D. . . . The Coloured people are determined to boycott the C.A.C." (*Inkundla ya Bantu*, 20.4.1943). Later (22.5.43) *Inkundla* reports: "From all over the country the Coloured people have rallied to protest against the new segregation measure, the establishment of the C.A.C. 81 Organisations have now joined. . . . Unity is strength. They know the dangers of disunity and how the government makes use of differences among them to weaken them. . . ."

The Anti-C.A.D. and the A.A.C.

What was also important was that the Western Province Committee of Convention, which loomed large in the emergent new leadership of Convention, was very much part of the process of the successful Anti-C.A.D. Campaign and the way in which the Coloured people rallied to the very ideas and policies that they stood for and which they wanted to and were beginning to propagate in the A.A.C. must have strengthened their resolve and heightened their elan. Success on one front must at least improve the morale on the rest of the battle

field. There must have been more than one thread connecting the success of the Anti-C.A.D. Campaign in the first half of the year and the special meeting of the A.A.C. Executive in Bloemfontein in August, a meeting of the Executive completely dominated by the new Convention Executive and which issued the historic manifesto: "The Clarion Call — A Call To Unity".

However, before the steps whereby the foundations for unity were laid are considered, the review of the early period of the Anti-C.A.D. should be completed.

The 1943 "General Elections"

The Anti-C.A.D. Conference at the end of May gave special consideration to the 1943 "General Elections" and what that minority of a minority who still had the vote should do. The debate on the matter was lively, with even officials of the Anti-C.A.D. Committee taking differing standpoints. At least one argued that the Anti-C.A.D. should not involve itself in the elections. The majority argued, and won the overwhelming majority of the Conference, that the elections should be used as part of the struggle against the C.A.C. This meant voting against the sponsors of the C.A.C., the United Party which was the Government party, which intended to take away the rights of the Coloured people in the same way as it took away the rights of the Africans and which "is at present the chief instrument of segregation in South Africa". In many constituencies this meant in practice voting for the Nationalist Party, though this was not support for this party but a demonstration against its rival. "It goes without saying that IN ANY CONSTITUENCY WHERE AN ANTI-SEGREGATIONIST STANDS IT IS THE DUTY AND INTEREST OF ALL COLOURED VOTERS TO VOTE SOLIDLY FOR HIM. In cases like Salt River or Woodstock where there are U.P., Nationalist and Communist Party candidates, it is the duty of all Coloured Voters to vote solidly for the anti-segregationist (Communist Party) candidate" (Bulletin No. 11, 8.6.43).

The main opposition to this line during the Conference debate was the Communist Party and its supporters.

They, of course, welcomed support for their candidates but, loyal to their alliance with the United Party, called for support for the United Party on the grounds that it was the lesser evil and was waging the war against Hitler. They bitterly attacked the Anti-C.A.D. view that there was no difference between the United and Nationalist Parties when it came to the Colour-Bar.

This Conference decision may be taken to mark the final demise of "vote politics" because, for the

first time in their history the Coloured voters took an independent course. For the first time they did not vote for a ruling class party but demonstrated against a segregatory measure that was a fundamental attack upon them.

The malice begins

The Conference decision had a curious side-effect. Right from its inception the Anti-C.A.D. faced government charges that it was "a noisy coterie", a "bunch of communists and other subversives", charges that it dismissed with contempt and derision, secure in the knowledge that the known fact of its character as an immensely popular united front of all types of organisations was its most effective reply. In early May, for example, it could say: "The opposition (i.e. to the C.A.C.—Ed.) has assumed gigantic dimensions, so what does it matter . . . if trap-boys and other knaves in the 'Sun' insinuate one week that 'the 4th International' is behind the Anti-C.A.D. Movement, and the next week that it is the Communist Party? What does it matter if they seduce one more A.P.O. official. WHAT DOES ALL THIS MATTER SO LONG AS THE PEOPLE ARE BEHIND THE ANTI-C.A.D. MOVEMENT, AND SO LONG AS THE PEOPLE KNOW THAT THERE IS NOT ANY SINGLE ORGANISATION BEHIND IT, BUT IT'S THEMSELVES AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS" (Bulletin No. 8, 12.5.1943).

In the aftermath of the Conference decision to use the election to vote against the C.A.C., the United Party intensified its propaganda cry that the C.P. had organised and was leading the Anti-C.A.D. Bulletin No. 12 (19th June 1943) replied:

"They know it is untrue to say that a Communist coterie started the Anti-C.A.D. for election purposes. In all fairness to the Communist Party and their candidates in the Election, it must be stated in their exoneration, (i) That the Anti-C.A.D. Movement was started long before anyone dreamed of a General Election; (ii) The C.P. and their supporters joined the Anti-C.A.D. 6 weeks after the body was formed, when our campaign was already in full swing; (iii) That never has the C.P. been in the forefront of the Anti-C.A.D. Movement; (iv) That their resolution at the National Anti-C.A.D. Conference which virtually called for the support of the U.P. where there is a straight fight between the U.P. and the Nationalist Party, was rejected by an overwhelming majority of the Conference, as being unacceptable. So much for the lie that the Anti-C.A.D. is a Communist Party show! The Conference expressly affirmed its INDEPENDENCE AND DETACHMENT FROM ANY POLITICAL PARTY. AND, THEREFORE, WE ARE NOT CONCERNED WITH WHAT THIS OR THAT PARTY THINKS SHOULD BE THE POLICY OF THE ANTI-C.A.D. MOVEMENT. THE CONFERENCE HAS DECIDED THIS POLICY." The malicious charge that the Anti-C.A.D. was really a front for "Communists", "Subversives", "Trotskyists", "Fourth Internationalists" and so on, was begun by the Government but soon became the hallmark of the hysterical liberal opposition to the Movement. That this malice has not abated to this day is apparent from the rash of academic poison pens being wielded by liberals of all skin colours.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (IX) 1943: On the Road to Unity

On the eve of the 1st National Anti-CAD Conference, Anti-CAD Bulletin No. 9 had outlined the conference tasks in the following terms: "There are three questions confronting the National Anti-C.A.D. Conference to be held in Cape Town on May 29th-30th. First, is the perfecting of the boycott and all other ways and means of defeating the C.A.C. Second is the question of the General Elections as a part of our struggle against the Government's segregation scheme. Third, the question of the relationship of our struggle against the C.A.C. to the general struggle of all Non-Europeans in South Africa for full democratic rights." We have already reviewed the attitude of the Conference to the first two questions and have only to review the third.

This question was dealt with in an address delivered by B. M. Kies entitled "The Background of Segregation" and subsequently published by the Anti-C.A.D. as a pamphlet. The acceptance, publication and spreading of the address did not mean, of course, that it was immediately fully understood and digested by the whole movement. It was indicative rather of the outlook, approach and attitudes that the new political vanguard were attempting to

popularise, seeking always to deepen and extend the opposition to a single segregatory act so as to embrace the whole policy and practice of segregation.

The roots of Herrenvolkism

The address considered that the *Herrenvolk* concept of enslaving people arises from and serves Imperialism: "It is the idea of a *Herrenvolk* which

keeps the British in India and other colonial countries; the Americans and the Japanese fight one another bitterly in the interests of the *Herrenvolk* idea of both Yankee and Japanese Imperialism; and it is the *Herrenvolk* idea which has enslaved South Africa to the idea of white trustees and Non-White child races." It saw the stirrings of militancy amongst the Coloured people as but "one, very, very humble example" of the Anti-colonial struggle accelerated by the war: "It is a part, however small at present, of that new spirit of manhood and brotherhood which has already shown itself in China and India, and which must inevitably sweep the Colonial countries and the whole world." South Africa, "while it may be a self-governing dominion for the Europeans, is nothing but a labour camp for Non-Europeans. No amount of verbal jugglery can disguise the fact that British Imperialism owns South Africa and that the various governments since 1910, Unionist, S.A.P., Nationalist, Pact or Coalition have all acted as Britain's business managers. The Non-Europeans are, and are intended to be, a dispossessed and politically voiceless mass of slaves. The only elements of democracy in South Africa are reserved, and intended to be reserved, for the white minority who are bribed to be our overseers."

Having placed South Africa in the colonial context where it properly belonged, the address turned to its internal relations. "In South Africa, the reign of the exploiting class is prolonged by the basic segregation of the working class into a white labour aristocracy and a black serf majority. The fundamental class issue of owner and worker is overshadowed and blotted out by the crusade of White against Non-White. So successful has this segregation been that the white minority as a whole is completely fascist in its attitude towards the Non-Whites. All of them, intellectual, worker or peasant, from the Prime Minister down to the most illiterate poor white, they live off the segregation of the Non-Whites, they perpetuate that segregation in their own interests and they swagger through the land, glorying in their possession of a white skin, their passport to South African Democracy."

Dealing with the "black serf majority" the address made the point that the exploiting class had "carved us up into three groups until today we look upon ourselves as either African oppressed, Coloured oppressed or Indian oppressed. They intend to reduce us all to the same low level of slavery, but to keep us segregated even in subjection. Each section is to be in the same chains as the others, but each group is always to think that its chains are somewhat different. Already the names African, Coloured and Indian are practically out of date, they no longer correspond to reality. The reality is this: that in South Africa there are only White and Non-White."

Their real strength

The address then turned to "the all important question, why are we in this position today? Why has a white minority been able to enslave us?" The reply was that the real strength of the ruling class was to be found not in their army, police and prisons, not in their use of whips, chains, torture, and bullets, but in their hold over the minds and thoughts of the oppressed and exploited:

"The bitter truth is that white South Africa still dominates because it has been able to enslave the mind, the ideas of the Non-European. It is a known historical fact that in any society the prevailing ideas, manners and customs of even the oppressed section are the ideas, manners and customs of the ruling class. South Africa is no exception. Segregation is the prevailing idea of the South African ruling class and it has created segregationists in our own ranks. So, we can distinguish the three main causes of our defeats:

- (1) The segregationist outlook of the Non-Europeans;
- (2) The segregationist political organisations and efforts of the Non-Europeans;
- (3) The segregationist and reformist leadership.

"The fact that 291 years after the advent of the European in this country, one still has to speak of African oppressed, Coloured oppressed and Indian oppressed is sufficient evidence of the sad fact that the slaves have taken over the segregationist ideology of their master."

The address then examined these three factors in detail and showed how they operated amongst all sectors of the oppressed in much the same way and came to the conclusion that these three aspects of segregation in the ranks of the oppressed themselves "are the three reasons why, more than 100 years after the abolition of slavery, the Non-Europeans of South Africa are still slaves."

A REAL United Front

Naturally, the question was then posed: "What are we going to do about it?" The answer was unambiguous. And, in view of the controversies of the time and current misrepresentations, we quote extensively: "We must take the road of unity. We must unite the struggles of oppressed African, oppressed Coloured, oppressed Indian into the unified struggle of the oppressed Non-European. We must build up a real and militant United Front of the PEOPLE".

It warned, however, that there were difficulties in the way: A REAL United Front could not be made by declaration or by passing any amount of resolutions. It could not be created overnight by loud shouts for a national organisation or any other sort of organisation. A REAL United Front could

not suddenly be called into being by Coloured or Indians whenever they were faced by a new piece of repressive legislation. A REAL United Front could not be created out of spite or panic or despair.

"The fact of the matter is that a REAL United Front cannot suddenly be called up or created but it has to be BUILT. And it can only be BUILT UP from below. It can only be BUILT UP by the slow and steady unification of the African, Coloured and Indian workers in and through the struggle for their full democratic rights. This is the first condition for a REAL United Front: it must have a *mass base* and its aim must be to fight for national emancipation and equal rights for ALL people in South Africa. It is a fact that in South Africa the national and agrarian questions are inseparable from each other. The question of land and of political rights go hand in hand and cannot be separated. (This basic tenet was carefully repeated in other words but this nevertheless did not prevent malicious distortions of it.—S. M.) This, then, was the common basis upon which a REAL United Front could be formed, otherwise there was no use trying to form it at all. Its programme had to have this common minimum basis for this alone embraced both the needs of the day and the needs of the future, and could arouse the masses to action. Second, it could not have leaders who spoke with two voices, one to the Government, the Liberals and the Conservatives, and another to the people. Its leaders had to have one loyalty and one loyalty only — to the oppressed people, not the rulers. Third, it had to rid itself of the reformist methods which had only bred failure after failure. It had to use every means at the disposal of the oppressed people to rid themselves of their exploiters.

"These are the essentials for a REAL United Front, built upon a solid foundation. It will take a long time, but it is THE ONLY ROAD that we can travel if we, Non-Europeans, really wish to liberate ourselves and if we really wish to enjoy full democratic rights. It is the ONLY ROAD for honourable men and women. It is the ONLY ROAD for honest fighters against tyranny."

The address warned: "When we speak of a united front of ALL Non-Europeans, it is not for the purpose of putting white against black and stirring up race hatred. It is for the purpose of uniting ALL Non-European oppressed so that they may bring the white working-class to its senses, and demonstrate that its real place is *with us and against the Imperialist exploiter* . . ."

The final section of the address noted the "Known historical fact that the emancipatory theory and the practical leadership always come from the intelligentsia . . . who provided that fusion of theory and practice which is known as leadership". It observed that while we did not have a leisured class, we did

have an intelligentsia, one, moreover, that "has sprung straight from the loins of the working-class. They do not have to go to the people. They belong to the people and the people are all around them.

"I refer, of course, mainly to the teachers . . ." Then, commenting on the useful role that so many teachers were playing in the struggle against the C.A.C., the address made a stirring call to the teachers in the ranks of the oppressed to play their part in the tradition of the teachers of France who for generations had formed part of the enlightenment that led to the dawn of the French Revolution, or the teachers of Russia who for a full hundred years had prepared the way for the Russian Revolution.

"We are all in chains, teacher and worker; we can never throw them off individually. But if we *both* play our part to the full, we will break those bonds."

Addressing those teachers who had consciously chosen to stand with the people, the address listed their tasks, and we quote this part fully so that it can provide its own reply to those who have consistently sought to misrepresent this address, and especially this portion, even from 1943 on!:

"First, we must see to it then, that we fit ourselves for our task. The ignorant can never lead. We must see to it that we study the problems of the people and that we understand them clearly. Liberation is never achieved by raving or passing violent resolutions. It is only achieved by those who KNOW HOW. Second, we ourselves must practise what we teach our students and our people, namely, that it is not enough to know how the world must be changed, but that WE must also change it. In other words, it is only the unity of theory and practice which can produce sound leadership. Theory without practice is useless; practice without theory is suicide. Third, we must have courage. It is a sad fact that while the intelligentsia of the world has produced some of its greatest heroes, sung and unsung, it has also produced some of the greatest intellectual cowards. Let this not daunt us, but rather let it inspire us to see to it that we are not the ones to falter and to betray. For he who wavers and falters in his allegiance to the people, is no longer with the people but with the enemies of the people.

"We must make a break with the past. We must blot out the shame cast upon our profession by those teachers who have helped to mislead and betray the people, who have helped to put on the chains and to keep them on. WE MUST TURN OUR FACES TO OUR PEOPLE AND WE MUST BE AMONG THEM AND WITH THEM AND OF THEM, TEACHING AND LEADING THEM."

As can be seen from the address taken as a whole, the Anti-C.A.D. Movement had at this time a two-pronged thrust:

- (a) to wage and, indeed, intensify the struggle against the C.A.C./C.A.D. and to do this in a manner that would contribute to (b); and
- (b) to prepare to take the Coloured sector into a united front of the oppressed.

Without a doubt the progressive political surge of which the growth of the Anti-C.A.D. was the most spectacular and visible manifestation, was building up a powerful wave for unity. Sectionalism was, indeed, falling on evil days. The call for unity was on everybody's lips.

S.A.I.C. "Unity Resolution"

In April 1943 at a meeting of the South African Indian Congress (S.A.I.C.) Ali Ahmed Ismail, President of the S.A.I.C., who hailed from the Cape, and A. I. Kajee (Secretary) gave notice of a motion they would move at their conference to be held in Johannesburg, virtually at the same time as the Anti-C.A.D. conference. The Conference was actually held on the 26th and 27th June. The resolution was duly passed and has become known as the "Unity Resolution". It reads: "This Conference resolves that it is its considered opinion that the time has come for the Indian community of South Africa to make common cause politically, educationally, and economically with all other Non-European peoples of South Africa."

The Executive was further empowered to open negotiations with other representative organizations "with a view that a South African National Non-European United Conference be convened not later than December 1943, to establish a national organization of Non-Europeans to which various representative organizations of Africans, Coloureds, Malays and Indians may affiliate with the object of safeguarding and promoting the political, economic and educational interests of all the Non-European peoples of South Africa."

This seemed to be a clear commitment to unity but in time it was revealed to be a merchant class trick: a threat of Non-European Unity against the looming threat of the Pegging Act. But this exposure was still ahead.

A.A.C. "Calling All Africans"

Also in June 1943 the All African Convention (A.A.C.) (W.P.) clearly intending to increase the pace inside Convention and to prepare for a meaningful A.A.C. Conference in December, issued a pamphlet entitled "Calling All Africans". It was a stirring pamphlet calling for unity. It pointed out that the world crisis had driven the rulers to unleashing oppressive measures against all sections of the oppressed simultaneously, resulting in a growing awareness of their common oppression. It said:

"There is a great clamour which rings through the

air — for UNITY! There is a great desire amongst all sections of the Non-Europeans to forge a weapon not only for defence but for attack. There is a determination not only to defend ourselves but to launch a struggle for full democratic rights . . . It is obvious that the different Non-European groups have now realised the need for unity — unity not only within their respective groups, but of all Non-European groups. The present-day conditions demand such unity. It is not a thing that comes from the air. The desire for unity comes from the realisation that our physical differences have nothing to do with our economic and political position. There is one fundamental factor common to us all and that is oppression. Our coming together, therefore, is not a question of the will of this or that individual, this or that section. Our unity is determined by our very position in the social structure of South African society. It is the objective conditions which determine and demand this unity and our conscious desire for it arises from our recognition of this fundamental fact."

The pamphlet calls for "a dynamic and purposeful unity" which was a means to an end. It called upon Convention to "devise ways and means of making this unity a living fact by carrying it to the people, the workers and the peasants, most of whom are illiterate. The Movement must find its roots among the people. And this is possible only if Convention takes up the problems which are now agitating the people, problems that are becoming every day more acute."

The pamphlet itself is indicative of the new mood and direction in Convention and helped substantially to prepare the ground for the Executive Meeting which was held in Bloemfontein on the 27th and 28th August 1943. The response to the W.P. pamphlet showed that indeed the supporters of Convention were ready to take the path to unity.

The Executive recognised that there was widespread demand for the Unity of all the oppressed people and so invited the representatives of the Coloured and Indian people to attend the December Convention meeting and proposed that there should be a Conference of the three groups in Bloemfontein immediately after the Convention conference.

"The Clarion Call"

The Executive issued a manifesto to be submitted to the December Conference. The Manifesto was titled: "The Clarion Call — A Call to Unity". This is the call which led directly to the 1st Unity Conference and to the historic unification process known as the N.E.U.M. The Manifesto called for a decisive break with the old road of compromise and collaboration and for embarking on a new road of struggle.

It began by reviewing the eight years of the existence of Convention: "For eight years we have been 'developing on our own lines'; for eight years we have been fooling around with dummies, with meaningless mock-elections and mock-councils, AND HAVE WE GOT MORE LAND TODAY, MORE JOBS FOR OUR THOUSANDS OF YOUNG MEN? ARE WE BETTER OFF? Not even the white man would say so. Even he has to admit that our position has catastrophically deteriorated. But we do not need to look for his testimonies. No longer can anyone conceal the crying plight of our people. Soil erosion is devouring the last bit of land left to us — not to live on but to die on. Our people are starving. The White man calls it by the fancy name of 'Malnutrition'. This may sound better in his ears. But it is *OUR* babies and children who are dying before they have a chance to grow up. It is *our* cattle which the white man has always begrudged us and which are *today* no longer cattle but only the shadow of cattle. Whether in the towns or in the Reserves, our poverty and misery are beyond description. While we have to pay double for everything we buy, the earnings of the people have not increased and the tax burden has not been lightened . . .

"For eight years we have been learning the true meaning of this policy of 'developing on our own lines'. And now everyone is convinced that it leads us to ruin . . .

"We ask for bread and we get stones. We ask for relief and get commissions. It is no use appealing to the government, because it is not our government but the government of the White man. It is no use appealing to parliament, because it is not our parliament but the parliament of the White man. It is no use appealing to the law courts, because the law is made by the White man against us.

"These eight years of the segregation policy have proved to us that we have travelled along the wrong road, a road that is leading us to an abyss. These eight years have proved to us that 'development on our own lines' is a fraud and that the representation is a fraud. . . . There is only one way open for us: to fight for our rights as citizens of our country. Therein lies our freedom and our future . . .

"We have also learned that not only we, but the Coloured people and the Indian people in South Africa have travelled the same wrong road, although separately. The White man wants this country for himself and with all the Non-Europeans as servants and slaves. The same policy that was applied to us in 1935 is now being applied to the Indian and Coloured people. But they are not repeating our mistakes and they are fighting back. The Coloured people are uniting behind what they call the Anti-C.A.D. Movement, a kind of federal organisation like our All African Convention. The Indian people

are also uniting behind their federal organisations, the South African Indian Congress.

"It should be obvious that if all these Non-European peoples are struggling to obtain the same thing — the rights of full citizenship — it would be foolish of them to stand separately, while they have a better chance of success if they join forces. It is very pleasing to note that both organisations, the Coloured and the Indian, have already appreciated this need for unity. They have adopted resolutions empowering their executives to enter into negotiations for a unification of all Non-European peoples in the struggle against segregation, a struggle for full citizenship rights. We on our part welcome these decisions of our co-sufferers in South Africa and we recommend to the coming Conference of the A.A.C. the adoption of the UNITY resolution. This is the first step on the new road."

Proposed resolutions

The Manifesto also set out the Resolutions that the Executive would call upon the Convention to make:

- "(1) The rejection, after the experience of eight years, of the policy of trusteeship and segregation.
- (2) The turning from the old road of passivity to the new road of leadership.
- (3) The demand for full citizenship rights and representation.
- (4) The realization that the striving for freedom of all the oppressed people in South Africa, the Africans, the Coloured and the Indians, is identical in aim and methods.
- (5) To give effect to the widespread demand for the unity of all Non-Europeans in South Africa. The representatives of the two other groups have been invited by the Executive as guests to the Convention.
- (6) A Conference of the three groups should be convened immediately after the Convention in Bloemfontein in order to save time and expense.
- (7) The decision on the Protectorates (rejecting incorporation into segregationist South Africa. —S. M.) to be re-affirmed and made known.
- (8) The question of the form of representation to the coming Peace Conference to be decided upon."

A.A.C programme

The Manifesto also included a summary of the common disabilities of all Non-Europeans and ended by quoting the Programme of the All African Convention which is "to fight for full democratic rights of all oppressed people in the Union". These rights include:

- (1) Universal suffrage for all adults irrespective of colour and sex. This includes the right to membership of parliament and state councils.
- (2) The right for all Union Nationals irrespective of colour to buy land or property anywhere in the Union.
- (3) The right of all Union Nationals, irrespective of colour, to trade anywhere they please.
- (4) Equal government assistance to all farmers irrespective of colour.
- (5) The right of employment in all State departments of all people irrespective of colour.
- (6) Equal educational facilities and equal subsidies for all children irrespective of colour.
- (7) Compulsory and free education for all children up to Standard 7 and free education up to Standard 10.

- (8) Equal pay for equal work.
- (9) The right to form Trade Unions.
- (10) The abolition of all colour bars in industry, including the civilised labour policy.
- (11) The repeal of all colour discrimination in political, educational, industrial and social spheres."

The December Conference duly adopted the Manifesto and all the resolutions except No. 8 for it was felt "that no useful purpose could be served by sending delegates to a Peace Conference of Imperialist Governments".

The adoption of the Manifesto and the resolutions meant that Convention had taken the first practical steps to calling the Non-European Unity Movement into being.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (X) 1943: Preliminary Unity Conference

The December 1943 Conference of the All African Convention (A.A.C.) was vibrantly alive and exciting and an air of expectation of great things dominated it. It was clear that by issuing the *Call to Unity* and convening the Preliminary Unity Conference to meet immediately after its own conference, it was tapping the most popular current flowing through the oppressed and exploited people of the land. Not only had the Anti-C.A.D. Movement accepted the invitation but its delegation was already participating in a fraternal way in the conference proceedings.

The delegation of the South African Indian Congress (S.A.I.C.) was expected. Even the African National Congress (A.N.C.) leadership clique was forced to make a concession towards the popular feeling and mood.

Responding to pressure from the floor of its own Conference, the A.N. Congress leadership drew up a resolution asking Convention to appoint ten members to a Select Committee to be joined by ten members from Congress with a view to discussing unity between the two bodies. There was opposition from inside Convention, from members who regarded the A.N.C. call as a manoeuvre to avoid unity. This manoeuvre was in line, they felt, with previous attempts to bury Convention and to reduce it to impotence (such as the earlier proposal, for example, that political matters should be left to Congress while Convention concerned itself with co-ordinating other national matters: or the proposal that only National Bodies should be allowed to affiliate to Convention). But the Convention conference ultimately accepted the proposal and appointed ten members to meet with Congress. The joint committee met on the 16th December for some hours. Their decision was reported to Convention on the 17th December by Professor Jabavu who "reported the final decision arrived at by majority vote that the A.A.C. should be the recognised political mouthpiece of the African people."

Jabavu's report was enthusiastically acclaimed

by Convention and the following resolution was passed on a motion ironically enough by Dr. J. S. Moroka (then Treasurer of the A.A.C., but later a President-General of the A.N.C. and bitter opponent of Convention and Unity): "In view of the decision made at the meeting of the joint delegates of the A.N.C. and the A.A.C. on the previous night of December the 16th, 1943, that the All African Convention shall henceforth be regarded as the official mouthpiece and the co-ordinating body of the African people; and in order to give effect to this decision so that unity may be achieved in practice and not merely in resolutions, this session of the A.A.C., sitting at Bloemfontein on December 19th, 1943:

- (1) Invites all the branches of the African National Congress which were affiliated from the inception of Convention up to 1941 to re-affiliate to the All African Convention.
- (2) Invites the African National Congress to affiliate to the All African Convention.
- (3) Urges the African National Congress in the name of unity to come back to the All African Convention so that the unity that was demonstrated in 1935 and continued to 1941 should be recovered and improved upon."

Against the background of a full discussion on the prevailing political situation, the Convention Conference turned to the question of the unity of the whole of the oppressed Non-Europeans and passed a lengthy resolution of which we quote the

essential portion below, which also enables one to grasp the spirit of the discussions and decisions.

Unity Resolution

"The Convention is firmly convinced that just as the division of the people into masters and servants serves only a small white ruling-class, so the division of the oppressed themselves (African, Coloureds and Indians) serves only this small ruling class, against the interests of the country as a whole and also the majority of its people. The first step to overcome these artificially fostered divisions and to bring harmony and goodwill amongst all the people is the unity of all oppressed peoples of South Africa:

"The Convention therefore welcomes the Executive Committee's invitation to the two other Non-European groups and expresses satisfaction at the presence of the fraternal delegations as the guests of Convention.

"Furthermore, it resolves to send a representative delegation to the Conference of all the Non-European sections, which is to take place in Bloemfontein after the conclusion of this session of Convention, and to take whatever steps are necessary for the laying of a solid foundation for Unity of all Non-Europeans in their just struggle against all oppression and discrimination."

Preliminary Unity Conference

Immediately after the rise of the Convention Conference, the delegates assembled for the Preliminary Unity Conference which was regarded as having the purpose of exploring the channels through which the unity of all the Non-Europeans could be established. All the decisions taken at this Preliminary Unity Conference were to be provisional pending confirmation by the various federal bodies.

The African section was represented by the All African Convention, the Coloured by the National Anti-C.A.D. Movement but the delegates from the South African Indian Congress representing the Indian section did not arrive. Instead they sent a telegram expressing regret at their inability to attend "as they were engaged in matters arising out of the Pegging Act. They were, however, in whole-hearted agreement with the Unity Movement."

The proceedings of the 1st Unity Conference are summed up by the Draft Declaration of Unity in which the Conference carefully recorded its activities, deliberations and findings. The Declaration reflects the painstaking care that was being taken to ensure that unity would be achieved, that the opportunity that might not be repeated for a long time would not be lost:

Preamble

"These three organisations of the Non-Euro-

peans, which in themselves are not political parties, but federal bodies embracing various political, economic and social organisations and parties of shades of opinion from every walk of life, have met together in Conference upon 17th December at Bloemfontein.

"After frank and friendly deliberations on questions affecting all Non-Europeans in South Africa, the Conference has come to the following conclusions:

"I. That the rulers of South Africa, who wield the economic and political power in this country, are deliberately keeping the Non-European people in economic and political oppression for the sake of their own selfish interests.

II. That the entire constitutional and economic structure, the legislative, educational, fiscal, judicial and administrative policy, is designed to serve the interests of the European ruling classes (the minority) and not the interests of the people of the country as a whole.

III. That despite protestations to the contrary, it is the firm determination of this ruling class to prevent the economic advancement and upliftment of the Non-Europeans."

(The conclusions continue up to Clause XII and for reasons of space we cannot quote them all in full.)

Clause IV reviews the period 1910 to 1943 which saw the systematic deterioration of the position of the oppressed, while Clause V rejects "all constitutional privileges based on skin colour and Clause VI avers that "the continuation of the present system . . . must inevitably be at the expense of the Non-Europeans and lead to their ruination." Citizenship for all based on "equality of civil and political rights" is essential if there is to be "economic prosperity and all-round advancement of South Africa" (Clause VII).

Clause VIII, which goes to the very heart of the matter, merits full coverage: "The recognition that segregation is an artificial device of the rulers and an instrument for the domination of the Non-European is at the same time the recognition that the division, strife and suspicion amongst the Non-European groups themselves are also artificially fostered by the ruling class. From this it follows:

- (a) That no effective fight against segregation is possible by people who tacitly accept segregation amongst themselves;
- (b) That the acceptance of segregation, in whatsoever form, serves only the interests of the oppressors;
- (c) That our fight against segregation must be directed against the segregationists within as well as without, and
- (d) That the unity of all Non-European groups

is a necessary pre-condition for this total fight against segregation."

Clause IX states that the intention is "to lay the foundation for real unity amongst the Non-Europeans" and points out that since the purpose is "to fight against segregation, discrimination and oppression of every kind and to fight for equality and freedom for all, such a Unity Movement cannot and must not, for one moment, be considered as directed against the Europeans.

It is an Anti-Segregation Front and, therefore, all those European organisations and societies which are genuinely willing to fight segregation . . . are welcome to this anti-segregation Unity Movement."

Clause X formulates "the organisational task of Unity" as the breaking down of the "heavy legacy of the past", the artificial walls of mistrust and suspicion erected by the rulers between the Non-Europeans.

Clause XI makes the point that "indeed, all Non-Europeans suffer under the same fundamental disabilities — the lack of political rights."

"It is through lack of political rights:

- (a) that his education is deliberately starved;
- (b) that he is starved of medical facilities, hospitals, maternity homes and clinics;
- (c) that he is forced to live in locations, bazaars, hovels and sheds;
- (d) that he is forced to carry passes and cannot move freely;
- (e) that the system of taxation is unjustly applied against him; and
- (f) that he is not allowed to form Trade Unions."

Clause XII, which links up with the programme, is quoted in full:

"In view of the fact that all the above disabilities, economic, educational, social and cultural, all flow from the lack of political rights, the struggle for full democratic rights must become the pivotal point of our struggle for freedom. But while recognising that our struggle is chiefly a political struggle, we must not neglect any other form of struggle so long as it serves the cause of Liberation. Thus it is the duty of every organisation in the Unity Movement to unfold to the people the meaning of the following programme, a programme not for bargaining but representing the minimum demands and fundamental needs of all sections of the people.

Programme

"The aim of the Non-European Unity Movement is the liquidation of the national oppression of the Non-Europeans in South Africa, that is, the removal of all the disabilities and the restrictions based on grounds of race and colour, and the acqui-

sition by the Non-Europeans of all those rights which are at present enjoyed by the European population.

"Unlike other forms of past society based on slavery and serfdom, democracy is the rule of the people by the people, for the people. But, as long as a section of the people are enslaved there can be no democracy, and without democracy there can be no justice. We Non-Europeans are demanding only those rights for which the Europeans were fighting more than a hundred years.

"These democratic demands are contained in the following Ten Points: . . ." The draft declaration of Unity then quotes in full the proposed Ten Point Programme and the official explanatory notes. As the Programme is readily available in many editions we do not quote it. As is well known the Programme embodies the demand for the full and equal franchise; for compulsory free and equal education; for the inviolability of one's person, home and privacy; for freedom of speech, press and association; for freedom of movement and occupation; for the full equality of all citizens without regard to race, colour or sex; deals with the land question; with the revising of the civil and criminal legal systems; calls for a new equitable non-discriminatory system of taxation and, finally, calls for the revision of all industrial laws.

Minimum demands

Thus the Preliminary Unity Conference laid down the basis for uniting the whole oppressed populace, rural toilers and urban workers, professional men and small farmers, men and women, African, Coloured and Indian by formulating the minimum demands that they had to achieve in order to become equal citizens in the land of their birth. And it was at the same time the means of achieving unity, for by accepting these demands for himself and for all, or for themselves and for all, each person or group was uniting with all others.

The programme was a minimum below which no person or organisation could go and was a common programme and thus eliminated the possibility of any section using it for bargaining for sectional ends — an important consideration in the light of the history of sectionalism that preceded 1943.

Thus the Conference proposed a Charter of Liberty for the oppressed and exploited masses of South Africa. The Anti-C.A.D. Movement at its second conference in January 1944 accepted the Ten-Point Programme as the Programme of the Anti-C.A.D. Movement and at its Conference (December 1944) the A.A.C. adopted it as its Programme.

Principled vs. Utility Unity

That this programme is a *minimum* which is *not negotiable* is what is meant by principled unity

as distinct from utility unity, where one section draws in other sections on an *ad hoc* basis to achieve a particular end, such as a modification of the Pegging Act or the repeal of certain discriminatory laws.

This idea of a minimum programme meant necessarily also the rejection of collaboration or the working of the instruments specially created for the oppression of the people. If one demanded the full franchise as a minimum one could not accept participating (either as a voter or as a candidate) in an election for a Native Representative Council, Coloured Representative Council or for an Indian Representative Council, nor could one take part in elections for Native Reps., Coloured Reps. or Indian Reps. — "A programme *not* for bargaining but for representing the minimum demands and fundamental needs of all sections of the people" necessarily made it, therefore, a non-collaborationist programme. And, as the second Anti-C.A.D. Conference pointed out; there was a direct connection between the Federal form of the Movement and its minimum programme. "One more condition is indispensable for the successful rallying of the people around the 10-point Programme, namely, that the federal character of our Movement shall be retained. The 2nd National Conference fully realised this most important principle of the Movement and decided accordingly. In our Movement there has been, and must continue to be, a place for every person and organisation willing to fight shoulder to shoulder with us. No matter to what political party a man belongs, no matter whether he is a Christian, Mohammedan or Freethinker, there is a place for him in our Movement because we all suffer alike from National oppression. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the leadership to see that the all-embracing nature of the Movement is preserved. It is all too obvious that neither of the political groups that have sought and are still seeking to dominate and devour the Anti C.A.D. Movement, could by any stretch of the imagination claim to represent the whole of the people. It is just as obvious to all except these little groups themselves that if either of them gained control it would be the death of the Movement, and the Anti-C.A.D. would follow the previous political efforts into the graveyard of lost causes. Our 10-point Programme is a Charter of Liberty for all oppressed people, and so it is the task of the leadership to see that the Movement embraces all oppressed people." (Bulletin No. 31, 2 February 1944.)

A New Political Outlook

What was involved, then, in working out this basis for the unity of the oppressed people was a new political outlook based on an aggressive assertion of equality, grounded in an awareness of the interests of the oppressed and exploited people as opposed to the interests of their rulers and committed to a broad and popular struggle to achieve "the dignity of a life as a full member of human society, as a full citizen of the country" pointing the way to a life "where a man may find the fullest development of his personality and may contribute to the best of his ability for the good of all." (Bulletin 31, 2/2/44.)

This new outlook reflected the remarkable growth, the tremendous leap forward that had taken place in the last three quarters of 1943. However, in a federal movement it is likely to be the most advanced layers who will attend conferences and help to constitute the leadership and so it can be accepted that those who met in Bloemfontein in the historic founding conference of the Unity Movement represented the political *avant-garde* of the oppressed people and that they still had very many obstacles to overcome before they could rightfully claim the full support of the masses. They had ranged against them a mighty array of forces. Naturally they had opposed to them the full resources of the ruling class, from the coercive might of the State via the sly manoeuvres of the liberal politicians to the insidious influence of the ruling class press, including the especially slimy section then still calling itself the "Bantu Press". No less dangerous were the forces that, nominally at any rate, were working from within the ranks of the oppressed: the unholy alliance of the trinity comprising the merchant class wing of the Indian community, the Communist Party of South Africa and the A.N.C. leadership, committed to collaboration and that form of racial sectarianism which it pleased to call African Nationalism.

It is to an examination of the struggle of the infant Unity Movement against this alliance that we shall now turn, and we shall begin with an examination of the nature, origins, role, function and influence of the A.N.C. Youth League, the nursery which produced Anton Lembede (regarded by the P.A.C. as their spiritual father), Robert Sobukwe (who split the A.N.C. into two sections by forming the P.A.C.), Nelson Mandela (regarded by many as the leader of the A.N.C.), Oliver Tambo (official leader of the A.N.C. in Exile) and Letlaka (at present in the Matanzima cabinet).

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XI)

The Youth League: Myth and Fact

The decision to establish the African National Congress Youth League in 1942 was, as was openly stated by the Youth Leaguers at the time, an attempt to give body and substance to the A.N.C. It is to be seen, therefore, against the background of the campaign (begun early in 1937) to raise the A.N.C. from the dead, to create a rival to the All African Convention. This was especially necessary, as the popular current of opposition to the Hertzog Acts, out of which Convention was born, could not be totally tamed and Convention's federal character, with the emphasis on local organisations and leaders, did not lend itself to manipulation from the centre as easily as did an organisation with the structure of a political party, as Congress was. This campaign was begun as early as 1937 and was intensified as the collaborationist clique of "Members of the Native Representative Council" and supporters of "Native Representation" needed organisational cover to do their dirty work. The A.N.C. was revived and organised as the party of collaboration.

It is a matter of history that the newly formed A.N.C. did not really survive the devastation of the liberal-sponsored 1913 Land Act. Its remnants were totally eclipsed by the dynamic, if short-lived, I.C.U. By the time of the birth of Convention it survived mainly as a memory, a memory that was close to the hearts of the liberal-sponsored sectarian leaders that formed the African sector of the Joint Councils and especially close to the hearts of the liberals themselves. Throughout the twenties and thirties, through their "Native Press" especially, they kept the name of the Congress alive and the names of its leaders in the public mind.

Reviving the Congress

It is significant that it was the Rev. A. J. Calata of Cradock who was the prime mover in the representative Council (M.R.C.'s) such as R. G. Baloyi and Thomas Mapikela. Calata permitted the communist J. B. Marks to attend this meeting and to work for the resuscitation of the A.N.C., which he reported to be "literally dead". Marks worked very hard to revive the A.N.C., touring the Transvaal and Free State to report to the people that "the A.N.C. had come back to them". He toured as the secretary of R. G. Baloyi, M.R.C. Clearly what held this group together, consisting as it did of the most conservative and reactionary leaders on the one hand and the members and supporters of the Communist Party on the other, was the common policy of working "Native Representation". Collaboration was the basis of the collaboration between Marks and Calata. Naturally, R. V. Seloape Thema, editor of the Chamber-of-Mines-owned *Bantu World*, was a member of this group and "his" paper gave full support to the work of resuscitating the A.N.C.

The general condition of Congress may be gleaned from the state of its strongest sector by

suscitation of Congress. This conservative and reactionary was wedded to the Joint Council Movement and was a great admirer of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides movements. He was rabidly anti-communist and would not permit Moses Kotane of the Communist Party to hold office in the Cape A.N.C. He worked closely with the Ballingers and Donald Molteno.

Calata travelled to Bloemfontein, Johannesburg and Pretoria "mainly on his own meagre resources but with occasional assistance from local Africans and White friends" to advocate the resuscitation of Congress.

The meeting, held on the Reef in 1937, where it was formally decided to resuscitate Congress was dominated by the members of the Native Repre-

far, Calata's Cape A.N.C. It reported in 1938 that the annual income for that year was £13-11s.-3d., of which 15 shillings came from members. Most of the rest was donations from "sympathetic whites". The minute of that year records applause at the promise by one of the Native Reps in the Senate that he would contribute £5 annually to Congress.

The Xuma period

Calata wanted Dr. A. B. Xuma, an American-trained medical practitioner, to head the resuscitated Congress, but since Xuma was away in England Calata proposed for the interim the Rev. Z. R. Mahabane, Vice-President of the A.A.C. In December 1940, however, Xuma was back and was duly elected. At that time there were 41 delegates at the annual congress and the organisation had no money at all. In fact, in October of that year Calata, writing to A. W. G. Champion of Natal, reported that the A.N.C. was, "an organisation which depends upon white donations for finances".

It was under Dr. Xuma that Congress was reorganised. He prepared a new constitution which made the provincial congresses subservient to the National Congress and instituted regular Executive Meetings. Undoubtedly he overhauled the machinery of Congress and made it run efficiently, but for all his organising skills Congress remained a small organisation without public support, although, of course, the A.N.C. leadership made extravagant claims.

The numbers game

In May 1939, when the A.N.C. and the Advisory Boards went on a Joint deputation to the Minister of Native Affairs, Calata claimed in answer to a question from the Minister that the A.N.C. had a membership of 4 000. However, in December 1941 Calata complained that none of the provincial congresses had furnished him with reports on membership and finances and estimated the membership at 200. This did not stop the 1942 Conference from authorising Xuma to campaign for a membership of 1 600 000! In 1945 the A.N.C. claimed 4 176 members, nearly half of whom were in the O.F.S. In 1947 the A.N.C. claimed a membership of 7 000 but the Conference records of 1949 disclosed a claimed membership of 2 755; there were actually 101 delegates at the Conference and it had £49 in the bank. This sum tends to throw some doubt on the size of even the claimed membership.

Although the A.N.C. did not have much public support, it did have support of an interesting kind. It was always blessed with donations. In the financial year 1945 to '46 it had an income from membership dues of £132 but donations from unnamed sources of £283. It is known that Xuma "also sought white financial support", at one point receiving R2 000 from the liberal-controlled Donaldson Trust Fund and undisclosed sums of money from the Chamber of Mines. There were suggestions in the late forties that unaccounted financial aid was given to the A.N.C. by the Indian Merchant class and the Communist Party.

"Attracting the graduates"

It was against this background of an inability to rally public support that the idea was conceived of establishing a Youth League that would ultimately give substance to the A.N.C. This idea we can trace to Calata's insistence that something should be done "to attract the graduates" to Congress.

There is a great deal of mythology that has come to be associated with the birth of the A.N.C. Youth League. One of the myths is the claim that it was a group of young people who decided to form the Youth League. In fact, the Congress old guard had

taken the decision to launch the Youth League and, in 1943, they amended the A.N.C. constitution to make provision for the establishment of the Youth League.

The factors that weighed with them in taking this decision were pretty clear. The A.N.C. was not growing, while in 1943 the A.A.C. showed unmistakable signs of revival and growth in popularity. There was now a real danger that the small A.N.C. would again be eclipsed. Calata gave the game away when he convened the A.N.C. 1943 Conference for the day before the A.A.C. 1943 Conference so as to prevent, he said, "other organisations from stepping into our shoes". In 1943 the idea of the unity of all the oppressed and exploited people in South Africa had wide and popular support and Congress, intensely sectarian and incurably hostile to Non-European Unity, had to develop an answer to the popular demand for unity. It opposed Non-European Unity with African Nationalism, or Africanism as some of its adherents preferred to call it, which meant that Africans had to unite as Africans. They even argued that because Convention had become part of the Unity Movement it had thereby forfeited its claim to be the mouthpiece of the African people.

The old guard prevailed upon some younger men to take the initiative in getting the Youth League going, but only after they had prepared the ground. One of the young men recruited by Dr. Seme was his articled clerk (and later partner) Anton Lembede, who became the leading theoretician and first president of the A.N.C. Youth League. But it was not only the old guard that had done the preparatory work.

Once again: Ballinger

The immediate origins of the A.N.C. Youth League are to be found in a group of about 8 to 10 who met in the offices of William Ballinger — the same who had come to organise the I.C.U. (out of existence as it turned out) and who was in close touch with Calata, Seme and the rest of the A.N.C. old guard. Prominent in this group were people like Oliver Tambo and J. C. (Congress) Mbata. At their second meeting in Ballinger's office they formulated a manifesto which declared that African Nationalism was the force that would lead to liberation.

The Ballinger group then turned its attention to recruiting more members and to "soak them in our Nationalistic outlook" (as A. P. Mda once put it) in preparation for the launching of the Youth League in the Transvaal. Groups met in the Domestic and Cultural Workers' Club Hall where Peter Ramboroko was the leading light, in the offices of Dr. Seme where A. P. Mda, Anton Lembede and Ngubane were the leaders, in the offices

of the A.N.C. and of Walter Sisulu where he was the guiding spirit.

St. Peter's

An important influence in the formative period of the Youth League was that of the "Black Bishops" — the top Anglican school for Africans in Johannesburg, St. Peter's. The overwhelming majority of the early Youth League were all St. Peter's Old Boys and this liberal institution had profoundly influenced their outlook.

The A.N.C. Youth League was formally inaugurated by a Conference in the Bantu Men's Social Centre in Johannesburg in September 1944. Speakers at this Conference included Dr. Xuma, Seloape Thema, Rev. Z. R. Mahabane and younger speakers like Bopape, Tambo, Nhlapo. Anton Lembede was elected president and Nelson Mandela, a Wits Law Student, secretary. Elected to the Executive were Mda, Sisulu, Tambo, Bopape, Masekela, Matseepe Mbobo, Mokoena and Nxumalo.

Lembede: a muddleheaded reactionary

Anton Lembede obtained the B.A. and LL.B. degrees. He was a devout Catholic and also obtained an M.A. for a thesis on the Idea of God as reflected in the writings of various philosophers.

He is regarded as the theoretician of the A.N.C. ideology of Nationalism and although he died in 1947, at a very early age, his ideas have continued to influence the A.N.C. Even the P.A.C., which later split from the A.N.C., regarded itself as being in the true tradition of Lembede. A dubious heritage in both cases. It will probably come as a shock to some and an acute embarrassment to others — the myth makers — to learn or to be reminded that Lembede formulated the "Creed of African Nationalism" as follows:

- (a) We believe in the divine destiny of nations.
- (b) The goal of all our struggles is Africanism and our motto is "Africa's Cause must triumph".
- (c) We believe that the national liberation of Africans will be achieved by Africans themselves. We reject foreign leadership of Africa.
- (d) We may borrow useful ideologies from foreign ideologies, but we reject the wholesale importation of foreign ideologies into Africa.
- (e) We believe that leadership must be the personification and symbol of popular aspirations and ideals.
- (f) We believe that practical leadership must be given to capable men, whatever their status in society.
- (g) We believe in the scientific approach to all

African problems.

- (h) We combat moral disintegration among Africans by maintaining and upholding high ethical standards ourselves.
- (i) We believe in the unity of all Africans from the Mediterranean Sea in the North to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the South . . . and that Africans must speak with one voice."

On another occasion he formulated (if that is the right word) it in the following reactionary and mystical terms: "A new spirit of African Nationalism, or Africanism, is pervading through and stirring the African society. A young virile nation is in the process of birth and emergence. The national movement imbued with and animated by the national spirit is gaining strength and momentum . . . African nationalism is based on the following cardinal principles:

1. Africa is a blackman's country.
2. Africans are one.
3. The leader of the Africans will come out of their own loins.
4. Co-operation between Africans and other Non-Europeans on common problems and issues may be highly desirable. But this occasional co-operation can only take place between Africans as a single unit and other Non-European groups as separate units. *Non-European unity is a fantastic dream which has no foundation in reality.* (My emphasis.)
5. The divine destiny of the African people is National Freedom.
6. Africans must aim at balanced progress or advancement.
7. After national freedom, then socialism.

Africans are naturally socialistic as illustrated in their social practices and customs. Our immediate task, however, is not socialism but national liberation."

Lembede also made an 'analysis' (to use, undeservedly, a polite word) of what he termed "the forces of struggle for African freedom":

- (a) *Africans.* They are the greatest single group in South Africa and they are the key to the movement for democracy in Africa, not only because Africa is their only motherland, but also because by bringing their organised numbers to bear on the national struggle, they can alter the basic position of the fight for a democratic South Africa. The only driving force that can give the black masses the self-confidence and dynamism to make a successful struggle is the creed of African Nationalism . . .
- (b) *Europeans.* The majority of Europeans share the spoils of white domination in this coun-

try. They have a vested interest in the exploitative caste society of South Africa. A few of them love Justice and condemn racial oppression but their voice is negligible, and in the last analysis counts for nothing . . .

- (c) *Indians*. Although like the Africans the Indians are oppressed as a group, yet they differ from the Africans in their historical and cultural background. They have their mother country, India, but thousands of them made South Africa and Africa their home. They, however, did not come as conquerors and exploiters but as the exploited. As long as they do not undermine or impede our liberation struggle we should not regard them as intruders or enemies.
- (d) *Coloureds*. Like Indians they differ from the Africans, they are a distinct group, suffering group oppression, but their oppression differs in degree from that of the Africans. The Coloureds have no motherland to look up to, and but for historic accidents they might be nearer to the Africans than are the Indians, seeing they descend in part at least from the aboriginal Hottentots who with Africans and Bushmen are original children of Black Africa. Coloureds, like the Indians, will never win their national freedom unless they organise a Coloured Peoples National Organisation to lead in the struggle for the National Freedom of the Coloureds. The National Organisations of the Africans, Coloureds and Indians may co-operate on common issues.

"The above summary on racial groups supports our contention that South Africa is a country of four chief nationalities, three of which (the Europeans, Indians and Coloureds) are minorities, and three of which (the Africans, Coloureds and Indians) suffer national oppression."

His master's ravings

According to A. P. Mda, Lembede was proficient

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XII)

The desire for unity was so deep and so strong amongst the oppressed and exploited that even the die-hard sectionalists of the revived ANC could not just turn their backs on unity and be done with it. Almost continuously throughout the 1940's the ANC engaged the AAC in 'unity' talks despite the fact that the Youth League, which provided the real body of the revived ANC, was being reared on a segregatory African Nationalism which held, in Lembede's words, that "Non-European unity is a fantastic dream which has no foundation in reality".

Of course, the 'unity' that was being proposed to the AAC by the ANC was a calculated manoeuvre. By calling for unity with the AAC it sought to make the mass of the people believe that it was for unity of all the oppressed people, while in fact it restricted itself to a unity of Africans only. Thus, while during

in Afrikaans and studied Verwoerd's articles in the *Transvaler* assiduously. Clearly, Verwoerd was his teacher and he repeated his Master's thesis virtually word for word.

It is against this background that we must view the Colour bar in the A.N.C. membership, and in the Youth League constitution. Membership was open only to all African men and women between the ages of 12 and 40 but permitted young members of other sections of the community who *reportedly lived like and with Africans* (my emphasis) and whose general outlook on life was similar to that of Africans also to become full members!

It is not only in this racial view of South Africa that Lembede, and through him the Youth League, were influenced by the Afrikaner ideologies. In an *Inkundla* article shortly before his death Lembede writes: "African Nationalism is to be pursued with the fanaticism and bigotry of religion."

A colleague of his in an address at Fort Hare some two years later expressed his admiration in these terms:

"I said last year that Fort Hare must be to the African what Stellenbosch is to the Afrikaner. It must be the barometer of African thought. It is interesting to note that the theory of 'Apartheid' which is today the dominating ideology of the State was worked out at Stellenbosch by Eiselen and his colleagues. That same Eiselen is Secretary for Native Affairs. But the important thing is that Stellenbosch is not only the expression of Afrikaner thought and feeling but it is also the embodiment of their aspirations. So also must Fort Hare express and lead African thought."

The pernicious idea of a "Black Campus" appears to have a longer genealogy than some of its present adherents realise.

J. Congress Mbatha recalls that the Youth Leaguers regarded themselves not only as "the backroom boys of the A.N.C." "but as a group comparable to the Broederbond".

Indeed, they were Nationalists.

The Enemies of Principled Unity: The ANC and SAIC

the Xuma reign the ANC made virtually annual overtures to the AAC, it refused to be involved in even mere consultations on real Non-European unity. The approach is documented in the minutes of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) from its inception. In December 1945, for example,

the Joint Secretaries of the NEUM report: "Immediately after the conclusion of Conference (that is, the 3rd Unity Conference, 4 and 5 January 1945 — S.M.), our Chairman, the Rev. Mahabane, went to Johannesburg to interview Dr. A. B. Xuma, the President-General of Congress, but the latter declined to meet our Chairman. The secretariat then sent the Resolution (see later — S.M.) to Dr. Xuma by registered post on 1st February, to which we received a formal acknowledgement dated 1st March. (The Resolution here referred to is that passed by the 3rd Unity Conference directing the incoming committee "to open negotiations personally as well as by letter with the African National Congress with a view to drawing them into the Unity Movement on the basis of the Ten-Point Programme". — S.M.). We wrote to Dr. Xuma again (May 17) . . . and pointed out the urgency of the situation. We also appealed to the President to use his influence to draw Congress into the Unity Movement . . . We wrote in similar strain to the Secretary of Congress. No replies were received to these letters. On instructions from our Chairman we invited both the President and the Secretary to attend the Executive meeting held in Johannesburg in July, but the reply was that as they were not members of the Executive they could not attend. At the Executive meeting the whole matter was discussed and it was resolved that a further effort should be made, so a committee was appointed to seek an interview with Dr. Xuma. But once again the President refused to discuss unity with us . . . We again invited Congress to attend this Conference."

Again the following year the Joint Secretaries report: "Soon after the last Conference we wrote to the National Secretary of the A.N.C. We received no reply to this letter. We again invited them to the Executive meeting . . . and to this Conference. These communications were made by registered post."

Collaboration vs. non-collaboration

There was, of course, more craft to the annual invitation from the ANC to the AAC than creating a smokescreen over the question of unity. The proposals for unity were always of such a nature as to attempt to manoeuvre the Convention out of existence or away from its path of boycott and non-collaboration. There was, for example, the proposal that the AAC should be a "national consultative body" while the ANC should be the "national political mouthpiece of the African people"; there was also the proposal that the two organizations should merge and become the 'All African National Congress' which would be "a unitary form of organization with federal features". The real meaning of

this proposal is apparent from the following extract from the minute: "Messrs. A. P. Mda, Dr. Xuma and Moses Kotane stated that Congress had intended the resolution to mean unitary organizations. It meant that other organizations were to be invited to disband themselves and join the unitary organization." (Minutes of Joint Meeting of the National Executive Committees of the ANC and the AAC April 17-18 1949. Signed by C. M. Kobus Recording Secretary.)

Proposing a basis

At this meeting Convention spokesmen proposed the following basis for unity between the AAC and the ANC:

1. A demand for full citizenship rights for all.
2. A rejection of an inferior status as expressed in the segregated and inferior political institutions created for a so-called child race and for the perpetuation of white domination, namely the Native Representative Council, the Bhunga, Location Advisory Boards and any other institution of a similar nature which may be created to substitute, supplement or strengthen existing institutions.
3. The acceptance of non-collaboration, that is, the rejection of the NRC, Bhunga, Local Advisory Boards, The Natives Representation Act, etc.

Uniting 'as a race'

R. V. Selope Thema, MRC, speaking for the ANC, is reported as follows on unity: "With regard to unity Mr. Thema said that if by unity we meant the unity of all the oppressed, then we might as well go home. They regarded the unity of the African people as of primary importance. Charity began at home. They, the Africans, wanted to unite in their economic and social life, and therefore they had to unite as a race. We had a purpose to fulfil as a united African race. Our aims might be opposed to those of other people, it did not matter. We should follow the law of self-preservation. We should love each other first before we loved other people."

Present at this meeting and supporting this attitude towards unity were other ANC spokesmen such as Dr. A. B. Xuma, J. B. Marks, A. P. Mda, G. Makabeni, L. S. Phillips, O. R. Tambo, Prof. Z. K. Mathews, Moses Kotane, K. Ntlabati and J. Malangabi. Indeed there was remarkable cohesion between the attitudes of open collaborators, alleged militant African Nationalists from the Youth League Nursery and also members of the Communist Party on the question of non-collaboration as defined in the Convention proposal. Thus Con-

gressives identified with the CP argued, for example, that it would be wrong to stigmatise as collaborators those who did not agree with non-collaboration at that stage. Again and again the lie was peddled that "the people were not ready" and it was claimed that Unity should not break on the acceptance or non-acceptance of non-collaboration. The young sophists of the Youth League equivocated and rationalised as follows: "There was much weight in what Convention said on non-collaboration. There was also much weight in what Congress said. In time we shall all be forced to accept Non-collaboration. The discussion should boil down to whether Congress was prepared to accept Boycott as long term policy." And so on, about it and about it.

Anything, everything but the boycott

In 1946 the African National Congress had resolved to boycott the NRC and Advisory Boards. In 1947 there was a slight change in the attitude of Congress. They advocated the election of 'Boycott Candidates'. They felt that the time was not ripe and that the present instruments should be used to further the boycott weapon. They said that "We should decide whether we were going to accept boycott or not, and when we were going to apply it. Some thought we should boycott now, others thought we could use these institutions to teach the people boycott. Not sufficient work had been done to educate the masses. The boycott weapon should be accepted in principle." There was no limit to the ducking and weaving, the rationalisation, sophistry and sheer dishonesty. For example, Mr. L. K. Ndabati said that there should be agreement on the principle of non-collaboration, "but if we found that it would serve our purpose to contest seats in these government institutions, we should not be called collaborators". And Mr. Thema said that unity would be destroyed by non-collaboration as a basis. "We should merely agree on the principle of unity, i.e. non-co-operation with the authorities and not mention the institutions to be boycotted." Anything, everything — but not boycott!

Bogus unity

The ANC struggle against the Unity of all the oppressed and exploited and against non-collaboration — all in the name of unity — did not remain at the level of actively trying to subvert the Convention while remaining ostensibly aloof from the movement which strove to establish the unity of the oppressed and exploited on the basis of a programme and principles. It widened into actively sponsoring and founding rival 'unity' movements. In these bogus Unity Movements it had the co-operation of the various Indian Congresses and, by

way of background to the Bogus Unities, we examine the relations between the Indian Congresses and the movement for unity.

The rôle of the SAIC

In the year of unity, 1943, the South African Indian Congress, at its Sixteenth Session at the Gandhi Hall, Fox Street, Johannesburg on 28 June, passed the following resolution: *Co-operation with Non-European Organisations* "This Conference resolves that the time has arrived for this Congress and its affiliated bodies (that is, The Natal, Transvaal and Cape Indian Congresses — S.M.) as representing the Indian Community of South Africa to co-operate on such specific questions which the Executive of the South African Indian Congress or its affiliated bodies may deem fit and proper with representative non-European organizations with the object of safeguarding and promoting the Political, Economical and Educational interests of the non-European peoples of South Africa." The resolution had been proposed by Ahmad A. Ismail, President of the Cape Congress and seconded by Mr. A. I. Kajeje, leader of the Natal Congress.

The South African Indian Congress responded to the 'Clarion Call', a Call to Unity, but although expected did not attend the pre-unity Convention conference in December 1943 nor did it attend the Preliminary Unity Conference, although again expected.

However, as the minutes record: 'Indian delegation: the Secretary of the South African Indian Congress sent a telegram expressing regret that their elected delegates were unable to attend as they were unavoidably engaged in matters arising out of the Pegging Act. They were, however, in wholehearted agreement with the Unity Movement.'

The wholehearted agreement probably reflected the sentiments of the mass of poor oppressed Indians but, as subsequent events showed, it certainly did not reflect the attitude of the leadership of the Indian Congresses drawn, as it then was, from the intensely sectarian merchant classes.

At the time, however, the attitude of the SAIC was taken at face value and provision was made for the SAIC and its representatives in the organisational structure and official positions of the NEUM. The SAIC were fully informed of the proceedings of the Bloemfontein Conference and they were called upon to take up their positions in the Unity Movement. This they did not do.

After protracted efforts by the Joint Secretaries, the President Prof. Jabavu and the Cape members of the Head Unity Committee, a Conference of Representatives of the All African Convention, the National Anti-CAD Movement and the South

African Indian Congress was held on 8 July at Kholvad House, Market Street, Johannesburg. This conference has become known as the 2nd Unity Conference.

Professor D. D. T. Jabavu was in the chair and the AAC was represented by Messrs. S. A. Jayiya, I. B. Tabata, T. I. N. Sondlo, W. M. Tsotsi and D. Koza while the S.A. Indian Congress was represented by Adv. J. W. Godfrey, Messrs. M. Jajbhay, W. S. Seethal, A. I. Kajee, K. Thambi, K. Coovadia, M. Abed and A. Chowdree. Dr. G. H. Gool, Mrs. Z. Gool, Messrs. E. C. Roberts, B. M. Kies, E. Marthinus and E. Ramsdale comprised the National Anti-CAD delegation.

In his opening remarks on behalf of the SAIC Advocate Godfrey sounded a familiar note. He said "that they felt that there was a need for internal unity in the different groups as a first step and thereafter to explore the possibility of finding common points of contact on which a common platform could be based". Which was almost word for word the argument of the sectionalists in the ANC, for example. "Co-operation between Africans and other Non-Europeans on common problems and issues may be highly desirable. But this occasional co-operation can only take place between Africans as a single unit and other Non-European groups as separate units . . ." Lembede argued.

'Not ready'

The type of utility unity desired by the SAIC was elaborated on by Kajee, who unashamedly stated their position: "Dealing with the 10-Point Programme he said that it could rightly be described as a 'Charter for the Rights of Man', but the Indian Community was not as yet ready for it. He described the programme as an ideal worth striving for, but if it was taken to his Congress as it stood it would be rejected, for the reason that the SAIC was committed to the principle of compromise. He feared that the Indians would stand to lose if they adopted a programme which did not give expression to this principle (that is, the principle of compromise).

"He said that the Indians were prepared for a broad basis of unity and to give effect to this he suggested the establishment of a co-ordinating committee. This committee would not have a definite programme but should co-operate on issues affecting each individual group as they arise . . . On Point 1 (dealing with the franchise) Mr. Kajee stated that as the Indian Congress stands by the policy of compromise, they could not commit themselves on this point. He stated that in their negotiations with the Judicial Commission now sitting in Natal, they had accepted the principle of a 'Communal' vote based on educational and property qualifications.

They had accepted this, he stated, in order to appease European public opinion which feared the Indians on the ground that they (the Indians) wish to swamp the Europeans and concentrate political power in their own hands.

"The Chairman asked Mr. Kajee whether they would accept the equal franchise as an ultimate ideal, to which Mr. Kajee replied in the negative . . ." (Proceedings of 2nd Unity Conference pages 3 to 4).

Kajee made it clear that the Merchant class leadership had no interest in building a movement for liberation from economic exploitation and political domination. They wanted a loose 'unity' that could be manipulated to improve their bargaining position in various negotiations with the ruling class. What mattered to them was their trading rights and they would make any compromise (read sell-out) to secure these. Thus they were quite prepared to sell out the franchise rights of all the oppressed, including the vast majority of the Indian people, in order to secure the trading rights of the few merchants.

The SAIC delegation arrogantly stuck to their position and after he declared that they found the position of the AAC and the Anti-CAD (that is, their insistence on the 10-Point Programme as a minimum) 'unacceptable' Chowdree offered "moral and financial support". "Mr. Kajee said that a basic difference existed. They (the Indians) do believe in compromise and gradualness and have been working at it for years and they were not going to change. If they were thrown out and others took power — men who believe as Mr. Kies and Mr. Tabata do, they may share the other groups' ideals, but until then they (Mr. Kajee's group) were there, entrenched and they were not changing." (Proceedings of 2nd Unity Conference page 6.)

The SAIC remained out of the Unity Movement, but inside the Indian sector and inside the SAIC there was growing discontent against the Kajee-Godfrey leadership. The mass of the Indian poor stood for unity with their fellow oppressed.

The Anti-Segregation Council

The pro-Unity group in Natal formed the Anti-Segregation Council and campaigned vigorously against the merchant class leadership on the basis of Non-European Unity, the 10-Point Programme and the policy of Non-Collaboration. Indeed, at the 3rd Unity Conference, held on 4 and 5 January 1945, the Anti-Segregation Council was represented.

Later that year, in fact in October, the Anti-Segregation Council led by Dr. Naicker was swept into power in the Natal Indian Congress. In the Transvaal the 'National Bloc' led by Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, a popular Medical Practitioner and member of the Communist Party, ousted the old leadership and the combination of Dadoo and Naicker thus controlled the South African Indian Congress.

The young progressives had sacked the old Kaeje leadership but, despite the policies espoused in the

Anti-Segregation Council days, remained outside of the Unity Movement; in fact, went into open opposition to the NEUM and helped to launch what has become known as Bogus unities. Which brings us to an examination of the rôle of the Communist Party of South Africa in the political struggles of the nationally oppressed and economically exploited people of South Africa and especially of their frenetic opposition to the indigenous national liberatory movement.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XIII)

Class and Colour: What the C. P. never Understood From Aristocratic Rules to Opportunistic Activism

The Communist Party of South Africa was born out of the ranks of the white workers and for some years was an all-white party. This fact is highlighted rather than contradicted by the solitary presence of T. W. Thibedi who had been recruited by S. P. Bunting's Independent Socialist League and who had accompanied the League in its merger with one or two other small groups to form the Communist Party of South Africa in about June 1921.

To understand how the Communist Party was marked by birth it is necessary to take a closer look at the position of the white workers in the South African set-up.

White Workers: Aristocrats of Labour

The story of the white aristocrats of labour, like so much else of South African history, begins with the mining revolution. In addition to its insatiable appetite for cheap labour, the mining colossus also needed skilled labour. It satisfied its enormous appetite for cheap labour by sucking increasing numbers of the dispossessed indigenous tribalists into its works and compounds but its need for skilled labour it met, initially, by importing mainly English coal miners. This imported skilled labour was naturally expensive because it was relatively scarce. These workers, in order to keep their wages high, wished to keep their skills limited to a few. To this end they used craft unions on the British pattern, the admission to which they could control and which was, in the case of mining, restricted to 'white' workers. However, the black workers actually engaged in mining necessarily acquired these. This spread of skills undermined the monopolistic power of the craft unions, and the 'white' 'skilled' workers were now forced to maintain their privileged position through negotiation and co-operation with the Chamber of Mines. The Chamber of Mines and the white workers agreed on an arrangement whereby there would be a fixed proportion of white to black workers, whereby certain categories of jobs would be reserved for

white workers (these jobs were called skilled while those done by black workers were classified as unskilled no matter what amount of real skill they required) and whereby the wages of white workers would always exceed a certain minimum.

Of course, more than immediate and direct economic considerations were involved. Especially after Union, but already essentially before it,¹ the special privileged position of the white worker in his job was a *political* matter. He was a citizen in a political dispensation where colour was the qualification for citizenship, where one had to be 'of European descent' to qualify for the franchise. By being white he was part of the ruling group and as a *consequence* of his political aristocracy he became also an aristocrat of labour. The Chamber of Mines was prepared to pay the price which was the necessary result of the political system whereby a permanent supply of cheap labour would be ensured. But because the Chamber was essentially a huge capitalist enterprise whose whole purpose for existence was the production of profit, it sought *always* to keep this price as low as possible in order to keep profits as high as possible. Thus it constantly sought to increase the number of black (and, therefore, cheap) workers compared to white and to increase the number of operations that the cheap labour force was permitted to do. The white workers, on the other hand, fought bitterly to maintain the colour bar on the mines, that is, to retain

1 As early as 1893 Blasting was reserved for persons of European descent. The first Union was formed in 1892.

the operations that were reserved for white labour only, and the proportion of white workers to black.

What was at issue between mine owners and white workers was not the question as to whether there should be a privileged position for white workers. The mine owners accepted this as a political necessity, their allies in rule had to enjoy a certain status, while the white workers, benefiting from their position, saw it as an inalienable right. What was at issue was the *extent* of the privileges, and over this mine boss and white worker fought and fought bitterly.

Two further points have a bearing on this matter. As Lord Olivier (*The Anatomy of African Misery*, 1927) put it:

'The high white wages, it is uncompromisingly recognised and stated, can only be paid on condition of Natives alone being employed for all unskilled and semi-skilled labour, and being paid at a sweated wage. The mining industry sets the standard of wages for all South African skilled labour and a ratio between white and black wages from over ten to one down to six to one runs through the whole structure of industry. (The ratio of the wage of skilled and unskilled labour in Britain averages fifteen to eleven.) This direct dependence of the white worker's very high wages (the highest in the world) upon the very low wages of the Native labourer is the secret of the philosophy of the industrial colour bar . . .' The position of privilege on the mines set the pattern for South Africa and so the struggle on the Witwatersrand on this matter had implications for the whole country. And what was involved in this privilege was not the usual difference between skilled and unskilled labour but was more in the nature of a subsidy paid to white worker out of the intense exploitation of the black workers.

Afrikaner Mine Workers

The fact that it was not a question of skilled or unskilled labour but of a colour bar is very clear if reference is made to the position of Afrikaner Mineworkers.

Before 1907 there were hardly any workers of Afrikaner descent on the mines. In that year the white 'immigrant, largely British workers' struck in protest against the proposal by mine-owners to permit African and Chinese 'indentured' workers to perform certain skilled operations. The strike was broken by the employment of unemployed Afrikaner workers from the rural areas who were then permitted to become 'skilled' workers. In fact, fifteen years later they constituted 2/3 of the skilled labour force on the mines. In 1907 they were unskilled in relation to African mine workers, yet

with the same rural background as the African miners the Afrikaner workers were permitted to enter the sacred portals of skilled labour while the African workers remained 'unskilled'. The fact that the Afrikaners could enter where Africans were kept out illustrates that the conflict was not between skilled and unskilled but was at root the question of status. The citizen worker could enter but the non-citizen worker had to be kept out.

The white miners struck in 1897, 1907, 1913, 1914 and again in 1922 'on each occasion advancing their privileged position against the mine-owners' attempts at introducing cheaper African labour. 1922 was the high-water mark in the making of a white labour aristocracy on the mines a bloody and protracted strike broke out on the Witwatersrand when the mine-owners tried to cut their costs by reducing the number of highly paid (white) workers and replacing some of them with Africans'. It is to be noted that the Chamber of Mines was not proposing the abolition of the privileged position of the white workers, merely increasing the ratio of black to white workers and the extension of the operations classified as unskilled.

The white workers resisted with all their might. The strike began on January 22nd 'and was only terminated in March after bloody clashes between the workers and Smuts' army. Military planes were used to bomb white working class residential areas in Benoni and Germiston; artillery, tanks and armoured cars were brought into action in addition to ground forces employing machine guns and rifles. A government inquiry reported the casualties as 153 killed and 687 injured, and 4 were executed.' (Webster, *Background to the Control and Supply of Labour in the Gold Mines*.)

A feature of the strike was the violence which the white strikers unleashed against the African miners. Regularly throughout the strike the 'struggle' repeatedly erupted in violent pogroms against them so much so that those who had not already been repatriated by the mine bosses demanded to be repatriated to escape the violence of the white workers. The ICU, the APO and the ANC organised protests against the violent and unprovoked attacks on the unarmed African miners.

The strike was crushed but in the 1924 General Election Smuts was defeated by a Nationalist and Labour Party Pact which wrote all the demands of the white mine workers into the law of the land and secured the industrial colour-bar throughout South Africa, so much so, that Lord Olivier could say in 1927 about the party of white labour: 'That Party is now firmly established as a section of the

European aristocracy of South Africa — combined with the mine-owner and the farmer in exploiting the native African on the basis of an industrial economy and a theory of industrial relations derived directly from slavery.'

The Communist Party and the Red Revolt

The infant Communist Party of South Africa, less than a year old when the strike erupted, joined the struggle with enthusiasm. At the beginning of the strike the white workers could be divided into three main streams:

1. The leadership drawn from the South African Industrial Federation which was the orthodox white Trade Union leadership. This was an English speaking group and was in the tradition of British reformist trade unions.
2. The Commandos. This was the Afrikaner mine workers organised along the traditional military lines of the Voortrekkers; and
3. The Council of Action which was a militant group of trade unionists who had been expelled from the Federation for wild cat strikes and excessive militancy.

The fledgling Communist Party had close connections with this group and became, as the strike developed, the dominant influence in this group which, at the height of the strike, had its headquarters at the offices of the Communist Party. A commentator certainly not hostile to the Communist Party reports:

'The "reformist" leadership of the Federation was swept aside at an early stage by the militant Council of Action and the Commandos who tended to coalesce both organisationally and ideologically as the strike proceeded. The Afrikaner strikers sang the "Red Flag" in English to the tune of the old republican "Volkslied" and the "Marxist Socialists" not to be outdone, refurbished an old May Day banner so that its slogan read, ironically enough "Workers of the World fight and unite for a White South Africa".'

'The sectionalist and what the Communist Party scribes have correctly if snidely referred to as the "petty reformist"-leaderships of the ANC and APO of that time had no difficulty at all in understanding that the "Red Revolt" of 1922 in defence of the industrial colour bar was directed against the oppressed workers while the "revolutionaries" of the CP blithely supported this "struggle" even though it repeatedly erupted in violent pogroms against African Mine-workers.'

In its defence one can argue that the CP was still an infant and impressed by the militancy of the workers without caring what they were militant about, that in the 1920's when the memory of

the Anglo-Boer war was still alive it was not only the CP that had illusions about the anti-imperialist character of Afrikaner nationalism, and that many of the Afrikaner mine workers were the impoverished victims of the 'British War', and in this way attempt to explain away its objective support for a vicious and reactionary colour Bar. It would, however, be more instructive and useful to attempt to understand how a party of people, probably in all sincerity and seriousness, committed to a revolutionary struggle against all forms of class discrimination and distinction and the establishment of a classless society could land themselves in a position where they supported, and in part led, a movement to entrench discrimination based on class and colour.

First of all there is the conception which the CP had of 'the working class' to whose interests they were supposed to be committed and whose cause they had to advance. Their conception of the working class was a mirror image of themselves and the group from which they sprang. Their image was very much the white members of the South African trade unions modelled on the British pattern.

It was certainly not the oppressed colonial non-citizens who in fact constituted the real mass of the working class. This real working class was, with the exception of a few CP members to whom we shall come presently, not inside their focus at all. In so far as they were concerned with them at all, the non-whites were part of a different question, 'the question of oppressed Nationalities, which question would be solved under the leadership of the working class' (which to them was white, though they might not have stated it openly and crudely).

The majority of the members of the CP never re-orientated themselves towards the Non-Europeans. Because class and colour were separate issues to them, their class analysis of South Africa did not take them outside the position of their (white) working class and outside the racialism of this group. They saw the white workers as the working class and supported their class struggles and ended up supporting a colour bar precisely because they failed to see the real South African context in which these 'class' struggles were taking place. They failed to see the relationship between colour and class in South Africa. If they had made the interests of the oppressed and exploited workers their touchstone and unconditional and immediate equality for the oppressed their point of departure they would have been able to transcend the limitations of their origins. Instead, for some years after 1922, the CP regularly applied to the Labour Party for affiliation and in the 1924 election declared its support for the (white) Labour Party, and for the Nationalist Labour Pact.

It is to be remembered that this Labour Party led by Cresswell had the most developed segregation policy of all white political parties at that time and that the Hertzog segregation policies owe their major inspiration to the segregation policies of their pact partner. This Labour Party stood for the repatriation of Indians, for development 'in their own areas' of 'the Natives' who would have no land rights in white areas. The spirit of this policy emerges from the following excerpt from its 1914 Manifesto:

'Nothing should be done to attract Coloured people to the Party at the expense of white ideals. We cannot shirk the responsibility which circumstances place on the white race in this country. The white population must at present, and for a long time to come, bear the responsibility of guiding the destinies of the country, and this responsibility will not be lessened by the indiscriminate admission of large numbers of Coloured people in all stages of civilization into our political institutions.' Predictably, the Labour Party wanted a law 'prescribing heavy penalties, without distinction of sex, for cohabitation of whites with Kafirs'.

A few members of the CP dissented from this line. The most notable dissident was S. P. Bunting who had broken from the Labour Party because of its white racialism and who believed that progressives should win the 'Bantu Masses' for Socialism. By December 1924 the Bunting group was strong enough to secure the defeat, albeit by a very small majority, of the annual resolution to apply to the Labour Party. The Bunting group received strong support from the Cape Town branch where S. Buirski, 'a foreign born member of great eloquence had rallied support for his view that the Non-Europeans were 'the real proletariat and that any association with the Labour Party would be dangerous'. They obtained the support also of the Young Communist League — the youth wing of the CP — which had its own history on the 'Native Question'. Some of its members wanted to bring 'Natives' into the YCL. Others argued that Africans should be organised into a separate body and the existing YCL kept as a white organisation. This dispute was referred to the Communist Youth Headquarters in Moscow who vigorously opposed segregation in the YCL and gave official blessing to the endeavours to 'capture the Native Youth'. Which task, as a commentator observed, 'proved to be much more difficult than they had imagined'. In any event, by the end of 1924, the YCL was ready to support a move away from the Labour Party towards the Non-European Masses. Of course the first six months of the Pact government with two Labour Party leaders in the Cabinet had been eloquent in teaching where the Labour Party

was going and this facilitated the task of Bunting, Buirski and Company.

What was decisive in the ensuing period was the movement in the ranks of the white workers themselves. Their struggles to be fully integrated into the white ruling bloc had been successful and the Nat.-Labour Coalition had written their demands into the law of the land. They now no longer needed a labour movement of their own for their group struggles had ended. While the Labour Party lingered on for a while yet, it was already in irreversible decline with its former supporters making their way to the major parties of the white bloc. Hertzog's Nationalist Party and Smuts' United Party. Parallel to the decline of the Labour Party was the decline of white labour support for the CP. As the white workers had no need of their own labour party, they had even less need of the party of the extreme left-wing white labour, the CP:

The resignation of the very Secretary of the CP, W. H. (Comrade Bill) Andrews at the beginning of 1925 and his slow merging back into the Labour Party personifies the retreat of white labour from the CP.

The CP now began a long and difficult road which transformed it from an all-white party to a party whose majority of members was non-whites. This process took a long time and the fact that by the middle and late thirties the CP had a majority of Non-White members did not, of course, mean that the party had shaken off the ideological influences that it had been born with. Far from it, as the record shows.

The CP's first step towards organising Africans was the establishment in 1925 in Ferreirstown (a Johannesburg slum suburb) of a Non-European night school to bring literacy to African workers. The only way in which this school differed from many other similar schools started by liberal endeavours is made by one historian. At this school 'enthusiastic white communists bent their energies to teaching by candle-light, semi-literate Africans to read involved passages in Bukharin's A.B.C. of Communism'.

It is claimed that most of the later African leaders of the CP came through this school, people like Kotane, J. B. Marks and Mbeki. The process of recruitment was slow, and the party continued to decline during 1925 and 1926. During 1927 there were two significant developments. The Comintern, the Bureau that was in charge of the international Communist movement outside of Soviet Russia under whose control the Comintern operated, imposed a new line on the South African Communist Party. This line was known as the 'Black Republic' and held that the main task in South Africa was the destruction of the rule of the British and Afri-

kaner imperialists in order to establish a democratic, independent Native Republic which would guarantee certain democratic rights of minorities. This 'Black Republic' would be 'a transition to the final liquidation of capitalism in South Africa', or so at least it was argued.

This confused and confusing line was reportedly the product of collaboration between James La Guma the SACP delegate in 1927 to Communist International, and one time General Secretary of the ICU and N. Bukharin of the Russian Communist Party, who was at that time in charge of the Comintern. It appears that the same line was sent also to the USA, apparently in the belief that the Colour question was the same in the two countries. This line had no visible effect on the public activity of the CP but it wreaked havoc inside the Party until it was quietly dropped in the early 1930's.

This chauvinistic line was probably in part an over-reaction to the chauvinism of white labour that had clearly affected the Party and its effect on the remnants of white labour in the party can be imagined. It speeded up their departure. It also created a great deal of hostility between white and non-white members of the Party. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say it helped to crystallise a great deal of hostility that existed in the party. Douglas and Mary Woolton, two English Communists, and Lazar Bach were sent out by the Comintern to take charge of the Party and to implement the new line. They finalised the departure of the 'white labour group' like S. Sachs, Andrews and Malkinson and even of S. P. Bunting and encouraged the recruitment of non-whites to the Party. The official organ of the CP was given a Xhosa name and carried articles in Xhosa, Zulu and Sotho and great store was set on the recruiting work of the night school.

The other important step was the starting of Non-European trade unions in 1927. For years members of the CP had been active in the field of organising trade unions for white workers and many of them were respected figures in this field. Andrews, Glass, E. S. Sachs and Weinbren to mention just some.

Now, with the spectacular growth of the ICU and with the emphasis on winning Non-European workers for the Party, members of the CP began to think in terms of organising Non-White workers. Bennie Weinbren, who was a laundry worker and who had organised his white fellow laundry workers into a union, now also organised the Native Laundry Workers' Union. Assisted by T. W. Thibedi who had for years been the only black face in the CP. Weinbren also organised the Native Bakers' Union, the Native Clothing Workers' Union and the Native Mattress and Furniture

Workers' Union. Later Ghana Makabeni, who like Thibedi had been associated with S. P. Bunting, became the pivotal figure in the Native Clothing Workers' Union.

By 1929 these unions had a membership of some 10 000 and were organised into the Non-European Trade Union Federation with Weinbren as Chairman and Thibedi as chief organiser.

This promising growth did not last long: 'This body disintegrated, as did also a number of its component unions during the period 1930-3, partly in consequence of the severe depression of those years and partly as a result of the unfortunate policy pursued by the CP which controlled them.'

The 'unfortunate policy'? The policy of 'Red Trade Unions' implemented on the instructions of the Comintern. This policy was based on the belief that revolution was to be the order of the day and that in preparation for the revolution the trade unions had to be made ready as organs of the party, loyal to it and to the revolutionary struggle. What was important was not broad mass-based unions of uncertain alliance but small, reliable, disciplined unions ready for the dictatorship of the proletariat. In practice of course this meant splitting and weakening the unions and virtually abandoning them, as, indeed, was the case of the Non-European Trade Union Federation which came to slow life again only in 1937 when people like Max Gordon — a brilliant organiser and not a member of the CP — became active in the field of African trade unions, to be followed later by a new generation of CP members and trade union organisers.

Before we take leave of this first Federation of Non-European Trade Unions, the point should be made that in the main these unions were the 'Native' equivalent of 'white' trade unions organised by Party supporters. In the case of the Garment Workers' Union, it was a branch of the white union, but the branches of the Garment Workers' Union were as racially segregated as the separate 'Native' and 'white' unions. The CP for all that it was a party that was professedly Anti-Colour Bar nevertheless accommodated its trade union policy to the racial prejudices of the white workers. It is interesting that it was prepared to court unpopularity by organising 'Red' Trade Unions but it was not prepared to face the unpopularity amongst white workers that the call for racially unsegregated Unions would have earned it.

In 1929 Bunting, still a leading figure in the CP at that time, initiated what proved to be an important development in the CP's political role, even though the CP expelled Bunting before this role was fully developed.

In that year the Party decided to put up two

candidates in the general election expected in June 1930.

It decided to put up a candidate in the Cape Flats constituency where there was a significant number of 'Cape Coloured' and 'Native' voters and a candidate for the Transkei constituency of Tembuland, which also had a large number of Native voters. Woolton stood in Cape Flats and concentrated his campaign on Ndabeni, at that time the major 'native location' of Cape Town. Bunting stood in Tembuland and campaigned vigorously throughout the Transkei.

Now both constituencies had traditionally returned the liberal friends of the Non-Europeans who would plead the cause of the oppressed in the chambers of the oppressor because the Non-White voters themselves did not have the franchise, but merely a segregated vote. Only 'a person of European descent' could be elected so that the Non-White voters could only choose which master could represent them.

The liberals were the masters of this vote game, misleading the voters into believing that they were in fact enjoying representation when indeed they were in practice accepting an inferior status by exercising the segregated vote. Now they were being challenged by the Communist Party for this kind of leadership over the oppressed people. What made it worse in the case of the CP was that, of course, only white members of the Party were eligible to aspire to this kind of leadership. So that they were not only asking Non-White voters to accept an inferior status but were also asking their Non-White 'comrades' to accept that kind of distinction between white and non-white communists. Of course, by this time the Hertzog Bills were already before the Select Committee . . .

The election campaigns of Douglas Woolton and Sidney Bunting in 1929/30 began a process that found its next stage in 1935 when the Communist Party added its voice to that of the liberals in advising the African people to use the platforms created by the Hertzog legislation, the NRC and Native Representation, that saw the CP put up candidates in co-operation with the ANC and the liberals and that ultimately saw Kahn, Bunting or, Carneson and Turok replacing the Ballingers and Moltenos as the official Native Representatives. An interesting development but not unexpected in a party that for all its revolutionary pretensions could not shake off the ideology that it inherited at birth and remained, therefore, the party of white labour's left wing.

However in 1930 this campaign was not sufficient to halt or reverse the decline of the CP. In 1931 Bunting, Weinbren, Sachs, Andrews and Co. were expelled and the CP was riddled with factional strife which was itself symptom and further cause of continuing decay. It is estimated that by 1933 there were at the utmost 150 members left in the CP of whom the overwhelming majority were Europeans. In 1929 the Party had claimed a membership of 3 000. The old leadership had been expelled and then the CP was left virtually rudderless for the official Comintern authorised leaders of the Party, Douglas and Molly Woolton from England and Lazar Bach from Lithuania, also quietly disappeared.

This was the state of the CP when the drift to war began. Its resurgence and its activities before, during and after the second World War merit separate examination because of its importance for the National Liberatory Movement.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XIV)

The CP: Myths and Reality — The Zig-Zags of Militant Opportunism

Very clear phases or periods demarcate the policies and activities of the Communist Party of South Africa. Its first and almost 'pure-white' period stretches from 1921 to 1927. Then there is the period 1928 to 1933 which was a period of 'ultra left-wing communism' where the 'revolution' was expected almost every day. From 1934 to 1938, at which point the CP virtually disintegrated in SA, the dominant policy was that of a united front of all anti-war and anti-fascist forces.

The declaration of War in 1939 marked the beginning of a new phase. The war was first seen by the CP as an imperialist war but when German forces invaded Russia there was a dramatic turn to a new policy: that of supporting the allies for the defeat of the fascist axis. After the war, which brought about much growth and respectability for the CP, its leadership realised that while they had been fighting the war significant political developments had taken place amongst the oppressed people; and the CP's post-war record is an attempt to take control of the National Liberatory Movement and to place itself at the helm of the struggle against national oppression.

1928-1933: Unreal

The activities of the party in the period 1928 to 1933 were based on the belief — hysterically propagated by the Communist International Bureau, which made policy for the SACP — that the great depression had ushered in a period of revolutionary upheavals; that the masses were on the march along the revolutionary road and that all that was necessary to secure the triumph of the revolution was for the party to unfurl the banner of revolution to which the masses could rally.

This unreal revolutionary policy as it was applied to South Africa called upon the masses to overthrow 'British and Boer imperialism', to confiscate the land, cattle and implements of landlords, companies and mission societies, to divide the land amongst peasants and farm workers of all races, to confiscate the mines, factories and all undertakings of the 'imperialists and capitalist robbers' and to do all this 'under a worker's and peasant's government in a black republic'. Although the Party paid lip-service to this revolutionary litany, its actual practical struggles were far more limited.

League of African rights

By preparing them for revolution and attempting to make them 'red' trade unions, the party succeeded in disrupting the Non-European Federation of Trade Unions virtually out of existence. In 1929, the 'suggestion' came from Moscow that the party should remain a small and select body of trained

revolutionaries steeped in Marxist principles and theory but working through a larger mass body by means of which they could give the masses a clear lead. To form this mass body the South African Communist Party immediately launched a new movement in Johannesburg called the League of African Rights. The League called upon all who were interested in the struggle of black men for freedom in Africa. On the lines of the Chartist Movement it drew up a 'petition of rights' that would be presented to parliament after a million signatures had been obtained. The programme of the League was designed to end national oppression: it called for the extension of the franchise, for free education and for the abolition of the pass laws and the land laws. The League adopted 'Mayibuy' i Afrika (Let Africa Return) as its slogan and had its own flag of black, red and green.

In the LAR the CP had launched a virtually national movement. Organisationally, however, this movement was not autonomous: through judicious selection of officials steering control was in the hands of the CP: J. T. Gumede was president, the communists Edward Roux and Albert Nzula were the secretaries, Charles Baker, who ran the CP night school, was treasurer. The League was popular from the beginning. The ICU was breaking up and thousands turned to the new organisation that seemed to be able to rally all the forces of the national movement. Thousands of petition forms were issued and signatures flowed in from all over the country. In the midst of all this, as Roux records, a telegram from Moscow ordered the immediate dissolution of the League. The League was accordingly dissolved.

The CP and the National Movement

The history of this short-lived League is of importance in two respects. It showed the attitude of the CP to the National Movement. In their view, the National Movement was subordinate to the wishes and interests of the party. Indeed, the party dissolved the League when it threatened to eclipse the party. The party saw in the national movement a threat and a rival that had to be kept subordinate.

From this time dates the CP practice of manipulating the national movement to further its own interests. In the second place the formation and subsequent dissolution of the League illustrates the role of Stalin's Comintern in the affairs of the Communist Party of South Africa. The will of Moscow was the main and overriding determinant in the shaping of policy.

Just as the programme of the League was more democratic than revolutionary, so the activities with which the CP carried on where the League left off did not really measure up to the 'revolutionary' prescriptions set out theoretically. No doubt casting around for the issue that could fire the South African revolution, the CP launched a campaign against the Pass Laws.

Passes and pass-burning

In Cape Town the CP had not really survived the expulsion of the pro-Bunting group. In Johannesburg it did not survive the disruption of the Non-European trade unions and the dissolution of the League of African Rights. And so Durban became the focus of a 'militant' CP-organised campaign against the passes, a campaign 'to end' the pass laws by getting the mass of the people to burn their passes and to refuse to bear them again. This campaign, for all that it sought to tap the enormous and bitter discontent against the passes, was doomed to fail because it was virtually restricted to Durban and because the burning of his pass left a person so vulnerable that it would be a step only very few would feel themselves able to take even though almost everybody was dissatisfied and ready to protest. There could be massive campaigns against passes but never massive burning of passes. Yet the leadership of the CP, fervently believing that the revolution was around the corner and desperately seeking the means of igniting the fire of the South African revolution, threw everything it had into the campaign. Many thousands supported the campaign but only a few hundred passes were burnt.

The campaign gave the police an opening for crushing the communists and all progressives in Durban. The Dingaan's day meeting at which the passes were to be burnt was dispersed with force by the police. Four men, including Johannes Nkosi, a charismatic leader of the CP, were killed and twenty others seriously wounded. Thirty-two were arrested and charged with 'incitement to violence'. Twenty-six of the accused were found guilty and received sentences of up to 6 months' hard labour without the option of a fine.

A crowd of supporters attended the trial, only to have 130 of their number arrested. Eighty-four of these, no longer having their passes, were sent to

prison under the pass laws.

The Native Administration Act and the Urban Areas Act were used to deport leaders and members of the Anti-Pass campaign. The campaign of repression did not end there. Spies and informers in the ranks of the movement called public meetings. These meetings were surrounded by the police and those attending arrested and then deported as 'disorderly persons'.

And, as Roux reports: 'Thus the pass-burning campaign ended in seeming (sic) failure'. The 'revolutionary' policy was so unreal in the light of the actual circumstances obtaining that it led only to the defeat and demoralisation of those who had answered the call and to the further isolation and shrinking of the CP itself. In a period when the membership of the party declined from 3 000 to a pitiful 150, the leadership of the party still convinced itself that the revolution was about to begin and, indeed, reported at the beginning of 1932: 'The framework of the slave regime is beginning to burst under the pressure of the masses, who are seeking in the CP their guide and leader.'

Leadership changes

For all the dogmatic unreality of the politics of the CP in this period, it marked an important change in the orientation of the party. The struggle of the oppressed people for national liberation had now replaced the class struggles of the white workers as the focus of the activities of the party. The party had acquired a predominantly non-white membership and had developed a group of non-white leaders in the persons of people like James La Guma, John Gomas, Moses Kotane, J. B. Marks, Edwin Mofutsanyana, Albert Nzula, and G. Radebe, most of whom had been sent overseas for training in the party schools abroad. While almost all of them were very critical of their white comrades, they were intensely loyal to the directives coming from Moscow and thus to the Party line. In fact, the common loyalty of both white and black to Moscow prevented what was left of the party from splitting totally into a white part and a black part. As it was, the party was divided into quite hostile wings. The white wing regarded the Non-Whites as Nationalists while they, in turn, regarded the whites as racialists and white chauvinists.

In the 1928 to 1933 period the non-white wing of the party was dominant, though, of course, the real control of the party was in the hands of the Comintern Representatives who for this period were Douglas and Molly Wolton and Lazar Bach. However, the Communist International, weighing up the position in Europe where Hitler had taken power and where the War clouds had gathered,

called for the establishment of a united front against fascism and war — a united front of bourgeois and workers to prevent further fascist victories in Europe and to preserve the precarious peace. The 'revolutionary' policy for the masses was replaced by an inter-class alliance against fascism.

In South Africa this meant that the white group in the party, that had been unimportant and isolated while the emphasis was on struggle of the oppressed workers, now again became the crucial layer.

In June 1933 the small and weak CP asked the trade unions, the ANC, the small socialist groups and the Joint Councils to combine against unemployment, police repression and fascism. Nobody responded to the call.

League against fascism and war

In 1934 the party launched the League against Fascism and War, drawing mainly upon the white trade unions in which Sachs, Kalk, Weinbren and other party members were active. In this front, especially in the Transvaal, the party connived at a *de facto* colour-bar. To restive non-white party members who wanted to know why it should be thought proper to form a united front with right-wing labour men who insisted on a colour-bar but not with African nationalists who fought against the colour-bar it was explained that if the white workers were not won for the Anti-fascist struggle they would swell the ranks of the Grey Shirts and other Fascist Groups and that their attitude to the colour-bar should not be made to keep them out of the Anti-fascist struggle.

Clearly, the party had not given up its orientation to the white workers. As long as they rejected Hitler and Mussolini's fascism, they could support the home-grown totalitarianism.

Because the non-white members proved an embarrassment to the CP in its attempts to build a united front of (white) 'trade unionists, communists, liberals and intellectuals' united 'in defence of civil liberties and the democratic ideal' they were allowed 'their own' United Front. This was the origin of the Non-European United Front sponsored in Cape Town by the Non-White Communists.

The white members of the CP who had felt isolated during the 1928 to 1933 period, when the party concentrated on the national struggle, now again rallied to the party and to the Anti-fascist struggle. Old wounds were healed and fresh resources tapped as, obedient to the latest line, the CP now 'rid itself of sectarian tendencies' and gave all its energies to building a 'people's front'. Workers, peasants, intellectuals, said the Comin-

tern directive, must combine with the middle class in a broad movement to prevent war and defeat fascism.

In January 1935 the CP launched an Afrikaans paper called *Die Arbeider en Arme Boer* (The Worker and Poor Peasant) to cater for Afrikaner workers who, the party leadership was convinced, were destined to play a revolutionary role.

In December 1935 the party had more success with its call for a United front. Some 120 delegates attended what was regarded as the most important united front conference in many years. Of course, it was a 'white' conference.

The CP and the AAC

This conference met at the same time as the first conference of the All African Convention and it is understandable that the Party encouraged its non-white members to work in the United front of organisations comprising the AAC. Thus in September 1936 the party's annual Conference of 18 white and 22 non-white delegates decided that the fight for African rights would best be carried on through the All African Convention. The non-white communists in the Cape had their NE United Front and those of the Transvaal and Free State were encouraged to link up with Convention, leaving the whites free to pursue the white united front. Thus in October the party joined in an openly 'whites only' Peoples Front called by the Trades and Labour Council.

Umsebenzi had already become the *South African Worker* but now, as the enthusiasm for the (white) United Front grew, there was a severe cut in the space devoted to comment or news in the African languages. With unbounded enthusiasm for the United front the CP offered to back Labour candidates for the provincial council. It was a pity that they stood for complete segregation said the CP; for, this apart, Labour was sincere in its endeavours to improve the lot of the poor. A few months later, despite Labour's decision to boycott the People's Front because of CP participation, Wolfson, the General Secretary of the party, suggested a 'working arrangement' between Labour and Communist parties in municipal elections on a platform of slum clearance, reduced bus fares, improved health facilities, and a minimum wage of 10 shillings a day for white workers and 5 shillings a day for non-white workers. The Labour Party rejected such an arrangement but the CP nevertheless called upon voters to vote for Labour!

In 1936 the CP not only had decided that the fight for African rights would best be carried on through the All African Convention but also had undertaken to weld Convention into a powerful movement. It had proposed the setting up of local

Convention committees that would at the same time be the machinery for fighting the elections under the Act.

Working dummy representation

So the 'fight' that the CP was talking about was the fight to make the dummy representation law work. *Umsebenzi* joined the liberal newspapers, and the CP leaders the liberal politicians in attacking the boycott — 'the Native organisations would now have to decide whether to follow a policy of abstention, that is, have nothing to do with the working of the new law, or to use the Native Representative Council as a propagandist platform from which to demand the extension of the franchise and the vote for all South Africans, black and white, on the same basis.'

In the 1937 NRC elections Mofutsanyana, the official CP candidate, lost. Basner stood for election to the Senate as the representative of the Transvaal and Free State Africans and was defeated by the liberal candidate J. D. Rheinalt Jones. J. B. Marks, who was shortly to be expelled, supported R. G. Baloyi of Congress, a bus owner, who defeated Mofutsanyana.

The absence of a Convention election machine and the fact that Congress under Seme had kept the local election machinery in its own hands, caused Mofutsanyana and the party to be disillusioned with Convention and caused them to turn to Congress. After all, election was their aim and Congress controlled the electioneering machinery.

Mofutsanyana and Marks then combined to reorganise the largely dormant Transvaal ANC and were later taken into Calata's committee for re-establishing Congress. Collaboration led them further, however. Since the local advisory boards were electoral colleges for the 'national' elections, Mofutsanyana, Marks and the rest became involved in advisory board activities, naturally under the guise of fighting day-to-day issues.

Early days: CP and ANC

The hostility to the ANC leadership, that had been almost endemic in the CP in the early days when the 'revolutionaries' had nothing but contempt for the bourgeois leaders of the ANC, rapidly eroded as it and the CP acquired a common interest in building Congress into the electioneering machine. In terms of their 1936 decision the CP clearly preferred the AAC, but when the wily practitioners of the ANC kept Convention without local machinery the CP members joined Congress. Of course, the growth of the boycott movement inside of Convention served to strengthen that Union of communists and nationalists that had begun as a strictly loveless marriage of convenience.

By 1938 the CP hardly existed as a coherent force. Its white and non-white members were alienated from each other, the non-whites being naturally repulsed by the turn to the (white) People's Front. The Party was so torn by strife and dissension along Colour lines that most of the branches did not meet, and, indeed, the Central Committee of the Party had become dormant. The execution by the Comintern the previous year of three leading members of the party (while they were in Moscow to settle differences) had had a definite aftermath, but the major divergence was between the white communists who, by and large, remained orientated to the white workers, notwithstanding the left turn of the early thirties and late twenties, and the non-white party members who saw the party chiefly in terms of fighting against national oppression.

The only area in which the CP functioned reasonably well was the Cape, where the white party members were working mainly in non-white trade unions and where the non-white comrades had their Non-European United Front and National Liberation League.

At the 1938 Annual Conference the Cape Section managed to block a move by Mofutsanyana and the Transvaal non-white delegates to divide the party openly into an African and a non-African section, their argument being that such a move would merely recognise a position that already existed in practice. Mofutsanyana delivered a stinging attack on the policies of the party and called on the party to 'admit a complete betrayal of the African people'.

The conference decided as a 'temporary measure', until the rifts in the party had been healed, to transfer the party headquarters to Cape Town and elected Jack Simons, his wife Ray Alexander, Bill Andrews, Sam Khan, Mrs. Z. Gool and Moses Kotane to the Central Committee. Incidentally, the headquarters of the party remained in Cape Town until the party was outlawed by the Suppression of Communism Act in the 1950's.

The (Golden) War Years

When war was declared in September 1939, the CP denounced the war as an imperialist one which was being fought to protect colonies and markets. In line with this view party supporters like Dr. Yusuf Dadoo opposed non-white participation in the war in which the rich would get richer and the poor get killed. He was sentenced to four months' imprisonment for anti-war activities. On the 22nd June 1941 German troops crossed the Soviet frontier and the CP changed its line. It said the war effort of the allies should be supported in order to defend the Soviet Union, the home of Socialism. It made nominal protests against segregation in the

army, at the segregated and inferior status of the non-white soldiers and their miserable segregated pay. Its members duly joined the segregated regiments and even helped in recruiting. Veteran party member J. A. La Guma at the age of 46 joined the Indian and Malay Corps, did recruiting work and attained the status of sergeant major, the highest rank a non-white was permitted.

The party still fired the occasional broadside at discriminatory measures but its main energy was directed to the War Effort. It had a good working arrangement with Colin Steyn, Smuts' Minister of Justice who, as Roux records, turned a blind eye to criticism of segregation from those who actively supported the war effort.

Because of its identification with Russia and the Red Army, the CP SA became almost respectable in ruling circles. It was, after all, the representative of a valuable and respected ally.

Russia was invited to appoint a Consul to South Africa and he set up office in 1942. The Friends of the Soviet Union, of which organisation the Hon. Colin Steyn was a patron, flourished as did the affairs and activities of the CP. Collections for Medical Aid for Russia topped the £100 000 mark in 1943. The circulation of the *Guardian*, the party's weekly newspaper, rose dramatically from 12 000 in 1940 to 42 000 in 1943 and 50 000 the next year. The party's membership rose from 400 in April 1941 to 1 500 by December 1943.

While the CP did not win any parliamentary seats, it did have spokesmen on the two biggest municipal councils in the country — Johannesburg and Cape Town, where it had two: Sam Kahn, an attorney and Betty Radford (Sacks), editor of the *Guardian*. This was truly the CP's finest hour. It had become the respectable left wing of the liberal establishment.

In the 1943 General Election the CP supported Smuts' United Party — except in the few constituencies in which it put up its own candidates. At the Anti-CAD Conference before the General Election it opposed the strategy of using the election to demonstrate against the CAC and the CAD and called upon voters to support the UP against the Nats. As the rising political consciousness of the oppressed made it impossible for the old liberals to peddle such myths as the lesser evil, their radical friends, the neo-liberals of the CP, took over this task of myth-peddling. The war came to an end and the valuable Russian ally of the shoot-

ing war became the target and chief enemy of the Cold War. Likewise, in South Africa, the CP rapidly fell from grace and soon Smuts would have his war-time allies on trial for sedition.

Losing out

However, when it woke up to the realities of political developments that had taken place among the oppressed while it had been helping Smuts win the war, the CP leadership found that it had lost its pre-eminence amongst the people.

The Coloured people had thrown off the heritage of Abdurahman with a vengeance, had established the Anti-CAD Movement, which was the undisputed spokesman for the coloured sector, which had been taken into the Non-European Unity Movement by the Anti-CAD. The All African Convention was resurgent and strong in its commitment to Non-European Unity on the basis of the 10-point programme and the policy of non-collaboration. In the Indian sector the old Kajeel leadership was on the run and the new emergent leadership in the Anti-Segregation Council, many of whom were members and supporters of the CP, was tending to support the policies of the NEUM, that of Non-European Unity, of a minimum programme of democratic rights for all as the basis for unity, and of the policy of non-collaboration or the refusal to work the instruments of one's own political enslavement. The CP leadership found, indeed, that while they had been busy working and fighting for democracy in Europe, the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa had launched their own indigenous movement for democracy in South Africa and they, the policy-makers of the CP, who had regarded themselves as the leadership of the people for more than 25 years had no influence over this movement. And, what for them was worse, the movement was exerting considerable influence on the non-white communists who had entered these movements while their white comrades had been in search of (white) united fronts and (white) people's movements. Kotane, for example, was speaking and writing for Non-European unity and for the Boycott. Dadoo was supporting the Anti-Segregation Council, Non-European Unity on a programme for full democratic rights for all and the boycott of dummy elections.

We turn next to an examination of how the bosses and policy-makers of the CP reacted to the post-war situation and to the situation as it developed in the 1950's and 1960's.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XV)

The Second Rand Revolt and the NRC's Exit

1946 — 1948: Pass Campaigns, Passive Resistance

For four days in August 1946 the very foundations of Herrenvolk society were shaken as production on 12 Witwatersrand gold mines was totally halted and fell dramatically in the remaining 9. More than 76 000 oppressed, largely illiterate, migrant workers were in revolt and refused to go down the mines. The magnitude of this situation is indicated by the fact that during the 1922 revolt, when every white miner was on strike, production though diminished continued throughout. In 1946, as was to be expected, the state intervened immediately and massively to cut short the effect of the rebellion. Using his army and police force Smuts ruthlessly suppressed the revolt with blood and violence and forced the workers back on shift at gun and bayonet point. Equally ruthlessly he strangled, virtually at birth, a movement for a general strike in support of the miners.

The anger and defiance of the broad mass of the people at this brutal crushing of this second Rand Revolt can be inferred from the reaction of the Native Representative Council collaborators who, seizing the opportunity, immediately adjourned the NRC in protest. In moving the adjournment resolution Dr. Moroka condemned the government's "post-war continuation of the policy of Fascism". Said Paul Mosaka MRC in support of the motion: "You can do what you like, you can shoot us, arrest us, imprison us, but you are not going to break our spirit. We shall continue fighting for our rights until the day dawns when we shall have the right to live like human beings in the land of our birth, in the land that is ours."

He knew, of course, precisely what the popular feeling was and that it would brook no opposition. As the later record shows, the NRC collaborators tried to get back into their normal business when they thought the hard anger of the people had softened and things were 'more normal'.

The Ingredients of revolt

This revolt merits far more detailed examination and study than is possible in this outline note and than it has so far received from writers. Compared to the 1922 affair it is a neglected field of study, yet it represents a much more important set of events. The official attitude was that it was all a "communist plot" and, despite the fact that years of prosecution of members of the CP, first on charges under the Riotous Assemblies Act and then of Sedition as arising from strike, failed spectacularly to secure any convictions, this view lingers on. A popular revolt with powerful spontaneous aspects can never be the product of a "conspiracy" or "plot". A proper study should attempt to find the links between a growing political consciousness as reflected by the birth of an indigenous national liberatory move-

ment and the growth of militancy amongst urban and rural toilers. Account must be taken of the intolerable burden of poverty of the mass despite and because of the boom conditions of the war years — this was a period that has been described as witnessing "an epidemic of African strikes". In this connection one should not lose sight of the effect of the strike in 1944 by 2 600 employees of the Victoria Falls Power Company (supplying electricity to the mines) against their miserable wages of 16 shillings (R1.60) per week when the Company was making a profit of £1 250 000 (R2 500 000) a year. A factor that needs to be examined also is the effect of contemporary militant struggles around the mine workers. There was, for example, the Alexandra Bus Boycott in 1943, where between 40 000 and 60 000 African and Coloured workers walked 9 miles twice a day to defeat the bus fares' increase and they had to defend their 1943 victory again in November 1944; there was also in the rural areas the militant and increasingly bitter struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme in those years. Another factor was the rapid rise of the African Mineworkers Union from 1942 until police action totally disrupted it in the aftermath of the strike; how and to what extent it coped with the problems of organising migrants who were, moreover, housed in heavily supervised compounds. There is the question too of to what extent the Union and its militants led the strike and how far they were overwhelmed and engulfed by the elemental discontent that erupted into what is called "the strike". Also, the effect of War Measure 1425 of August 1944 that made meetings of more than 20 persons on mine property illegal and thus struck the Union a body blow from which it never really recovered. Then, of course, there were the wages and conditions of work of the miners who not only had to watch the purchasing power of

their wages shrink but were actually receiving diminishing cash wages: in 1890 wages were 2/6d. per shift while in 1942 they were 2/- per shift. In addition, in this period the customary poverty in the reserves was aggravated by drought and the wives and children of the miners were literally starving. 1945 was a period of food shortages on the Rand — even where workers had the money to pay. Of course there were signs and portents of dissatisfaction and unrest before August 1946. In April a mineworkers' conference of 200 delegates demanded adequate food, a minimum wage of 10/- a day and the repeal of War Measure 1425. This was followed by some one-day strikes but the Chamber of Mines contemptuously refused to negotiate or even discuss with the Mineworkers Union. These and other aspects demand analysis and review, as they all contributed to the situation that exploded as the 1946 strike.

A political side-effect

One of the side-effects of the strike was an increase in the authority and the standing of the CP. The persecution of the CP at the hands of their former ally, Smuts, who had his eyes on the approaching election, and the "Rooi Gevaar" propaganda of the Malan Nationalists, gave the CP the kind of standing amongst the oppressed and exploited that the war years had given them amongst the liberal establishment. Thus when the CP turned to asserting itself as against the emergent indigenous national liberatory movement it did so as the biggest organised grouping in the camp of the oppressed, with the greatest resources (including a weekly newspaper and access to substantial funds) and with great standing and authority.

Two approaches

Already in 1943, the year of Unity, the realisation was taking root that the struggle of the oppressed and exploited was not merely against this grievance or that one, but that since *all* their grievances and disabilities flowed from their lack of political rights they should direct their attention to obtaining all the political rights that constituted citizenship. The Communist Party sought to deflect the attention of the people away from this approach by starting a campaign against the Pass Laws, against one single issue, starting what has become known as the First National Anti-Pass Campaign.

It was of course not the first Anti-pass campaign. Passes had been resented and opposed since their introduction. The hatred of pass laws is so deep-seated, the misery they bring so direct, the humiliation and indignity they entail so immediate, their effect so intensely burdensome that opposition to passes has been ever present. But this was to be the first *national* anti-pass campaign. To this extent

it was perhaps calculated to appeal to the new national sentiment evident in the growth of a national liberatory movement. Actually it was intended to take over the political stage on which the NEUM was just appearing. In fact, the CP was attempting to make one disability, and one, moreover, that flowed directly from the lack of citizenship rights, the overriding issue at a time when the emergent liberatory movement was attempting to make the question of equal political rights the central focus.

The CP established local anti-pass committees by operating through their own branches, the ANC, the Transvaal Indian Congress and trade unions where it had control or influence. In this way it prepared for the great national anti-pass conference to be held at Easter, 1944. Of course, the campaign had the backing of the CP's *Guardian* newspaper and received publicity in the English-language *Herrenvolk* press.

An anti-pass petition

In the event, the Conference was held in the Gandhi Hall, Johannesburg on May 20 and 21, 1944. 540 delegates attended representing a reported 605 222 people. A demonstration of 20 000 people marched through the streets of Johannesburg. The Conference passed a resolution denouncing the pass laws and established a new organisation, the National Anti-Pass Council, with Dr. Xuma (President of the ANC), as Chairman, with Dr. Dadoo (of the Transvaal Indian Congress and the CP) as Deputy Chairman and Mr. D. W. Bopape (Secretary of the Transvaal ANC and member of the CP) as Secretary. The Conference decided to launch a nationwide campaign to obtain a million signatures to an anti-pass petition that would be submitted to the Government by a deputation of African leaders in August 1944, simultaneously with demonstrations against the pass laws throughout the land.

A million signatures to be obtained by a movement claiming more than half a million in membership should not have been difficult. However, the "million-signature petition" was a failure, although signatures were canvassed from the whole populace. August came and went. Eventually, in June of the next year, the petition was brought to Cape Town. The organisers were vague about the number of signatures but claimed that it ran into "some hundreds of thousands". The deputation asked the liberal Hofmeyr, who was acting Prime Minister, to receive them but he contemptuously referred them to the Minister of Native Affairs. They then protested by demonstrating outside parliament and the leaders like R. V. Selope Thema, S. Moema and Dr. Dadoo were arrested and fined

for leading an unlawful procession.

Thus ended the first National Anti-Pass Campaign. Significant is a remark by Roux: "the leaders of the anti-pass campaign during the war years refrained from any sort of direct action to secure their demands." Of course they were not serious about these demands. Nor were they serious about embarrassing their ally, the Smuts government. The role which the organisations of the oppressed were assigned in this and subsequent campaigns is to be noted. A new Ad-hoc organisation is created especially for the campaign, with the CP actually in effective control. The organisations of the people are pushed into the background and virtually cease to function for the duration of the campaign. At the end of the campaign, the special organisation is disbanded and the new layer of militants that have been recruited are attached to the CP, which alone emerges organisationally stronger.

The Anti-Pass Campaign was intended to be a rival to the infant NEUM virtually still struggling to be properly born.

The CPs political approach: "action", "action":

The political approach of the CP should be noted. Against the idea of a *programme* expressing the demands of citizenship as the basis of unity and struggle they posited the single "specific issue". Instead of utilising the campaign to strengthen the organisations of the people by heightening their level of understanding, by raising their political consciousness, the CP concentrated on raising the militancy of the people in a high-powered emotional campaign which was aimed at securing "militant mass action"; in the case under review, the burning of the passes. This, and subsequent campaigns, were characterised by a hysterical hostility to any attempts at discussing the political issues involved in the campaign usually expressed in the claim that "the time for talking is past, the time for action has come". "Action", became the watchword of every CP campaign. "Action" would defeat the passes. "Action" would defeat the Peggling Act. "Action" would defeat the Franchise law. "Action" would build Unity.

Any attempt to analyse the efficacy of the "action", to ask which interests were actually being served, was derided as coming from people who, because of attachment to their comfortable government jobs, it was said, were afraid of action. (This was directed especially at the teachers who had been active in the Anti-CAD and AAC and were prominent in the leadership of the NEUM.) They were denounced and derided as "theoreticians" and "school-teacher generals". Programme and principles became, in these CP campaigns, dirty words.

Another abortive campaign

Of course, the fiasco of the first anti-pass campaign did not stop the CP from launching the second National Anti-Pass campaign in Johannesburg in June 1946. Xuma, the President, said that the time had come to prepare for intensive organisation of the people to take action. The conference decided to "Commence a mass struggle within three months from this date (June 1946), which mass struggle will culminate in the national stoppage of work and the burning of passes". Needless to say the date on which the "mass struggle" was to commence was postponed again and again and was quietly dropped when there was a new issue which could be used and a new organisation to be launched to crowd out the systematic and continuing attempt to get the fledgling NEUM firmly established.

And now . . . Passive Resistance

We have previously dealt with the attempts of the NEUM to bring the SAIC into unity and of the growth of the pro-NEUM Anti-Segregation Council. When Dadoo and Naicker came to power in the SAIC they immediately turned their backs upon the Anti-Segregation Council and the NEUM. Naturally they covered this base betrayal which kept the majority of the organised Indian oppressed out of unity by all sorts of radical rhetoric and by embarking on a new "militant" campaign. On June the 13th, 1946, they launched, in a blaze of press publicity, the Passive Resistance Campaign.

This campaign was avowedly based on Gandhi's doctrine of Satyagraha and Non-Violence, which held that by the victims' passively and peacefully resisting an injustice, by their accepting whatever violence was meted out in retribution for the resistance, the hard heart of the ruler would be softened. Of course Dadoo and Naicker and the puppetmasters of the CP did not openly declare that the intention was to soften the hearts of the oppressors. They concentrated on the fact that they were prepared to go to prison for the sake of the people. They were "militant".

They courted arrest by squatting on a vacant plot in Durban when Indian occupation was prohibited or by crossing prohibited Natal-Transvaal provincial barriers. The "resisters", as they were called, were first trained not to react to taunts or acts of violence but merely peacefully to squat on the prohibited plot or to march peacefully across the provincial border, to surrender to the police when arrested, to refuse bail and fines and to serve out the prison sentence with dignity. The campaign lasted from 1946 to 1948 and some 2000 resisters went to jail for, on the average, about a fortnight to demonstrate their opposition to the Indian Ghetto

Act of the Smuts Government. Of course this campaign was not as naive or innocent as it might appear. In the first place, because people were visibly going to prison for their principles, there was immediately an emotive reply to any charge that they had betrayed the path of principled struggle. Their willingness to go to prison was supposed to demonstrate the militancy of the Dadoo-Naicker leadership.

The merchant class: sectarianism

Of course, highlighting the necessity to fight the Indian Ghetto Act without relating it to its cause — the political rightlessness of all the oppressed people — and separating it from the struggle of all the oppressed people by limiting it to the Indian Pegging Act and making it an "Indian" issue suited the Indian merchant class completely. It was in fact their policy of concentrating on the economic plight of Indians instead of on political rights for all Non-Europeans that was being followed and indeed the

strategy had an audience outside of South Africa. The passive resistance was intended to focus the attention of the UNO on the position of "persons of Indian Origin in South Africa" so that international pressure could be brought to bear on the S.A. government to alleviate the position.

The purpose of the exercise was to bring relief to the merchant class that Smuts was attempting to ruin with the Pegging Act. That is why Dadoo and Naicker went from jail to the corridors of the UN and ultimately succeeded in having a resolution passed by the General Assembly demanding that the treatment of Indians should conform to agreements between India and South Africa and to the relevant provisions of the charter. The communists hailed this as a serious moral defeat for South Africa and the first significant victory in the long struggle to arouse world opinion against white supremacy! The mass of the oppressed took a different and broader view.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XVI)

From the Bogus "Doctors' Pact" to "Boycott Candidates"

In the aftermath of the 1946 Miners' Revolt and the Passive Resistance Campaign against the Indian Pegging Act, the CP intensified its anti-unity manoeuvres. It contrived a "unity" pact between Drs. Dadoo, Naicker and Xuma. A strange, bizarre opportunism. The former two stood firmly for the boycott of dummy elections for the Indian sector. Xuma's ANC continued to use every resource of cunning and deception to keep the discredited Natives' Representative Council alive. But they needed one another, Xuma for home consumption and the other two for a show of Afro-Asian solidarity in the UNO campaign.

Two new retarding factors

The Passive Resistance Campaign not only effectively cut the Indian masses from the NEUM and established the Dadoo-Naicker leadership over the merchant class (having served them as the Kajee-Godfrey-Chowdree old-guard could never have done) but also introduced two elements into the National liberation struggle that would prove to be serious retarding factors:

It popularised non-violent passive resistance, thus giving the old change-of-heart strategy a new lease of life; and it spread the belief that liberation could come via UN and world opinion whereas the indigenous liberatory movement was attempting to teach the oppressed people that they could achieve liberation only by themselves waging the struggle for it.

The CP left no stone unturned in its attempts to discredit the NEUM. Its National Anti-Pass campaigns had failed to crowd the NEUM off the political stage. Indeed, the stature and influence of the NEUM had continued to grow by leaps and bounds

during 1943, 1944 and 1945. While the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 had consolidated the leadership of the Dadoo-Naicker group in the SAIC, had undermined the anti-segregation council, and kept the Indian Congress out of organised unity for the present, it had by no means killed off the demand of the Indian masses for unity.

Dadoo's slanders

The CP leadership reacted to this situation with cunning. Writing in the official organ of the CP, Dadoo argued, in effect, that the NEUM was a plot directed against the ANC, giving thus a "pro-unity" argument for keeping the SAIC out of the NEUM. At this time, too, the CP started dismissing the NEUM as basically a "Coloured" Movement. It claimed that the AAC and, indeed, the NEUM, were dominated by "Coloured intellectuals" who wanted a National Movement that they could control. They even argued that the NEUM did not want unity with the ANC because the "Coloured intellectuals" had no influence over the ANC. And they persisted with these stories despite all the

attempts made especially by the Working Committee of the NEUM to bring the ANC into the Unity Movement and the refusal of the ANC under Dr. Xuma even to discuss the matter. (See Majority Rule (XII), December 1978.)

And just in case these 'Coloured' and 'Anti-ANC' slanders were not enough, the CP began dismissing the NEUM as a "Trotskyist" group. Of course, the liberals picked up this label with glee and saw to it that "the teachings of Trotsky" was included in the definition of "Communism" in the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950.

Utility Unity: The Doctors' Pact

However, the propaganda campaign against the NEUM and the misrepresentation of its leadership was not as effective as the CP had hoped. It was forced to take the next step in its attempts to drive the NEUM off the political stage. In order to meet the rank-and-file pressures for unity in and on the SAIC and the ANC, the CP began launching its own bogus Unity Movements. The first of these was launched in 1947 and has become known as the Doctors' Pact.

Suddenly on the 9th March, 1947 Drs. A. B. Xuma, President-General of the ANC, S. M. Naicker of the Natal Indian Congress and Y. M. Dadoo of the Transvaal Indian Congress issued what they termed a "Joint Declaration of Co-operation" which expressed the joint meeting's "Sincerest conviction that for future progress, goodwill, good race relations, and for the building of a united, greater and free South Africa, full franchise rights must be extended to all sections of the South African people". The declaration listed a 6-point programme including matters like the pass law,

The declaration committed nobody to anything, although it sought to create the *impression* that the ANC and the SAIC had united on a programme. The only commitment was in the last sentence: "This Joint Meeting further resolves to meet from time to time to implement this declaration and to take active steps in proceeding with the campaign." In point of fact it did not commit the SAIC to struggling for the same rights for all and to accepting nothing less, to rejecting any concessions made to any section, for this programme was not a minimum programme. For the same reason, it did not commit the ANC to boycotting the NRC even though it was supposed to be struggling for the full franchise. It therefore was not a programme that was a guide to struggle but was an exercise in opportunism. It was aptly described at the time as a utility unity. Dadoo and Naicker in taking the case of the Pegging Act to UNO needed African support and so Xuma went to UNO. Now they were

off to a Conference in Asia to drum up further support and they had been 'advised' that it would be advantageous to have African support. Thus the Joint Declaration of Co-operation was born. Of course, they could also now pretend to the Indian masses that they were not only fighting the fight of the merchant class, but also building unity with the ANC.

That participation in this Joint Declaration of Co-operation was a cynical act for Dr. Xuma is clear from the surrounding circumstances. A mere three months previously in December 14 to 17, 1946 the ANC met in Conference. He gave Conference no indication of these Unity plans and sought no authority for them. Conference did in terms of its Resolution 3 pay tribute to those who had taken part in the passive resistance campaign. It did also, in terms of its resolution 7, instruct the National Executive to consider the possibilities of closer co-operation with the national organisations of other Non-Europeans in the common struggle. However, it went on, in terms of resolution 8, to declare "with this end in view" (i.e. closer co-operation in terms of resolution 7 — S.M.) to instruct the incoming National Executive Committee to conduct a powerful and nationwide campaign for a boycott of all elections under the 1936 Act and a demand for representation on municipal councils, provincial councils and parliament through a common franchise. This lip-service to unity clearly did not refer to the kind of Unity arrived at in March, but was beamed at the non-collaborationists. After all, this was December 1946, in the aftermath of the struggle of "those national heroes — the African Miners of the Witwatersrand — who fell in the face of ruthless terror as martyrs in the cause of freedom" (as Conference resolution No. 4 had it).

Dr. Xuma's other muti bag

The National Executive of the ANC met over the weekend of February 1-2, 1947, a mere month before the Pact and again Xuma gave no inkling of the coming Unity Meeting. What did happen was that Messrs. Msimang and Baloyi persuaded the Executive to *reject* a recommendation by the Working Committee pledging full and active support to the struggle of the Indians and to postpone the Conference resolutions hailing the decisions of the UN and paying tribute to the Resisters! Less than a fortnight after the Pact with Drs. Dadoo and Naicker, Dr. Xuma issued a fresh declaration, this time addressed to "All Africans and Friends of Justice". The statement described the Africans as "the underdog of all underdogs in South Africa". All national groups, he said, are fighting for their freedom. All self-respecting Africans must join in the struggle for their own liberation. He then presented what he described as a "minimum pro-

gramme" of seven points. Now these points were basically the 6 points of the Joint Declaration with significant changes. Thus, while the Joint Declaration had called for "the abolition of Pass Laws against the African people and the Provincial barriers against Indians", the later statement called merely for "Abolition of Pass Laws". The seventh point was new: "The re-establishment of the Status of the African chief in our national affairs."

"The Voice" on the revolt and the NRC

Analysing the adjournment of the NRC decided on during the very days that the mineworkers' revolt was being forcibly crushed, "The Voice", official organ of AAC, declared:

"The same despair and frustration of the people that has caused the mineworkers' strike, has brought about the bursting of the safety-valve of the ruling class — the Quisling Council. It would be a complete perversion of the truth to say that these 16 individuals, who have placed themselves in the service of the Government against the interests of their own people, have now suddenly discovered that the NRC is a fraud. No, it was due to the wrath of the people. Driven to despair by the conditions that were created during these last ten years, with the connivance of the Council, the people made it impossible for them to go on with the fraud. And they themselves were forced to admit that they had become ridiculous in the eyes of the people. As P. R. Mosaka said: 'they were held in contempt in the country'."

"The Voice", after quoting Prof. Mathews, the leading MRC, to the effect that the time had come for them to recognise that the experiment had failed, made the telling point that the members of the NRC "still refused to draw the only possible conclusion, namely to resign. Instead they left the door open — they merely adjourned".

It is clear that the mineworkers' revolt was the occasion that finally brought matters to a head, but the popular opposition to the dummy council and popular support for the boycott had in fact finished off the NRC. (For further evidence see, for example, "Reasons why the Native Representative Council in the Union of South Africa Adjourned", a Pamphlet by Professor Z. K. Mathews, published in November 1946 and circulated also at UN.)

The pro-boycott and non-collaboration current in the political awareness of the oppressed (out of which the Anti-CAD, the New AAC and the NEUM were born and which had been clarified and strengthened in turn by these organisations) was now running so strongly that it was carrying all before it. The CAC had been swept away and the NRC was being swept away.

Forced to retreat or be swept away by this current, the collaborators (still organised into the

ANC) made a tactical retreat. They adjourned the NRC "for an indefinite period until the Government shows evidence of its intention to give more serious consideration of the views of the Council" This was in August.

The next meeting of the NRC was due in November. How could they attend that meeting without losing every possible shred of credibility?

ANC bails out the NRC

They resorted to the use of their natural home, the ANC. They shared this home with the members and supporters of the African National Youth League and with the African Members and supporters of the Communist Party. The presence of these latter two groups, especially because of their militant talk, tended to obscure the real character of the ANC as the home of the collaborators and quislings. To this extent the Youth Leaguers and Communists served the interests of the quisling old guard by giving their nest cover and respectability. Actually, the quislings were in a minority but they operated with such skill and astuteness and capitalised so effectively on the confusion and woolliness of the other two groups as well as on their distrust and antipathies towards each other, that the ANC did their will.

Because they wanted to resume negotiations with the government in November, they called an Emergency Conference of the ANC for October 6 and 7 in Bloemfontein. The question to be debated was whether or not the members of the NRC should attend the next meeting.

Eight members of the NRC, including A. J. Luthuli (a chief from Natal who had been elected to the NRC in that year to replace John Dube who had died) attended the Conference, as did 500 other delegates.

Lembede, leader of the Youth League, and Kotane of the CP argued for immediate mass resignations but ultimately these two moved a "compromise" resolution which was passed by 495 votes to 16 — virtually unanimously. This "compromise" was effected to preserve the unity of the ANC! The "compromise" resolution was to the effect that the Conference:

- (1) Endorsed in full the action taken by the MRC's.
- (2) Called upon all Councillors to attend a meeting convened for the 20th November, or any other meeting called for the purpose of hearing a reply of the Government to their demands.
- (3) Declared the Native Representation Act of 1936 to be a fraud and a means to perpetuate the policy of segregation, oppression and humiliation;
- (4) Called upon the African people as a whole to boycott all elections under the Act and to

struggle for full citizenship rights.

And so the three elements of the ANC, the quisling clique, the allegedly militant nationalists and the allegedly militant socialists of the CP, united on the basis of the policy of the quislings even though the resolution was sponsored by the two other factions.

When "compromise" = betrayal

Points (1) and (2) was what the quislings wanted and needed: a mandate to continue collaboration with the government. Points (3) and (4) were, of course, meaningless. How could a boycott resolution that approved of the stand of the quislings in remaining on the NRC and, indeed, instructed them to continue collaborating have any meaning? Points three and four were nothing else but attempts to deceive the masses into believing that the quislings were not betraying. The "compromise" made by the CP and Youth League militants was nothing but a gross betrayal. Consider what a blow the quislings, the government's NRC and the whole policy of collaboration would have suffered if the "militants" had taken a simple principled stand — Boycott the NRC and its men — and separated the 500 delegates from the 8 quislings.

The December 1946 Conference of the ANC following upon a conference of organisations sponsored by the Cape Town ANC in November, called for a boycott of all elections under the act and for a struggle for full citizenship rights. This appeared to be a repudiation of the October decision. It only appeared to be such and it was an appearance that was forced by the popular temper.

The CP makes a turn (it seems)

The annual conference of the CP, meeting in January 1947, also declared for the boycott, much to the delight of the Non-White majority. Kotane, on behalf of the party, denounced not only the stooges who would serve on the NRC but also those European friends of the Africans who, while they themselves enjoyed full democracy and citizenship rights, opposed the boycott and were consequently opposed to Africans ridding themselves of something deceptive and achieving for themselves the full franchise. Such persons were, it was argued, representatives of white supremacy.

From farce to fraud

The next month, February 1947, the secret came out at the ANC National Executive Meeting. De-

spite the alleged boycott decision of the December Conference, the Quislings like Prof. Z. K. Mathews, R. V. Selope Thema, Selby Msimang, W. Baloyi, Dr. R. T. Bokwe and W. G. Champion were all still on the Executive and made it quite clear that they were continuing on the NRC.

And, as Dr. Bokwe pointed out, there was no time stipulated for the beginning of the boycott and the people did not know what methods should be followed. All this, of course, was swallowed by the Youth Leaguers like Lembede and A. P. Mda and the not so young CP supporters like J. B. Marks and M. M. Kotane.

In December 1947 the farce was complete: All three sectors of the ANC combined to pass by a vote of 67 to 7 a resolution whereby Congress would intensify the boycott . . . by putting up candidates who supported the boycott. Tambo, Makabeni and Mofutsanyana spoke in support of this contemptible fraud.

The reason for the ANC decision became apparent in January 1948 when the CP held its Congress. The "line" that had been taken by its members at the ANC Conference now became official:

The CP turns on itself

Since the overriding task of the party was to work for the defeat of the pro-fascist Nationalist Party, the CP would support anti-fascists who stood as Native Reps. in parliament and would support NRC candidates who would work for the abolition of the NRC. And so on the crucial question of accepting or rejecting inferiority, the party that prided itself on being the party of "revolutionary marxists" took over the policy of the African élite that had been nurtured by the liberal establishment to be the quislings and collaborators. Again the ANC was united, united on the basis of the policy of the quislings, no matter in what radical-sounding verbiage the white petit-bourgeois intellectuals of the CP leadership attempted to clothe it.

We see thus that just the prospect of a Nationalist victory had completely disorientated the CP and set it openly on the path of collaboration. The actual victory of the Nationalist Party and the policies of the National Government had a far more traumatic effect on the Communist Party and we propose to examine next the effect of Nationalist Rule on the policies and activities of the "Congress Alliance" for which the CPSA was the puppet master.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XVII)

1948 And all that: Learning nothing from History

The coming to power of the first completely Nationalist Government in May, 1948, sent shock waves through many parts of the country and caused reactions sometimes bordering on the bizarre. Not only Smuts was surprised and disappointed. Ex-Servicemen's organisations such as the Torch Commando and, to its left, the Springbok Legion showed signs of beginning to ask themselves what World War II (which they had just helped to 'win' against Nazism and Fascism) had been all about. In the ranks of those working politically among the oppressed and exploited, the heavy casualties, understandably, were among those who had flogged the line that the 'Malanazi' wing of the ruling classes was in its oppressive policy basically worse than the other wing of the same bird of prey. Chief among such casualties was the Communist Party.

The CP was traumatically the victim of its own political track-record and particularly of its political illusions. Those illusions were ultimately rooted in its wrong analysis of the class-colour situation in this country (see XIII of this series, Jan.-Feb., 1979 *Journal*). The roots had become grotesquely tangled during its (golden) war years (see XIV of this series in March, 1979 *Journal*), and in fact caused some of the delusions to develop delusory aspects, especially in relation to the questions of its legal right to propagate its policies, the politics of militant but non-violent persuasion and other opportunist zigzags.

'Lesser' and other evils

Together with many others who were wedded to the idea that the United Party represented a 'lesser' evil, the CP was now thrown off balance by the electoral victory of the 'greater evil', Malan's Nationalist Party in partnership with Havenga's Afrikaner Party. Among those 'others' were the old ANC incurables plus a few, particularly of an older generation, for whom five years of the teaching of the Anti-CAD, the AAC's 'new road' and the NEUM's 10-point minimum programme had been too short to wean them of a lifetime of *ad hoc* reaction to each new parliament and each new parliamentary session's fresh load of oppressive laws.

Grim Ironies

It is a grim irony of the situation in 1948 that the CP, whose opportunism had led it to put up Sam Kahn and to get him elected to parliament as a 'Native Representative' at a time when dummy representation was falling apart at the seams, should find its comrade sitting in the first Malanazi parliament. Prior to Kahn's nomination as a candidate, Moses Kotane had come out very strongly and in writing against the whole fraud of dummy representation. Some people thought that the party was somehow lurching onto a correct path. In 1943 the CP had been Smuts' fellow-traveller in the war

effort and, to the embarrassment of many a rank-and-file member, had slandered instead of supporting the Anti-CAD's boycott policy. Now it seemed to be changing course, and many a Non-White comrade became quite cheeky on the subject. But not for long. The party line, it appeared, had not changed. And why? Because liberal Donald Molteno had announced that he was not standing for re-election and, incidentally, had made it clear that he had had enough of the whole farce. Comrade Sam Kahn wanted to take his place and the party decided accordingly. And the dour Moses Kotane, with the niftiness which had kept him going for many years, turned his talents to defending the swindle he had just been attacking. He managed.

In similar vein, there was the irony of Sam Kahn's formal entry into the *Herrenvolk* parliament. Apparently, two people lead in a new member. As she tells it in her book, 'From Union to Apartheid', Mrs M. Ballinger, the Godmother of the dummy 'Native Reps.', decided that she would be responsible for organising this, but could not find a second sponsor. As she was telling the Speaker this and Dr. Malan was rising to his feet to move the suspension of the rule, a United Party frontbencher, Morris Kentridge, rose to assist. On the arm of the lesser evil he went to meet the greater evil. Fellow party member Fred Carneson followed the example of his leader and became a dummy 'Native Rep.' in the Provincial Council. To jump ahead somewhat, Sam Kahn was still in parliament in 1950 when the Suppression of Communism Act was being ushered through the House. And it was he who got up in the House before the final reading of the Bill to announce the dissolution of the party. Subsequently, in terms of this Act, he was evicted from Parliament and at the by-election to replace him Brian Bunting was put up as a candidate. He was a devoted member of the party which had expelled his father, Sidney Bunting, the one CP member who in 1922 had taken a principled stand against the white mineworkers' strike which was directed against African fellow-

workers. Patently, Brian did not have the same sensitivity to principles as his father had had. It wasn't his fault that the Suppression of Communism Act was invoked and he was not allowed to work the fraud.

Unto this Last

The political demoralisation and bankruptcy of the ex-CP members may be gauged from the fact that Ray Alexander was the next to break the boycott by standing for election. Elected by a handful of boycott-breakers (no doubt setting a precedent for the boycott-breakers who vote in CRC dummy elections for the Labour Party candidate as a sign of their rejection of dummy elections), when she tried to take her seat in the house, the police had to prevent her. After her came Lee-Warden. The police had not found his name on any of the membership lists which the CP, with its great faith in SA democracy, had so obligingly kept on file. So he hung on as a 'Native Rep.' until the whole institution was scrapped. And so, in a manner of speaking, he completed the arc of cynicism started by Sam Kahn. But he did not bury the ex-CP's opportunism on the question of dummy representation. Its tortured ghost lived on in location Advisory Boards throughout the country as well as in the Coloured Representative Council (quite apart from M. D. Arendse, whose name had been on the list). In fact, the same wrong policy is being applied by conservatives and reactionaries to bedevil the perfectly straightforward issue of the boycott of the projected "elections" to the puppet SA Indian Council.

Family Connection

The slender parliamentary majority of the Nationalists in the 1948 parliament (they had 79 seats as against the UP's 65, the all-white Labour Party's 6, plus the 3 dummy 'Native Reps.')

was the source of new illusions and opportunisms, especially in ANC and NRC circles. The connection between the African National Congress and these dummy reps. during this period was underscored by the Rev. J. Calata in his Presidential Address to the ANC (Cape) in July 1948. He said that he had been surprised to find that the press spoke of the three 'Native Reps.' as though they were UP members. They were not supposed to take sides with any party, he said. Their job was to strengthen the ANC, which would give them a unique opportunity to use the narrow margin between government and opposition. And the state of political ill-health in this camp may be judged from the fact that in this same address Calata declared that the powers of 'our Chiefs' needed strengthening, and he welcomed the granting to Chief Matanzima of the right to try civil cases. The government had taken a step in the right

direction, he declared with a blandly unconscious gift of prophecy.

Once again: "African Unity"

The 'crisis' of May 1948, shrewdly exploited by a not disinterested press, brought together a motley collection of political figures, collaborators and non-collaborators, tribalists and non-tribalists, in "A Call for African Unity". That was the name given to a leaflet put out on October 3, 1948 and signed by: "A. B. Xuma (Convener), D. D. T. Jabavu, J. S. Moroka, Z. K. Matthews, R. T. Bokwe, R. H. Godlo, Paul R. Mosaka, R. G. Baloyi, A. W. G. Champion, R. V. Selope Thema, L. K. Ntlabati, Z. R. Mahabane."

Xuma was President-General of the ANC, Jabavu was President of the AAC, Mahabane was President of the NEUM. All the rest were members of the Natives Representative Council or their supporters.

The "Call" itself, not surprisingly, was as mixed a political ragbag as one could find. It started off by saying: "Having regard to all the facts, we are convinced that in recent times there has been a marked deterioration in the plight of the African in all aspects of his life. We are alarmed and strongly protest against the callous disregard of the fundamental rights of the African by the Government, largely with acquiescence of European public opinion." It considered that the situation was a "Challenge which cannot be ignored by the African people" and that the "primary necessity in meeting the challenge is unified action on the part of the African people. The signatories were "convinced that the preliminary step in this direction is the Unification of the main African political organisations — the African National Congress and the

All African Convention into 'THE ALL AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS', united and inspired by common principles and a common programme of action for the achievement of the liberation of the African people." To this end it considered that December 16th 1948 "be the day fixed for the bringing about of this Unified National Political Organisation" and suggested that a conference be held in Bloemfontein on that day.

Its concluding sentence indicated an attempt to cast as wide a net as had been cast in 1935 when the AAC was founded (with the ANC as one of its federated organisations) in response to the 'crisis' brought about by the three Hertzog Bills. It ran: "We therefore, most earnestly appeal to all Africans, Chiefs, Ministers of Religion, Leaders, men and women, young and old to rally to the call for African unity, and make December 16th, 1948, a turning point in African political history."

The choice of December 16th, 'Dingaan's Day' as the public holiday was then called, was not

casual. Nor the venue. Since 1935 both the AAC and ANC had held their annual conferences in Bloemfontein at about that time, usually with the 'Native Reps.' making a pilgrimage to the latter.

The 'Conference' that wasn't

Not surprisingly, the 'conference' did not come off. Certainly not in the form envisaged by the signatories to the "Call". The political reasons are obvious enough from what has been cited above. Apart from the conflicting and diametrically opposed political elements, it was so patently an ANC manoeuvre to bury the AAC, the federal body it had helped to found in 1935 because it had been too weak and discredited to rally the people against the Hertzog Bills. Now, after having discredited itself still further by its sell-out and its close association with the NRC quislings (whom it made equal parties to the "Call"), it wanted to revive itself by taking over the AAC in exchange for adding the word 'All' in front of ANC. (It was obviously the brainchild of the ever-slippery Professor Z. K. Matthews, NRC Quisling, who had given J. H. Hofmeyr the name of 'Ntambu — Our Hope'). Among the chief 'practical' reasons for the non-happening of the Conference were the considerations that Xuma had not consulted "the provinces" and that neither Jabavu nor Mahabane had had any authority from their executives either to be present or to sign.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XVIII)

1948: The Continuing Struggle for Principled Unity

The ANC-AAC unity conference, supposedly called for 16-17 December 1948, eventually got to the starting post at 3.30 p.m. on the 17th. Not that it got much further than the starting post. It was jointly presided over by Prof. D. D. T. Jabavu and Dr. A. B. Xuma, both of whom were soon to be on the way out of the Presidency of their respective organisations, the latter being replaced by an NRC quisling, Dr. J. S. Moroka, whom the pulp press has recently been trying to resurrect from his Thaba N'chu retreat. It broke down on the same day, but lingered on for another year before it was recognised that, despite the ANC's lip-service to unity and even to the ten-point programme, it just could not settle accounts with its collaborationist element. It could not break with and boycott bodies such as the Bunga and the Natives' Representative Council.

At the very outset, the AAC delegates laid great stress on the strength of the federal form of organisation at that stage of the struggle. Indeed, on its necessity. It was ironical that this had to be done, because in 1935 it was primarily the ANC which, realizing that it was too weak to rally the people against the Hertzog Bills, called the All African Convention into being on a federal basis. Now, in 1948, it was the Communist Party spokesmen, Moses Kotane and J. B. Marks, respectively the delegates of ANC Cape Town and ANC Johannesburg, who led the attack against federation. Their chief supporter, not surprisingly, was

It turned out that Xuma had invited them to a discussion on our new 'crisis' situation and they had landed themselves in this company. Another, probably, was that between October and November the Government had also issued a 'Call'. It called the MRCs home to a meeting of the NRC to be held in January 1949.

What did take place, however, and that on the 17th December, was a joint meeting between delegations of the ANC and AAC, jointly presided over by Xuma and Jabavu. Most of the AAC members were not even in Bloemfontein on the 16th, because they were engaged in Queenstown at a conference of the African Voters' Association. However, the proceedings at Bloemfontein on the 17th were very instructive.

Prior to the joint meeting on the 17th, there was a preliminary meeting of the ANC to elect its spokesmen. This was presided over by that notorious tribalist, A. W. G. Champion, member of the NRC. According to Calata, who kept the Minutes, he made "some noteworthy remarks" before he vacated the chair. They were noteworthy indeed. He said: "that the policy of the Nationalist Government made every white man an enemy of the African who would do everything possible to obtain his liberation from white oppression. The Africans, concluded Cllr. Champion, would welcome assistance of any nation or race, be they Russian or Japanese or Indians."

a member of the NRC, Paul Mosaka. (The line-up is not without contemporary significance, if one notes the range of and line-up in the fierce struggle now going on in Natal and Transvaal in connection with the boycott of the S.A. Indian Council 'elections'). The MRC clearly did not want unity at all, not because he was necessarily tribalist but because he was opportunist. He could operate much better inside the NRC if there was no unity against it outside. He declared that there was a need for both a federal and a unified organisation, but then launched an attack against the AAC because in advance of any unity talks it was demanding that

certain types of representation be rejected.

This argument should be noted also because down to the present day the neo-liberals, and other enemies of unified struggle on a principled basis, persist in the crude untruth that the "Unity Movement" do not want unity except on the Simon-pure terms that they lay down, branding as collaborators those who want to use the platform the rulers provide and the leadership they permit in order to "fight them from within". In more ways than one, this 'conference' on 17 December 1948 gave the lie then already to the continuing slander. Among other things, and to demonstrate that it was more interested in principles than positions, the AAC announced that in advance it wanted to guarantee the ANC a certain percentage of seats on the Executive. **Breakdown, but . . .**

However, the arguments went back and forth. Prof. Z. K. Matthews, perhaps the last and certainly the most talented of the mission-boy 'greats' of that epoch, tried to get a Steering Committee set up. As a practised helmsman, he knew why. So did everybody else, and the AAC delegates minced no words in denouncing this as a formula for slow burial of the whole question of principled unification in the struggle.

Eventually, in desperation, as he himself put it, and because he wanted to gain respectability for his attendance' on that occasion, Prof. Jabavu moved that the conference adopt the statement issued on 3 October 1948 (see previous article). In fact, he read it out, but his own organisation, the AAC, rejected it. He then wanted conference to agree that he and Xuma be empowered to draw up another statement in the light of the decisions of the joint conference. This too the AAC delegation rejected, because it knew only too well that that was little more than a variation of the ZKM burial scheme.

When the Rev. Z. R. Mahabane moved that the principle of unity be adopted, the resolution was carried unanimously. But when he moved further that a committee be appointed to go into the question of unity and report to Conference, the AAC delegation moved an amendment that the Committee should consist of the two Executives. And this was carried unanimously. Whatever the motivation from the ANC side, it certainly had the advantage from the viewpoint of the AAC that it provided for time and opportunity to continue a debate which was being stifled, if not strangled, by collaborationists as well as elements seeking to manipulate as they had sought to do inside of Kadavie's ICU.

This decision that the two executives should continue discussion and negotiation during the coming year, 1949, was the main positive and concrete thing that came out of the meeting. It was already very clear to those close enough that the

obstacle to unity was not rivalry in the leadership, as some said then and others have said since. It was the old and the continuing question of collaboration versus non-collaborationism. With which, then as now, there walks hand in hand the question of whether there should be an all-embracing mass struggle of all the oppressed and exploited people until final victory, or *ad hoc* protests and isolated gestures and passive resistance delusions. On a different plane and a more localised scale, the same sort of question was being theoretically and practically hammered out — in the Cape Peninsula on the question of resistance to train apartheid which in August 1948 the newly elected Nationalist Government of Malan and Havenga had introduced on suburban trains.

The T.A.R.C.

The best shorthand introduction to what the struggle against train apartheid was all about, what its difficulties were from the very beginning and why it inevitably ran into the sand, is provided by a document, 'The T.A.R.C. Reports', published by its Secretary, A. E. (Sonny) Abdurahman, a bare two months after the Train Apartheid Resistance Committee was formed (August 18, 1948).

The TARC was an *ad hoc* Committee. The Anti-CAD and the Local Committee of the NEUM, opposed in principle to *ad hoc* committees and *ad hoc* campaigns which highlighted one or other aspect of oppression and failed to struggle against it as part of the whole system, nevertheless joined the TARC. The first reason was to demonstrate that, although it was politically strong in the Western Cape particularly, it was not sectarian and divisive. There was a widespread and angry reaction to the introduction of train apartheid in the Peninsula, and the move was regarded as an arrogant provocation by an intoxicated Nationalist government. The second reason was that the Anti-CAD and Local Committee hoped to be able to broaden the relatively narrow struggle into a mass struggle of an all-embracing nature.

In 'The T.A.R.C. Reports', the Committee states that after existing for two months it wanted to report to the people on how things stood. It reported that it had held crowded meetings throughout the Peninsula, that there had been financial and moral support locally and from other parts of the country. It said that "After a tremendous mass rally on the Grand Parade on September 5th, the Government decided to prosecute 10 members of the TARC on charges of inciting to public violence, inciting to break railway regulations, and fomenting ill-feeling between Europeans and Africans. Nine of these were found 'not guilty' on all counts. One was found guilty of the second charge, and fined £5. We are appealing against this on the grounds

that the Railway Regulations under which the latest apartheid measures have been introduced are ultra vires (not valid in law). This will be in the nature of a test case on the regulations." This was the case of R. v. Abdurahman.

'The Purpose'

Then the Report goes on to say: "But the TARC was not formed merely to make a test case to prove Train Apartheid invalid. It was formed to organise ACTIVE, DISCIPLINED, MASS RESISTANCE by boarding the marked coaches on the trains, and making the regulations unworkable. It was formed to DEFEAT the regulations by every means at our disposal. This was and is the purpose for which TARC exists. This is what we are working to bring about as soon as possible. The TARC is convinced that this CAN be done. Why, then, the delay? Why hasn't it started yet?"

'Two Reasons'

It says "There are two reasons why the mass boarding of the marked coaches has not yet begun. It is important that YOU should know these reasons, because YOU alone can help us to remedy the position and mass action cannot but be delayed until YOU get moving.

"The first reason is that, despite the enthusiastic support we have received from tens of thousands of people all over the Peninsula, WE HAVE RECRUITED ONLY 450 VOLUNTEERS. We are, of course, pleased that these 450 have come forward and every credit is due to them. But with such a small number we cannot start MASS resistance to train apartheid, we cannot have MASS boarding of the coaches marked 'Slegs Blankes'. To attempt such a move would be foolhardy, and ineffective and the whole movement may suffer a severe setback. We could, of course, send in tiny batches of 10-20, but these would not achieve anything and would merely be offering a TOKEN resistance. We don't want mere token resistance. We want REAL resistance, MASS resistance so that the regulations will be unworkable. We are up against a Government which is determined to carry out its plans irrespective of our resolutions. Token resistance would not 'soften their hearts' or change their minds. They will move only when organised, disciplined, determined mass resistance makes it impossible for them to carry on with their train apartheid.

So we must have an army of volunteer-resisters. We must have thousands of people determined to ride in the marked coaches regularly, day after day, week after week. Until we have such an army, nothing can be done to bring about EFFECTIVE resistance. Thus the question, "Why the delay?" resolves into a question which YOU should ask yourself. Have YOU volunteered? Has your fellow-

worker volunteered? Your neighbour? Your brother? Your sister? Your father and mother? Your son and daughter? Or are you depending on someone else to volunteer? Are you waiting for someone else to go into action, while you are content to remain aloof or to cheer and pass resolutions at meetings?

"The second important reason why mass action has not been launched yet, is that only nine trade unions have come forward to join the TARC. In other words the majority of the organised workers are still standing aloof, outside the TARC. Some unions say it is none of their business. Some say they can't have 'politics' inside their union. Others say that they will fight apartheid when it reaches their union. Others say that they are waiting for the S.A. Trades and Labour Council Local Committee or the W.P. Federation of Labour Unions to give a lead. And only NINE have come into the TARC.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? Into which group does YOUR trade union fall? Have YOU been consulted, or has someone else decided that YOUR trade union should not join the TARC?

Very many of the unions which are not yet in the TARC have a large Non-European membership. Some of them are predominantly Non-European. But yet SOMEONE has decided on behalf of these workers that their union should stay out of the TARC and thereby accept train apartheid.

There are unions which have boasted for years that they allow no racialism and no politics inside them. It is about time that the workers examined this boast a little more closely. In very many cases, in fact in most cases, they will find that it is a lie. Every trade union which claims to be non-racialistic and non-political but refuses to join in the fight against train-apartheid, which affects every Non-European worker, is in fact supporting the racialistic doctrine of apartheid. Every such union HAS a political policy — it supports the politics of the Government, the Nationalist Party, or the politics of the United Party."

'The Irresponsible'

In conclusion the leaflet says: "You have heard accusations that the TARC is shilly-shallying, avoiding the issue, afraid of action. This accusation comes from two sources: (1) from those who are eager to see the People's cause defeated so that they may justify their own policy of collaboration with, and submission to, apartheid; and (2) from elements who are prepared to plunge the Non-Europeans into any irresponsible and adventurist action, just to be able to boast that 'we are up and doing', even if this action must inevitably lead to disaster. This is the line of the Communist Party against which the majority of the TARC have had

to fight for the past two months. We were not prepared to send into action the few volunteers whose self-sacrifice would not make any impression on the train-apartheid issue, as their small number could only lead to their imprisonment WITHOUT anything being achieved thereby, except the fizzling

out of the movement in a miserable defeat.

The issue is much too big, and much too important for all the Non-European oppressed, for any display of individualistic heroics. And as responsible leaders we can think only in terms of MASS resistance, Mass action ..."

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XX) Grand Apartheid: Their Nation and Ours

The titanic battle waged against fascism and racism in World War II from 1939 to 1945; the anti-colonial revolutions in China, India and the Middle East; and the struggle in Africa during the forties and fifties for Independence from colonial oppression made a profound impact on and influenced fundamentally the political ideas, attitudes and strategies of struggle against racism and political oppression in the Union of South Africa.

Previous articles in this series have dealt with the new road embarked upon during this period by the Teachers' League of South Africa, the Anti-CAD movement, the Non-European Unity Movement and the All African Convention. And in December 1949 the African National Congress (ANC) adopted a Programme of Action intended to throw overboard the tactics of moderation such as petitions and deputations to the ruling forces. In 1949, also, nurtured in its Youth League, there came to power in the ANC a new leadership that in 1950 began to push the old conservative elements in a direction of militant African nationalism and mass action and towards tactics of boycott, strike and civil disobedience, that culminated in the Defiance Campaign, naively calculated to bring about fundamental change through non-violent civil disobedience. In this article we examine the response of the rulers to these new ideas and strategies.

The Malanzis: Architects of Apartheid

The Malan government had come to power in 1948 on a platform of Apartheid and the promise to the white electorate that if Smuts' United Party was too squeamish to tackle it they would deal with the changed political situation in which "kaffirs", "coolies" and "hotnots" had the gall to demand equality with the White man.

In the first session of the Parliament of the 1950s the Malanzis wasted no time in making it clear that in that decade they were determined to mould, in accordance with their Apartheid philosophy and the master-race ideology, a South Africa in which each ethnic group would be defined biologically; each group would live in a geographically demarcated area, separate from all other groups; only persons of white descent would sit and be represented in the law-making institutions of the land and the other ethnic groups would be excluded from the body politic. In this South Africa of the *Herrenvolk* there would be no inter-racial integration and no social mixing. The white man alone was going to be the ruler and enjoy the privileges of first-class citizenship and those classified Coloured, Indian and Bantu were going to be

ruled and relegated to the status position of permanent non-citizens.

Some Pillars of the Structure

In 1948 Train Apartheid had been introduced, with separate coaches for each "race" group. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 was designed to ensure that the master race would remain pure and that in future all children of, what they regarded as, mixed blood would be bastards.

In 1950 the Population Registration Act placed every man, woman and child in a "racial" group and forced everybody over the age of eighteen to carry identity documents clearly defining the "racial" group of the bearer. In 1950, also, Dinges introduced the notorious Group Areas Bill. This, when it became an Act, empowered officials of the Group Areas Board to proclaim specific residential and business areas for the exclusive occupation of a particular "racial" group employing the machinery evolved under the Smuts Government's Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1946 for the restriction of S. Africans of Asiatic descent. The Group Areas Act was aimed at clearing "Coloureds" and "Indians" out of areas in which the master race lived. While they housed people other than Whites these areas were crudely termed "black spots". In terms of the Act hundreds of thousands of persons not classified white were and still are being forcibly removed to the outskirts of all towns in industrial and rural areas throughout South Africa.

The Nationalists with fanatical zeal began to dismantle the political structures that had existed before 1950. The token, meaningless, enfranchisement of "Indians" in Natal was summarily terminated. In 1951 the Native Representative Council was abolished, ostensibly for refusing to do business with the Nats as they had previously done with the United Party under the patronage of their Liberal mentors. On 14 October 1950 Malan and Havenga made a horse deal on the so-called Cape Coloured Vote. Under the Malan-Havenga deal "Coloured" voters in the Cape would be removed from the common voters' roll and placed on a separate roll with power to elect four members to the Assembly, one

to the Senate, and two to the Cape Provincial Council — whites only in the first two categories but not explicitly so in the case of the Provincial Council. On 8 March 1951, Donges effected the deal by introducing in the Assembly the Separate Representation of Voters Bill, which became law in June 1951.

But of even greater urgency to the tub-thumpers of master-race ideology, the belief in the superiority of certain people and the inferiority of others, was the need to articulate the rationale and to establish the legislative machinery that would physically remove the "Bantu" (the new in-word not to offend the "natives") from the urban areas of South Africa, and politically from the body politic. The "Bantu" would be pushed back to the reserves, each to his own tribal area. "Bantu" would in future be temporary sojourners in the urban areas, where they would be tolerated only as providers of labour.

To work out the blue print for the future South African society, ideologues had to be appointed. W. W. M. Eiselen became a member of the Native Affairs Commission, and Hendrik F. Verwoerd became Minister of Native Affairs on 18 October 1950.

But while they were evolving the total strategy, fashioning the blueprint that would ensure for the white nation a permanent status of privileged ruling class, the Malanzis saw the urgency for a plan that not only would crush the rising militancy of the oppressed and silence their growing demands for equality, but would obliterate for all time from their minds *any idea at all* of equality in a free South Africa.

They saw the solution to this problem in a system of schooling that would indoctrinate the new generations of the oppressed into an unquestioning acceptance of their inferior position in South African society. Thus there was appointed in 1949 the Bantu Education Commission, with Eiselen as its chairman. This Commission spawned the monster of Bantu Education, under the control of the government Department of Native Affairs. With its Christian-National (CNO) doctrines of "eiesoortigheid" and "andersoortigheid" it was intended to crush forever all aspirations for freedom on the part of the majority section of the oppressed. The other sections, "Coloured" and "Indian", were dealt with later in similar fashion. And thus was born the "educational" systems that produced the events of 1976, dramatic evidence that this pillar of the apartheid structure had crumbled.

Verwoerd undertook to show the country and the world "how various Acts, Bills and also public statements which I have made all fit into a pattern, and together form a single constructive plan". He appointed a socio-economic Commission under F.

R. Tomlinson whose Report turned barren Reserves miraculously into Tribal Homelands whose inhabitants would, upon request, be granted Independence. Verwoerd also appointed an Inter-departmental Committee to investigate the location industry near the Reserves so as to reverse the process of "Bantu" job-seekers "invading" the white Urban areas. In Verwoerd's philosophy the "Bantu" had to be trained for self-government, based on their own traditions. And so, in place of the Native Representative Council, he planned a pyramid of Bantu Authorities in town and country, rooted in tribal custom. "Bantu" in white towns would be refused political rights. What was needed, apparently, was to provide in every town, and particularly in every industrial area, a potentially comprehensive location site which would be separated from the white urban area by a *cordon sanitaire*. Verwoerd's aim also was to eliminate black land-ownership in white farming areas, and to get rid of "Bantu" squatting and labour tenancy on white farms.

We shall examine in later articles the plethora of legislation that Verwoerd introduced to give effect to his grandiose schemes which would lay the foundations of the South African White Nation that he so fanatically visualised.

While pushing through Parliament legislation designed to flesh their concept of the Nation, the *Herrenvolk* also gave notice that they would not tolerate any opposition to these policies and would crush all counter ideologies.

The first "danger" to which they gave their attention was the association between the ANC and the Communist Party of S.A. In May 1950 Blackie Swart, the Minister of Justice, introduced the Unlawful Organisations Bill which was soon withdrawn and replaced by the Suppression of Communism Bill. The Bill defined Communism to mean not only Marxist-Leninism, but also "any related form of that doctrine" which sought to bring about "any political, industrial, social or economic change within the Union by the promotion of disturbance or disorder", whether in association with a "foreign government" or not, or by encouraging hostility between Europeans and Non-Europeans. The powers of the Minister under the Suppression of Communism Act were made so wide and so arbitrary that it has enabled the Nationalist Government viciously to ban hundreds of persons and outlaw countless organisations that have in any way opposed its ideology.

The frontal onslaught against the last vestiges of political rights of the oppressed people unleashed a flood of political activity among them. The Anti-CAD and the Non-European Unity Movement held meetings throughout the country to rally the oppressed. In national conferences and at meet-

ings of local committees the need for the unity of the oppressed was emphasised over and over. The ANC embarked upon its planned campaign of civil disobedience. But the Non-European Unity Movement also correctly analysed that the struggle against naked fascism and blatant racism could be waged successfully only if the oppressed clearly understood the designs of the *Herrenvolk*, clearly grasped the nature of the struggle that had to be waged and accepted that indispensable in the struggle for liberation was the forging of one united South African nation. The struggle against *Herrenvolkism* could be won only if waged on the basis of the Unity of all the oppressed; on a Programme of minimum demands and by their refusing to become involved in the machinery of their own oppression. The strategy of struggle had to be Non-Collaboration in any form of oppressive machinery.

Declaration to the People of South Africa

In April 1951, five years after it had issued *A Declaration to the Nations of the World*, the Non-European Movement issued *A Declaration to the People of South Africa*. This *Declaration to the People of South Africa* sought to put clearly before the oppressed the concept of a South African nation that was in stark contrast to the Malanazi nation that would exclude all who were not "white" and keep them in permanent subjection. And sought to persuade the oppressed that only by building this nation of all South Africans could they live as full citizens in a democratic country.

The Declaration, after stating that "the force of truth and right has not been crushed and WE ARE NOT ALONE", questions the reasons for the slow progress in building the unity of the nation "without which we cannot liberate ourselves".

The contents of the Declaration are as relevant and meaningful in 1980 as they were in 1951. Those who today are proposing a re-assessment of the policy of Non-Collaboration and who are indulging in theories that are divisive, would do well to study the Declaration. It states:

"We know that the *Herrenvolk* are waging relentless war upon us and aim at crushing us as a people and reducing us to a soul-less, will-less, ambition-less chattel slavery. Yet we go about as if we did not know either the cause of our suffering or the remedy for it. Every new blow that the *Herrenvolk* inflict upon us is received first with astonishment, and then with frustration. Somehow the hatred of oppression that is generated by it, and even the determination to resist and fight back, is not cumulative, but is dissipated either in fruitless, isolated outbursts, or in meaningless argumentation over trifles, or in the harmless channel of appeals, resolutions, and petitions readily provided by the *Herrenvolk*

agencies. The dead weight of the past weighs heavily upon us and we seem reluctant to throw it off. We still think and act as isolated groups each in and for his own kraal of Africans, Coloureds, Indians, Malays and so on."

The Declaration then postulates in clear terms who the people are that constitute the South African nation. This concept totally rejects a *Herrenvolk* ideology. It asks the question:

"Who are the people to whom we are addressing this declaration? Who constitutes the South African nation? The answer to this question is as simple as it would be in any other country. The nation consists of the people who were born in South Africa and who have no other country but South Africa as their mother-land. They may have been born with a black skin or with a brown one, a yellow one or a white one. They may be long-headed or round-headed; straight-haired or curly-haired; they may have long noses or broad noses; they may speak Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, English or Afrikaans, Hindi, Urdu or Swahili, Arabic or Jewish, they may be Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, or of any other faith. So long as they are born of a mother and belong to the human species, so long as they are not lunatics or incurable criminals, they all have an equal title to be citizens of South Africa, members of the nation, with the same rights, privileges and duties. In a nation it is not necessary that the people forming it should have a common language or a common culture, common customs and traditions. There are many nations where the people speak different languages, consist of different nationalities with different cultures. All that is required for a people to be a nation is a community of interests, love of their country, pride in being citizens of their country."

The Declaration then postulates the community of interests that should exist among Non-Europeans because of their common oppression. It continues:

"But this universal concept of a nation is not shared by the South African *Herrenvolk*, who have usurped to themselves all political, economic and judicial rights, who have wielded the gun and grabbed the land in order to proclaim themselves the sole citizens of the country, the sole rulers, owners, law-makers, to proclaim themselves THE nation. It is against these usurpers who have robbed the whole nation of its rights and reduced its people to the position of outcasts thrust into reserves, locations, bazaars and sub-economic and sub-human townships and tolerated only as servants and unskilled labourers — it is against these that the nation has to unite in the struggle for its land, rights and liberty. It is therefore to all those who are against

Nazism and *Herrenvolkism* that this Declaration of the Non-European Unity Movement is addressed. If it is primarily addressed to all Non-Europeans, it does not exclude any European who accepts unconditionally our right to full and equal citizenship and our definition of the nation."

In its Conclusions the Declaration says:

"The Herrenvolk are waging war upon the Non-Europeans, and if we want to survive as free human beings we have to win this war. We can win it only if we are prepared to fight, to bear sacrifices and submit to discipline in the national cause. Even without arms, with the only weapon at our disposal — Non-Collaboration — we can win. "But in order to achieve victory.

We have got to build the Nation.

We have got to build the unity of the Nation.

We have got to put the Quislings beyond the pale of the Nation.

We have got to mobilise every capable man and woman into active local organisations.

We have got to bring organised workers, the trade unions, into the national organisations.

We have got to co-ordinate the work of town and country."

The Declaration concludes:

"Let us not forget that battles are fought, and will be fought, over this or that position, over this or that Bill, but a war is fought over big issues. And the big issues for which we are fighting are contained in the 10-Point Programme."

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XXI)

Apartheid Cornerstone: 'Ethnicity'—'Race'; Settling the 'Native Question'

In the decade of the 1950s the Nationalist Government pushed through Parliament a plethora of laws designed to make all the instruments of rule representative of white opinion only: laws designed to effect the total separation of the 'different ethnic groups; to move all Non-White persons out of the centres of towns in industrialised and rural areas; and to leave control of White education under the Provincial Education Departments while placing control of education for 'Natives' under a Native Affairs Department, for 'Coloureds' under a Coloured Affairs Department, and for 'Indians' under an Indian Affairs Department.

At each session of Parliament numerous laws were rushed through with a desperate urgency to secure the permanent position of superiority of the 'White race' and the permanent inferiority of the 'other races'. Terms like 'eiesoortig' and 'ander-soortig' became vogue terms in the political vocabulary of the Apartheid ideologists. And the government relentlessly pursued strategies that would crush all opposition to its grand designs and grandiose schemes to divide South Africa into a 'white area' occupying 87% of the land and eight separate 'Bantu Homelands' occupying the other 13%.

Dr H. F. Verwoerd, when he was Minister of Native Affairs, defined Apartheid thus: "Apartheid comprises a whole multiplicity of phenomena. It comprises the political sphere; it is necessary in the social sphere; it is aimed at in church matters; it is relevant in every sphere of life. Even within the economic sphere it is not just a question of numbers. What is more important there is whether one maintains a colour bar or not."

Cornerstone: Ethnicity — Divide and Rule

The Nationalists with fanatical zeal promised that they would undo the unforgivable, harm that previous governments had done to race relations by not recognising the separate, ethnic origins of the 'peoples of South Africa', and by permitting integration in the political, social, economic, education

and cultural spheres. The Government would encourage a feeling of pride in cultural identity, customs and traditions.

The ideology of Apartheid had to unfold and develop along the logical pattern of Divide and Rule, and so the 'Native question' had to be settled first.

Settling the 'Native Question' — First!

The Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1951 empowered the Minister of Native Affairs to force 'Natives' off public or privately owned land and authorised local authorities to establish resettlement camps. These became squatters' camps in which unemployment and the most wretched living conditions prevailed. The Native Building Workers' Act of 1951 restricted 'Native' building artisans to employment in locations and tribal areas. A 'Native' was not permitted to do work above the level of labourer in a 'White' area.

The Native Services Levy Act of 1952 compelled employers to pay their share of the construction of housing in 'Native locations'. The Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 limited 'Natives' with a right to live permanently in urban areas to those who had been born there, those who had resided there without a break for fifteen years and who had worked for the same employer for ten.

The Native (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act demonstrated the legis-

lators' cynicism and contempt in their naming an oppressive law in terms exactly the opposite of its real purpose. In terms of this Act passes were not abolished, their application was extended, except that passes now became 'Reference Books'. All 'Natives', including those formerly exempted under the pass laws, and now for the first time 'Native' women as well as men, had to carry Reference Books bearing their photographs, and information about their place of origin, their employment records, tax payments and police records.

The Bantu Authorities Act of 1953 was a prelude to the removal of Native Representatives from the House of Assembly and the Senate.

'Bantu' Education: Catching them young

The Bantu Education Act of 1953, which resulted from the Eiselen Commission's Report of 1951, removed control of all schools for 'Bantu' from the Education Departments of the Provinces and placed them under the control of the Native Affairs Department. Schools were placed in the hands of 'Bantu' School Boards, instruction in the vernacular was enforced in the Junior schools and both English and Afrikaans were made compulsory subjects in the Higher Primary schools. Differential syllabuses for 'Bantu' schools were laid down.

Dr H. F. Verwoerd, formerly a Professor of Psychology at Stellenbosch University and in 1953 Minister of Native Affairs, proclaimed: "Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live . . . education should have its roots entirely in the Native Areas and in the Native environment and Native community . . . The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour!"

In April 1953, the Criminal Laws Amendment Act was passed to deal with the type of situation that had threatened in 1952 during the Defiance Campaign of the African National Congress (ANC). In terms of the Act any person who committed any offence 'by way of protest or in support of any campaign against any law' could be sentenced to a whipping of ten strokes, a £300 (R600) fine, three years in jail or a combination of any two of the penalties. The Public Safety Act of 1953 empowered the Governor-General (that is the Cabinet) to declare a state of emergency if he thought the public order was seriously threatened. During a state of emergency there could be summary arrests with the government obliged to submit names to Parliament only after thirty days.

Mass Removals: New Locations

Under the Native Resettlement Act of 1954 'Native' residents of the Western Suburbs of Johannesburg were removed to a new area called

Meadowlands, twelve miles from the city. Sophiatown, Martindale, and Newclare had been established in 1905-1912 as townships in which 'Natives' were permitted to own land in a form of freehold which in turn gave them a semblance of permanent residence in an urban area. But the ideologies of the modern social engineers of Afrikanerdom and *Herrenvolkism* were antagonistic to freehold rights for 'Natives in White areas'. So the 'Natives' had to be moved to an area outside the municipal boundaries of Johannesburg. In spite of valiant opposition by the residents of these towns the removals were carried out on 9 February 1955, with the heartless precision of a military operation, by 2 000 policemen in armoured vehicles and trucks. The removals left over a thousand 'unlawful' residents of Johannesburg homeless. In 1956 Sophiatown was re-zoned for Whites and, with brutal contempt and disregard for the sensitivities of the former residents, and reminding one of how Winburg got its name during the Great Trek, the town was re-named TRIOMF.

In 1956, also, the Government, in terms of the Group Areas Act, proposed to zone the whole of the Table Mountain area on the west of the Suburban railway line from Cape Town to Muizenberg for White occupation only.

Tasks of Leadership

To be able to oppose a legislative programme that robbed those not classified White of even the minimal and really meaningless political rights that they had been allowed before 1948; a legislative programme that left those not White stunned and bitter; a legislative programme that resulted in social disruption, economic deprivation and hardship; and that through its Education policy threatened to transform young children with vital, enquiring and eager minds into docile, unquestioning, accepters of their inferior position in South Africa — to be able to oppose such a legislative programme and its dire intentions oppressed people — all those who were not White — were in need of political organisations and a leadership that understood the purpose and nature of their oppression. The people needed a leadership that spoke a political language that they could readily understand and identify with. The oppressed people needed to learn and understand the nature of their oppression and the similarity of the oppressive pattern that was unfolding for all those not classified 'White'. The oneness of the oppression and therefore the need for the fundamental unity of the oppressed had to be emphasised in all the different ways possible on and off the political platforms. The nature of their oppression had to be placed in the context of national and international events and the theoretical content of an opposing ideology had to be articulated. The organisational machi-

nery to withstand the onslaught had to be established.

To meet the challenge, the All African Convention, the Anti-CAD and the Non-European Unity Movement and their affiliate organisations in regional and annual national conferences, at mass meetings in the industrial centres and rural areas of South Africa; by way of statements, leaflets and publications and in the pages of the *Torch* newspaper consistently and without deviation carried the message of the oneness of oppression. These organisations rejected all concepts of "ethnicity" and ideologies of "race" and called for the unity of all people to withstand oppression. They waged the fight on the demands of the ten-point programme, and on the basis of non-collaboration, and employed the boycott as a weapon of struggle. They realised that the struggle was going to be a long and hard one and that therefore it had to be pursued consistently in accordance with firm principle and directed towards a clearly defined goal.

Congress Alliance: Dummy Elections

The African National Congress and the organisations with which it convened the Congress of the People in June 1955 — the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the South African People's Organisation (SACPO) and the Congress of Democrats (COD) — and later formed the Congress Alliance, conducted their campaigns against selected laws on a purely *ad hoc* basis. These organisations believed in collaboration and regarded the boycott as an essentially negative weapon. They established bogus unities aimed at getting huge mass support for campaigns to pressurise the Nationalist government into suspending or repealing certain laws or amending certain harsh clauses in a particular law to make it slightly more acceptable. And to wage this kind of battle inside of the Assembly and the Senate of the oppressors the African National Congress urged its followers to elect to the White parliament liberals Margaret Ballinger and her husband, and men of the likes of Sam Kahn and Leonard Lee-Warden. The ANC never terminated its collaboration with the Members of the Natives' Representative Council.

The ANC Annual Conference of 1953 held in Bloemfontein discussed from 8.00 p.m. until 2.30 a.m. whether or not to boycott the election of Whites as Natives' Representatives in Parliament and the Cape Provincial Council and the election of Africans to Advisory Boards. Members debated all that time without being able to arrive at an answer; and then referred the matter to Provincial Conferences. The Conference of the All African Convention (AAC) which had met in Bloemfontein only a few days earlier had, after a very brief discussion, resolved to boycott these Dummy

elections. In the ANC the argument for or against boycott continued throughout the 1950's. ANC members ran for seats on township Advisory Boards. In June 1954, the ANC in the Cape, where the election for three Natives' Representatives to the House of Assembly was to be held, resolved not to take an organised part in the November election but to allow each member to act according to his conscience.

In sharp contrast to the soul- and conscience-searching that paralysed Congress, the All African Convention issued a leaflet entitled ENOUGH OF THIS DUMMY, in which it stated categorically:

"We have had enough of these insults. We have had enough of these leade goats and these sham elections. We have had enough of these policemenchiefs and of the touts who make a living out of the deception and oppression of the people through the Advisory Boards, Bungas and separate representation in Parliament."

At a meeting of the O.F.S. Branch of the ANC held in October 1954 a resolution was passed condemning the Bantu Education Act; but at the same time the meeting passed another resolution pledging support to Mr. W. G. Ballinger who was standing as a 'Native Representative' in the Senate elections.

And it was essentially the ANC's stubborn retention of the policies of collaboration, and its belief that the liberation of Africans could be achieved by Africans alone (although they could unite with other groups on specific issues), that kept Congress out of a genuine unity with the All African Convention and the Anti-CAD in the Non-European Unity Movement.

ANC: Selective Opposition

Before the Defiance Campaign of 1952, the ANC directed a letter to Prime Minister Malan stating that if six laws — which the ANC specified — were not repealed by a certain date people would defy these laws and court arrest. The ANC did not call for the repeal of all discriminatory legislation and demand full and equal rights for all. It recognised the oppressive nature of only six laws.

The strategy of the ANC against the Western Areas Removal Scheme, its instructions given to parents to oppose Bantu Education by removing their children from the schools and to teachers to resign their posts did not take cognisance of whether the strategies were capable of practical implementation. And so Congress missed opportunities to politicise for fundamental change. In commenting on the reasons behind the SAIC-ANC 'Joint-Plan' of 1952 an article in the *Torch* of February 1952 stated:

The Joint Planning Council is the latest example of the frauds practised by Indian and African Congress leaders. The "Plan" must be condemned for two main reasons. First, it is

NOT a struggle for democracy. Second, it is NOT a united struggle of the oppressed people. Instead of coming out with the demand for full democracy, the "Plan" of the Joint Planning Council actually promises the government that they are only demanding the repeal of 'certain' laws and are not struggling against oppression as a whole.

And even for this purpose the leaders of the Congress are not prepared to unite. The "Plan" is really two separate demonstrations (not struggles) — one by Africans against the Pass laws and one by Indians against provincial barriers and one or two other laws.

It was because of the collaborationist politics of the ANC, SAIC and SACPO, that posed no real threat to the privileged position of the White section, that they enjoyed the publicity given their Days of Mourning, Defiance and other campaigns and stunts. The Press that so eagerly publicised the activities of the ANC barely mentioned the activities of the AAC, Anti-CAD and NEUM because the policies of boycott and non-collaboration were anathema to a Press that is an integral part of the

machinery of rule and basically has always served the interests of the privileged section.

And the publicity given to the stunts and campaigns of the ANC created the impression that the Congress was an organisation with mass support. The Nationalist Government was determined to implement its laws and was not going to tolerate any challenge to its position of hegemony. So it used the powers it had granted itself under the Suppression of Communism Act, the Criminal Laws Amendment Act and the Public Safety Act to ban members of the African National Congress, the All African Convention, the Anti-CAD and the Non-European Unity Movement. Police attended the meetings of these organisations. Leaders were banished to areas where they were restricted. In the course of 1952, 8 500 persons were arrested on charges of political activity.

Nevertheless, in spite of police harassment and surveillance, the ANC, AAC, Anti-CAD, NEUM and affiliate organisations continued the struggle against oppressive laws into the 1960's.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XXII)

The Grand Design: Finishing Touches; Langa-Sharpeville

The year 1958 was the end of the first decade of Nationalist government rule in South Africa. During the decade the Nats had relentlessly pursued a legislative programme that would give effect to their ideology of Apartheid in all spheres of South African life. For the grand design of Apartheid-cum-Separate Development to be completed the Nats still had to remove all 'Non-White' representation in Parliament, to set up governmental structures for the subordinate 'ethnic' groups, to extend the system of separate schooling to the institutions of higher education, to pass Labour Laws that would weaken if not destroy Trade Union power, and to effect the total socio-economic and cultural separation of the people of South Africa along racial lines.

But during the same decade those not classified White were taught, and learnt, the lessons of the indivisibility of oppression and of the necessity for the unity of the oppressed. Throughout the decade the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) and its affiliate organisations, the Anti-Coloured Affairs Department (Anti-CAD), All African Convention (AAC) and the Anti-Segregation Council taught the lessons of non-collaboration and the boycott of institutions and legislative machinery established to implement 'Apartheid Ontwikkeling'.

Strikes, Days-of-Mourning, Days-of-Prayer stunts of the African National Congress (ANC) largely dissipated the energies of their followers and left them exhausted and politically confused. But the opposition to government policies and ideology remained resolute.

The Nats, attempted to break the spirit of opposition to 'Coloured' and 'Bantu' Education by dis-

missing from service members of the Teachers' League of S.A. (TLSA) and the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA). By banning leaders of the ANC, AAC, Anti-CAD and NEUM they attempted to shatter the opposition to laws designed to separate and oppress.

The largest and longest trial in history lasted from August 1958 to March 1961, when the last of the original 91 Treason Trialists were acquitted on all charges (156 persons had been arrested on 5 December 1956). But the demand for the equality of all peoples in South Africa remained undiminished despite all these attempts by the rulers to kill it.

So for the Nationalist Government, the rounding off of the total strategy and setting up of the machinery that would entrench White hegemony and sustain White privilege became a matter of urgency.

Dummy Elections: Opposition

In 1956 the *Separate Representation of Coloured Voters Act* had been passed. The Act provided for the placing of 'Coloured' voters in the Cape on a separate voters' roll and the 'election' of four Whites to serve as 'Coloured Representatives' in Parliament. A Coloured Representative Council would be set up. The 'election' for 'Coloured Representatives' was held on 3 April 1958, thirteen days before the 'General Election' (White voters only) on 16 April.

The National Anti-CAD launched a country-wide campaign urging 'Coloureds' to think of themselves as people of South Africa and to have nothing to do with the 'dummy elections'. The utter poverty of the ideas and policies of the Congress Alliance was again exposed in the 'election' for 'Coloured' Representatives. The South African Coloured Peoples' Organisation (SACPO), the 'Coloured' wing of the Alliance, declared the boycott "negative" and "politically unscientific", and nominated two White candidates, Piet Beyleveld, president of the Congress of Democrats (and later the chief state witness at the Treason Trial), and Piet Vogel, a leader of the COD in Port Elizabeth, to stand as candidates.

In a pamphlet *The Road is Forward* the National Anti-CAD asked why there was such excitement about this 'election' among the touts, quislings and strike-breakers and gave the following answer:

"The answer to this question is to be found in the fundamental creed of government over defenceless and voiceless colonial slaves everywhere, a creed so aptly expressed by the late General Smuts: a slave must always be given a bone to gnaw or else he thinks of meat."

"'Separate Representation' through 3 'Native Representatives' and a 'Natives' Representative Council made up the bone thrown to the African people in 1936. And 20 years later, in 1956, 'Separate Representation' through 4 'Coloured Representatives' plus a 'Coloured Representative Council' is the bone thrown to the 'Coloured' people. If the aim of Smuts in throwing the bone was that there should always be fighting over it, as well as a hiving off of the more educated section from the mass, naturally the same aim holds good in the case of the 'Coloured' people. However, during these twenty years that separate the second from the first the times have changed, and the assumption of the *Herrenvolk* that the 'Coloureds' must and will repeat the barren path trodden by the Africans, is altogether arrogant and blind," the pamphlet stated.

The results of the 3 April 'election' was a sharp slap in the face for all those who had attempted to dupe the 'Coloureds' into an acceptance of

dummy representation. Of an estimated 130 000 males qualified to vote in the Cape Province only 24 000 had bothered to register (registration was then not compulsory) and only 14 451 had voted. The pattern of voting showed that the majority of those who had voted were old conservative 'Cape Coloureds'. In the rural areas, farmers carried lorry-loads of voters — their labourers — to the polls. Four United Party candidates were returned. Beyleveld got 813 votes and Vogel 96.

Yet, in spite of the evidence of total opposition to the policies of the *Herrenvolk* starkly revealed in the 3 April results, Luthuli, then president of the ANC, still called on White voters to return the United Party in the 16 April 'White' elections. The politically bankrupt cry was once more raised: "Get the Nats. out!" A United Party Government would be the lesser of the two evils and would, it was argued, provide a respite and opportunities for Whites and Non-Whites to come together. Election Day was to be a day of mass prayer and dedication to the Cause of Freedom. And the National Workers' Conference resolved to organise a week-long stay-at-home throughout the country to begin two days before the election. On 12 April, four days before the 'general election', all gatherings of more than ten Africans in all major urban centres were banned.

On 16 April 1958 'White' voters returned the Nationalists with an increased majority. In reviewing the year the National Executive Committee of the ANC reported that the election had 'shattered' the 'illusions' that change could be effected through the electoral system.

University Apartheid

In April 1957 the 'Extension of University Education Bill' was introduced. The Bill provided 'for the establishment, maintenance, management and control of University Colleges for Non-White persons; for the admission of students to and the instruction at University Colleges; for the limitation of the admission of the Non-White students to certain University institutions.' Section 28 stipulated that from Jan. 1, 1958, no Non-European student might register at any of the 'White' universities without the written consent of the Minister. In the Parliamentary debates on the Bill Nationalist Party speakers stressed the need for the 'ethnic' universities to inculcate an *eiesoortige* cultural identity in their students and to cultivate the future leaders of the various groups. The implication was that these future leaders would accept and work all separate institutions and promote the ideologies of *eiesoortigheid* and *andersoortigheid*.

Job and Social Apartheid

The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 came into operation on 1 January 1957. The Act pro-

vided for Apartheid in Trade Unions and job Apartheid on a racial basis. It aimed at protecting workers of one 'race' against unfair competition from workers of another 'race' in a particular job. In fact its aim was to protect White workers against competition from Non-White workers. It also aimed at splitting Trade Unions and workers from top to bottom.

In 1957, also, the Native Laws Amendment Bill extended the areas to which the infamous Urban Areas and Labour Regulation Acts applied. The Bill facilitated the segregation of Africans and 'Coloureds' in urban and rural areas. The main purpose of the Bill was to make it impossible for an African to have a home in an urban area, even in a location. In terms of Clause 29(c)(7) any organisation or institution (including churches, schools, hospitals, clubs) which Africans were not specifically debarred from attending or belonging to, became illegal if it had not existed on 1 January 1938. In effect, then, this Act made it illegal for Africans to meet with other people in churches, social gatherings, sports and all other organisations. The Right of Assembly thus ceased for all who refused to be a party to such segregation by specifically excluding Africans from such gatherings.

Labour Needs: Resistance to Forced Removals

Throughout 1956 there had been resistance to Government attempts to foist Bantu Authorities upon Africans in rural areas and still living under Tribal authorities. Economic necessity in 1957 lent an urgency to the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act.

1957 witnessed a decline in gold mining on the Witwatersrand which threatened the closing of at least 14 mines. The decline had manifested itself in a drop of £80 million (about 160 million rand) in gold mining shares towards the end of 1956. But surveys had revealed substantial gold ore deposits in the Orange Free State and the South Western Transvaal. The opening of the Free State mines and the production of uranium would stem the decline. A problem that had always faced the gold mines, however, was the supply of cheap 'black' labour. The problem had been made a thousand times more difficult when the Central African Federation (Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) was founded and cheap labour from this region was drafted away from the gold mines in South Africa to the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). Agriculture and Secondary Industries in South Africa are heavily dependent upon the growth and expansion of Mining. So, with the opening up of the Free State mines and the consequent accentuation of the labour problem, the *Herrenvolk* parliament had introduced a host of oppressive laws to ensure the movement of cheap black labour from the tribal areas

in the Free State and Northern Transvaal into the mining areas. In June 1957, after fierce resistance to attempts to remove them in September 1956, the Mamathola tribe were driven from their fertile home in the Wolkeberg mountains near Tzaneen in the North-eastern Transvaal to a farm, Metz, thirty miles away on the Lowveld, where they had to join fatigue groups on farms and were shunted to the new mines. The people of Sekhukhuniland, an area between Lydenburg and Pietersburg, had stubbornly resisted the establishment of a Tribal Authority under the Native Affairs Department. Then in April 1957 the Government deported 2 Pedi councillors. The people suspected moves to depose their chief and open resistance continued. At the end of May 1958, the Government sent mobile units armed with stenguns and rifles into Sekhukhuniland in riot cars. The resistance of the people was broken and the Free State mines were assured of a new source of cheap labour.

In Pondoland, Tembuland and the Ciskei, also, people resisted the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act. In Tembuland in Umtata a commission sat to determine the people's reasons for their refusal to accept the new Tribal Authorities. One chief, Kaiser D. Matanzima, informed the commission that the Tembu people under him had been the first to accept the Bantu Authorities.

Africanism: Birth of PAC

The convening of the Congress of the People in June 1955, and the resultant formation of the Congress Alliance (comprising the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the South African Coloured Peoples' Organisation (SACPO) and the Congress of Democrats) exacerbated differences inside the ANC that eventually led to the breakaway in November 1958 by the Africanist group inside the ANC and the formation in March 1959 of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) led by Ashby P. Mda, Robert Sobukwe and Potlako Leballo.

The philosophy of Africanism had been enunciated in the ANC as early as the late 1940's when Anton Lembede in the Youth League began to question the influence of White Liberals and Communists on the policies of the Congress. The Africanists believed in 'Africa for the Africans' and the establishment of an All-African 'nation' in South Africa. They believed that only African nationalists had the potential to blend correct theory and practice and so form a powerful alliance between the leaders and the masses. Thus they denounced the presence of 'Whites', 'Coloureds' and 'Indians' in Congress as obstacles in the path of African self-realization.

The ideology of Africanism was given renewed vigour by the granting of 'Independence' to

the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1957 — which event, incidentally, filled the South African *Herrenvolk* with gloom. (At a Day of the Covenant speech in December 1957 at Grootte Schuur, Cape Town, Erasmus, the Minister of Defence, said: 'It is Africa's turn next.' He sadly observed that until quite recently the world had concerned itself not at all with Africa but 'to-day this continent stood with all its enormous potentialities in the limelight.' Erasmus raised the cry 'Communism has its eyes turned on Africa.')

But the response of American Imperialism did not reflect the gloom of the South African racists and indeed markedly influenced the course of events in South Africa. Richard Nixon, then Vice-president to Eisenhower, represented the American dollar at the Independence celebrations and his flirtation with Kwame Nkrumah and other 'fighters for independence' was so successful that the British were hopping mad. Nixon was accompanied by 'Negro' representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), who expressed feelings of identity with the Ghanaians. The Americans, shrewdly and expertly, began to cultivate as potential allies of Imperialism those who espoused the ideologies of Africanism, since their very African Nationalism represented Middle Class aspirations. The Africanists in Ghana, Tunisia, Morocco and inside South Africa desired collaboration with Imperialism but on the basis of a better 'cut'. The Pan-African Conference held in Accra, Ghana, in December 1958, witnessed very warm and cordial relations between the representatives of Ghana, Tunisia, Morocco, Malawi, South Africa (Liberal and ANC) and the representatives of French, American and British money interests. So the Africanists in South Africa broke with the ANC not only because of the presence of non-Africans in the Congress Alliance, but because they failed to see that the clause in the Kliptown Freedom Charter (of the ANC) which called for the Nationalisation of banks, mines and heavy industry was mere rhetoric.

The Independence struggle in Africa in the late 1950's led by forces with decidedly Middle Class aspirations also had its effect upon certain hitherto progressive elements inside the All-African Convention. In his Presidential Address to the AAC Conference at Edenvale, 14 to 16 December 1958, W. M. Tsotsi hailed emergent African nationalism as a progressive political force in so far as it was genuinely anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist. He saw the Bantu Authorities Act as an effort 'to crush the rising African professional and business class which demands a share in the economic power based on capitalist democratic rights'.

(The corrupting influence of the American dollar was also to affect Abraham Tiro and Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness movement ten years later.)

Upon its formation in March 1959 the Pan-Africanist Congress of South Africa immediately adopted the Programme of Action of the African Youth League. It then engaged in a struggle with the ANC for the support of the masses.

Langa-Sharpeville

In December 1959 the African National Congress resolved to conduct on 31 March 1960 massive country-wide demonstrations against the Pass Laws, linked with a National Campaign for a minimum wage of £1 (R2,00) a day.

On 18 March the Pan-Africanist Congress pre-empted the plan of the ANC by announcing a campaign to defy pass laws on 21 March 1960.

What was later reported to have been a peaceful march on the police station at Sharpeville in the Transvaal resulted in the deaths of 69 (the 'official' figure) African men and women who had gone to the police station to submit themselves for arrest for not having passes. Demonstrations in Langa, Cape Town, resulted in six deaths. As a ploy, the

Government actually suspended the Pass laws for a few days. This, it hoped, would remove the reason for the protests, and give it a chance to deal with the PAC and ANC in the quieter situation. But demonstrations continued.

On 28 March 1960, the Government introduced legislation to declare the ANC and PAC illegal organisations, the ban to become operative on 8 April.

On 30 March Philip Kgosana led about 30 000 marchers from Langa to Caledon Square in Cape Town to demand the release of detained leaders. Kgosana naively accepted the suggestion of an interview with Erasmus, then Minister of Police, and ordered the marchers to disperse. He was arrested when he went to keep the interview. On the afternoon of 30 March a State of Emergency was declared in 122 of the 265 magisterial districts of the Union of South Africa. In dawn raids on subsequent days 18 000 persons were detained under the Emergency regulations and 5 000 were eventually convicted on various charges.

The crippling effects on the liberatory movement of the aftermath of Langa-Sharpeville are seen and felt to this day. For by its declaration of a State of Emergency and its subsequent drastic measures the government effectively smashed all overt extra-parliamentary political opposition to it and its laws.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (XXIII)

The Past Two Decades

In this the concluding article in the series 'Majority Rule' it would be useful to review the significant contributions that have been made to the struggle for full and equal democratic rights for all in South Africa and all that would flow from this: an equal share for all in economic rewards; one system of free compulsory education; full and equal participation in sport and cultural activities; and the right of all to live a full life, without privilege on grounds of colour, "race" or creed.

It would be equally useful to assess what have been the strengths and what the weaknesses of the organisations that have participated in the struggle and to recognise the factors that have advanced this struggle and those that have retarded it. And the conflicting ideologies in the matrix of the Southern African situation must be analysed.

In the light of the immediate internal and external situation the most meaningful contribution in this struggle has been the attempts over the past three and a half decades to establish a real and lasting unity of the Non-White oppressed. The other major contributions — not necessarily in order of importance — have been the prosecution of the struggle on the basis of a programme of MINIMUM non-negotiable demands, aggressively articulated; the conducting of the struggle through organisations representative of all sections of the oppressed, from which the vanguard of the leadership has been drawn to express the moods and feelings of the people; and the forging of the policy of non-collaboration and of the boycott as a weapon of struggle — to deny the rulers, their agents and agencies the opportunity to involve the oppressed in the machinery of their own oppression.

Birth of the Struggle

The major contribution to the theory and practice of political struggle in South Africa was made from the early-1940's by the progressive thinkers in the All African Convention and those who established the Anti-Coloured Affairs Department. Through study, analysis, polemic and discussion in the New Era Fellowship, and through debate and clashes with the conservative and reactionary bureaucrats in the African People's Organisation (APO), the (old) Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA), the All African Convention and other organisations that functioned in the 1940's and 1950's, they gave these organisations a character and direction that was new and significant in the political life of South Africa. They rejected the sectionalism of the APO and the African National Congress and strove to build a national organisation as a home for all sections of the oppressed. They realised that the 'racial' prejudice in the ranks of the oppressed themselves, their chief weakness, was what gave the oppressors their strength. And so these men and women drawn from the ranks of the intelligentsia marched out boldly along a NEW ROAD in South African politics.

In December 1943 the preliminary Unity Conference was held in Bloemfontein, attended by delegates from the All-African Convention and the

National Anti-CAD movement. The 10-Point Programme was adopted as the basis of Unity. The delegates from these two organisations were uncompromisingly non-collaborationist in outlook. The Anti-CAD movement had come into being to struggle AGAINST the Coloured Advisory Council and Coloured Affairs Department and FOR full democratic rights. The All-African Convention applied a strict boycott of the Native Representative Council.

Nationalism vs Unity

But the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) were (up to the early 1950's) a collaborationist clique and were "Members of the Native Representative Council." The ANC was intensely sectarian and incurably hostile to genuine Non-European unity, which it opposed with Nationalism or Africanism. The ANC argued that because the All-African Convention had become part of the Unity Movement it had forfeited its claim to being the mouthpiece of the African people.

The Youth League of the ANC, established in the late 1940's, felt that though co-operation between Africans and other Non-Europeans on common problems and issues might be highly desirable, this occasional co-operation could take place only between Africans as a single unit and other Non-European groups as separate units. One of the Leaders of the Youth League claimed that Non-European Unity was a fantastic dream which had no foundation in reality. Nor could the ANC accept unequivocally the policy of non-collaboration and the boycott as a weapon of struggle.

In their well-documented book *From Protest to Challenge: Documents of African Politics in South Africa 1882-1964*, Vol. 2, *Karis and Carter* (Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter) state (p. 97): "Once the pro-boycott Programme of Action was adopted by the ANC in December 1949, the course for Councillors who were ANC members was clear. Yet Mathews (Professor Z. K. Mathews) and Moroka (Dr Moroka) did not resign until after the Council's (Native Representative Council) last meeting in November 1950, and even then they were in a minority in doing so. At last, by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, the Council was abolished."

And then, as part of their rationalisation of what was going on in the ANC, Karis and Carter use an argument that in the 1970's was used by the 'Coloured' Labour Party to justify its collaboration in the Coloured Representative Council:

"Perhaps most Africans who opposed boycott would say, today (1973), in retrospect, that the Natives' Representative Council should have been boycotted from the start. But for men like Mathews

and for some others farther to the left, the tactical question was not simple. To prevent the Council from becoming a useful front for the Government, the boycott had to be universal, and the Councillors doubted that popular support had reached that stage. AAC spokesmen, however, were certain that such support existed and were vitriolic in their attacks on "opportunists", "quislings", and "agents" of the "Herrenvolk". (p. 97)

SAIC "No" to Real Unity

The conservative, sectarian, collaborationist and mainly merchant-class, leadership of the South African Indian Congress likewise could not accept genuine unity with the other sections of the Non-White oppressed. At the 2nd Unity Conference, held on 8 July 1944 at Kholvad House, Market Street, Johannesburg, Advocate Godfrey on behalf of the SAIC said "That they (SAIC) felt that there was a need for internal unity in the different groups as a first step and thereafter to explore the possibility of finding common points of contact on which a common platform could be based."

The SAIC, too, favoured Utility Unity as opposed to real unity. A. I. Kajee of the SAIC at the 2nd Unity Conference said that the Indian Community was not as yet ready for Unity on the basis of the 10-Point Programme. Kajee pointed out that the SAIC could not accept the demand for the Full Franchise as it stood by the policy of Compromise. The SAIC accepted the principle of a 'Communal' vote based on educational and property qualifications.

But, although the Anti-CAD and the AAC were unsuccessful in drawing the ANC and SAIC into the Non-European Unity Movement, local Unity Committees were established throughout the country and the 10-Point Programme and the concepts of non-collaboration and the boycott were explained to the Non-White oppressed at public meetings everywhere. The NEUM preached the indivisibility of the struggle and the demand for nothing less than the full franchise for all.

Because the Liberals and the Communist Party of South Africa put up candidates at 'General Elections', they were antagonistic to those who advocated the policy of non-collaboration and found allies amongst the leaders of the ANC, SAIC, Franchise Action Committee, and the South African Coloured Peoples' Organisation (SACPO). These were the political trends amongst the oppressed in 1948 when the Nationalist Party came to power on the platform

of apartheid.

The Apartheid concept originated in the mid-1930's among Afrikaner intellectuals who wanted a 'Vertical' separation of the "races". T. R. H. Davenport in his book *South Africa — A Modern History* says:

"At the time of the general election (1948) the Malanites stood for a policy which treated the Reserves as the proper homelands of the African population, where their welfare agencies should so far as possible be concentrated, and where alone they would properly enjoy rights of citizenship, under a political system based on the example of the Transkei Bunga, only with more safeguards for the power of the chiefs. Educational facilities were to be separate at all levels for all groups. African administration was in all matters to be canalised through the Department of Native Affairs, even African education; and Coloured administration, similarly, through the Coloured Affairs Department. There was also to be segregation for Coloured people with regard to residence, amenities, transport, education, and politics. Indians were to be restricted in all ways legally possible, and their repatriation (to India) stepped up."

So, to a Nationalist Government that espoused the ideology that there were inherent differences in the "racial" groups and that believed in the superiority of the 'White race' and the inferiority of the 'other races'; that declared the right of only the "White race" to seats in the Central Parliament, the idea of Non-White Unity and the demands enshrined in the 10-Point Programme were anathema; and because after 1948 they controlled the machinery of rule, the Nationalists were able over the next three decades relentlessly to implement their policies and give effect to their ideology of separate development.

Those active in the organisations affiliated to the Unity Movement had no illusions about the nature of the struggle that had to be waged. They remained firm in their resolve to wage the struggle on a principled and programmatic basis. They continued to preach and to apply the policy of non-collaboration and effectively applied the boycott against all dummy ethnic institutions set up by the rulers for 'Coloureds', 'Africans' and 'Indians'.

The boycott proved such a powerful weapon of struggle that in spite of wholesale bannings of the leadership in an attempt to silence opposition to these bodies no aparte dummy parliamentary bodies established by the Government for those classified Indian, Coloured and African have over the past decades been able to function as tools of the *Herrenvolk*. The Native Representative Council was disbanded in the early 1950's, the Union Council of Coloured Affairs was disbanded in the 1960's, the Coloured Representative Council was recently disbanded, the election for an Indian Council has been postponed, and the proposed Coloured People's Council is born dead. The bodies set up under the Bantu Authorities Act were rejected throughout the country. At present, attempts to establish Urban Community

Councils are being effectively opposed by the African people.

The ANC, the SAIC, the South African Coloured Peoples' Organisation (SACPO) and the Congress of Democrats established Utility Unity to conduct campaigns against specific laws. They organised mass action on a particular day on a specific issue such as the pass system or against selected laws. They demanded the repeal of these laws and then organised mass demonstrations or a mass one-day stay-at-home in an attempt to apply pressure on the Government to repeal them. These campaigns were never conducted to bring about fundamental change in the socio-political and economic system of the country.

Rulers' Response: Legal Machinery

Nevertheless these campaigns and mass demonstrations and strikes did show a total opposition to the ideology of Apartheid; they did show very broad rejection of the policies of inferior schooling, of inferior housing conditions, of group area removals and the herding of people into instant slums, of influx control under an extremely rigid pass system and the growth of squatters camps, of the denial of Trade Union rights, of job control and inferior wages. And, because such mass opposition posed a threat to the continued implementation of separate development, the government employed its machinery to smash these organisations along with the Unity Movement.

Thus at every session of Parliament over the three decades from 1948, the Government in kragdadige fashion introduced new repressive laws to crush all opposition and to enable it to continue to implement its policies. The Suppression of Communism Act, The Public Safety and Criminal Laws Amendment Acts, The Riotous Assemblies Act and other legislation gave the government the powers needed to silence the voice of opposition by banning organisations and banning, banishing and incarcerating persons forming the leadership of these organisations.

But suppression of overt opposition to the ideology and policies of Apartheid did not blot out opposition to racial practices, did not silence demands for equality; nor did it bring acceptance of "ethnic" divide and rule institutions.

And so, as a result of the winds of change blowing southward down Africa, as a result of international revulsion at Apartheid, but more especially because of determined and growing opposition to Apartheid by all sections of the unfranchised majority of the South African people, the rulers were pushed into making 'changes' that would give the impression that Apartheid was 'dying'. Part of this process has been the continuing name-changing aimed at making unpalatable concepts acceptable.

So the crude, insulting and abusive language of the 1950's has very awkwardly given way to a less crude expression of the assumed superiority of the ruling section and inferiority of the oppressed: the Depart-

ment of *Native Affairs* changed to *Bantu Affairs* and finally to *Plural Relations*. In addition the racist boards and separate counters have disappeared in certain places; sportsmen are 'permitted' to play 'normal' sport; people of colour serve on Transportation Boards; persons of darker hue serve behind the counters of very posh shops in the business centres. But the essential apartheid structures that have been built over the centuries have remained and are intended to remain intact. To the *Herrenvolk* they are non-negotiable. Parliament will remain 'White.' Separate Group Areas for separate "racial" groups will remain. The fragmentation of the country into Homelands will remain. The Immorality Act will attempt to keep the Vrystaat pure.

But the political work that has been done by sincere, dedicated, correctly politicised and aware layers amongst the oppressed will ensure the continuation of the struggle. The next few decades will determine which ideology will triumph, what the nature of the future nation of South Africa will be.

The Basis of Unity

And for those who are impatient and feel that programme and theory do not matter and that the time for intellectualising is past, and that mass action is all that is required to topple the Government, let us quote from the paper "The Basis of Unity" delivered at the first all-in Unity Conference in 1944. Dealing with certain misunderstandings of the 10-Point Programme, the introducer stated:

"Fourth, we come to the 'activists' who despise 'talk' and who feel that 'programme' and 'theory' do not matter. These ideas we shall have to change or we may find ourselves provoked into all manner of adventurist sallies. The Programme DOES matter. Theory IS important. Your political theory means the way you sum up things, where you consider the interests of the oppressed to lie. This determines your direction; it determines the type of demand you make and the type of organisation you admire or follow or join; it determines your political activity. Indeed, we have become so used to the harsh PRACTICES of the South African Government that we usually forget that these harsh practices are based upon a THEORY — the theory that the Europeans are the *Herrenvolk* and the trustees of the Non-Europeans; the theory that the natural resources of South Africa should be harnessed for the benefit of the minority of shareholders and not for the majority of the workers.

"What we feel is the result of putting this theory into practice. When we say that the Programme is of Prime importance, we mean that without the right Programme, the right theory, we will never get the right practical activity and the desired practical result; without the correct evaluation of the forces of oppression and the goal and resources of the oppressed, our faces will not be turned in the right di-

rection and we will not spend our time in activities bringing us nearer to our goal. The only thing any political movement without a programme can do is a great deal of harm."

It was on the basis of this kind of analysis that Conferences of the All-African Convention, the Anti-CAD, the TLSA (after it took the New Road in 1943) always discussed in depth the National and International Questions, the Question of Landlessness and the struggle of workers in the Trade Unions. The fight against a particular law was never waged in isolation of the TOTAL FIGHT. It was on the basis of their own political and economic demands that the Leadership in the NEUM were able to analyse the Independence struggles in Asia and Africa and to distinguish between that gained through the struggles of the people of Vietnam for genuine freedom from Imperialist domination, and the Independence granted to a caretaker elitist class in India, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi and other 'Independent' states in Asia and Africa that have to this day left the mass of the people as poverty-stricken after as before 'Independence', and as uninvolved in the running of their country.

It was this type of analysis also that distinguished those in the NEUM from those in the SAIC who rejoiced at Gandhi's victory in India, and from those in the ANC and PAC who rejoiced at and hailed the victories of Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Hastings Banda and who — if 'Independence' had come in the 1960's — would have hailed Ndabaningi Sithole or Joshua Nkomo in Zimbabwe, just because they were black.

The struggle for fundamental change, for the full franchise for all, will be waged relentlessly for some time yet, so it is pertinent to include here a quotation from the leader article 'Some Problems of the Liberatory Movement' *'The Torch'* of February 19, 1957:

"Perhaps the greatest single factor causing this painfully slow growth of the real liberatory movement is that such wide sections of the people and the leadership (young and old) are still looking for an easy way out, are still waiting for a miracle. This cuts across all sections of the population and is to be found in varying degrees in all political camps. This explains not only — at the lowest level — the conservatism and collaboration of those who work separate political representation and "Bantu" authorities, school boards, and committees, but also those who dramatically "defy" or "stunt" in some other way (That is why these two extremes exchange recruits so readily and so often). It explains why young self-styled intellectuals expect the sheer warmth of ideas they claim to have and understand to melt the inner walls of tribal, "racial" and political division among the people as well as the walls of a *Herrenvolk* Jericho. And it also explains why defeatists, romantics and weary political travellers find it so easy to "write off"

the "trade unions" or "the intellectuals", a whole group, while stuffing themselves on childish dream-substitutes about an idealised "proletarian mass" or "peasantry" or "the women".

"They are all miracle-mongers, even when they pay lip-service to a programme. Some of them, who consider themselves progressive, would be outraged if it were suggested that they were in fact waiting for a change of heart in the Government or a change of Government or compromise concessions as a result of some vague and generalised state of discontent among the majority of the people, or a stunt or a series of stunts, or outside intervention. But that is precisely what it boils down to: they have no "ideas" and certainly not even a vague picture of how the liberatory movement must develop, how and where in order to win success. There is a gap in their conception of the development of the struggle. And it is filled by hopes of a miracle — hopes of a solution that will not ask too much of them personally (and not for too long a period either)".

These words were true of a certain direction that the movement for liberation took in the 1950's and it is true of a certain direction that some people wish to give the movement today. Those who are earnestly dedicated to the struggle for fundamental change and opposed to a negotiated settlement (a sell-out) will have to wage a relentless struggle both against the oppressors and against those within the ranks of the oppressed who wish to steer the struggle into a blind alley so that they can work out a deal simultaneously with Imperialism and with *Herrenvolkism* on the backs of the very masses whom they claim to be fighting for. The history of Africa during the period that the 'Majority Rule' articles cover is strewn with such negotiated sell-outs.

It will be fitting in concluding this series to posit clearly the nature and the aims of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM). The NEUM was never 'racialist' either in its declared aims or in any of its public policy statements and its literature in general. The term 'Non-European' was used in the South African political context of the time to refer to all those who suffered national oppression, who were deprived of all citizenship rights and were not only exploited economically but also denied every one of the benefits of civilization: as against the citizen group of the population, who at that time chose to refer to itself as 'European'. The aim of the NEUM was to unite in a national (not nationalist) political organisation all those who had no vested interests in a colour-bar

society. It had to break down the racialism that a very long period of political conditioning and indoctrination by the rulers had created in the ranks of the oppressed, so that they had come to accept that they were African, Coloured and Indian, 'races' apart. It had to break down artificial barriers of all kinds that

were used to divide the oppressed. It strove to make these 'separate' sections see that they suffered a *common* oppression. And it regarded as one of its most urgent tasks that of creating an organised, unified opposition and resistance to oppression. Moreover, it emphasised the *national* nature of the *struggle* on a *common* programme of *minimum* demands for all the oppressed. And its goal of a single South African nation in a non-racial democracy is central and crucial to its objectives.

Anyone, irrespective of his or her classification according to the official South African catalogue of 'races', anyone who believed in the common humanity of all in South Africa and who was prepared to struggle for full equality for all in this country on the basis of the NEUM's minimum programme was accepted and could work in the movement. Indeed, if one wished to judge by the 'customary' South African classifications, many of the very useful and loyal fighters in the movement happened to be classified 'White'.

The NEUM's concept of majority rule is based on a majority totally opposed to racialism and committed to the ideal of a single South African nation with a common citizenship for all. This concept excludes 'White majority rule' as emphatically as it excludes 'Black majority rule'. Nor will it accommodate 'safeguards' or special parliamentary seats for 'minorities'. In a nation of equals there can be no majorities and no minorities. Armed with the full franchise, educated politically to use that franchise to the best advantage, each man and woman will choose from among those who offer themselves for election to a single national assembly the men and women who will best be able to carry out the programme of creating and maintaining a true democracy in South Africa and thus eliminate the poverty, discrimination, oppression and backwardness that exist in present-day South Africa.

Majority Rule: Some Notes (II)

Divide and Rule: The Missionaries, the Liberals and the Mission-trained Elite

Throughout the history of South Africa the oppressed people have been excluded from sharing real political power. But the rulers have never left the position at this naked exclusion, for this would have made the oppressed immediately aware of their real position and consequently of the need to achieve their share of political power. And so they have always hidden the state of rightlessness by granting dummy rights, by providing a form of dummy representation that gave the appearance of political rights where in fact there were none.

The purpose of granting dummy representation was, however, more than that of masking the absence of rights; it was more than the old slaveholders' injunction of "giving the slave a bone to suck lest he, in his hunger, should demand meat". It had two further purposes. It has always been a means of fostering division between various groups of the oppressed and so preventing and hampering the growth of the unity of the oppressed people which is indispensable for any struggle against oppression and exploitation. Dummy representation has thus always meant separate representation and accepting dummy representation has meant accepting segregation not only between the citizens and non-citizens but also between the various sectors of the oppressed people. It has always been part of the strategy of "divide-and-rule".

Working the system

The third, and perhaps most fundamental, aim of the system of dummy representation is to secure an acceptance in practice of the inferior status of the non-citizens by getting the non-citizens themselves to work the system of dummy representation. While they accepted inferiority by accepting dummy representation they were naturally unable to struggle for equality for, clearly, no struggle for equality is possible while inequality is being accepted. You cannot simultaneously accept and reject inferiority. No people working the instruments of their own oppression can wage a struggle against that oppression.

It is to be understood, therefore, that the question of the franchise, franchise frauds and dummy representation has played a decisive and central rôle in the evolution of the political struggles of the oppressed people in our country.

Military and political struggle

It is true that the oppressed have a long history of struggle and resistance that goes back to the very first attempts to invade these southern shores. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between the military resistance of the indigenous tribes to conquest, dispossession and enslavement and a *political* struggle.

Only after the resistance had been overcome and the indigenous people had been forcibly drawn into

the new society, when from inside that new society they began to struggle for their rights as members of that society that we can speak of political struggle and of a struggle for political freedom or national liberation.

It is one of the ironies of our history, however, that when this political struggle began it was in a sense more backward than the relatively advanced stage reached by the tribal military resistance towards the time of its final defeat. Towards the end, the tribal resisters were unifying their military struggles in alliances which reflected an understanding of their community of interests; they were, indeed, acquiring a cohesion which was beginning to transcend the divisions inherent in the way of life of tribal societies — the division into small scattered communities — through alliances which united the so-called "Hottentots", "Bushmen" and "Kaffirs". In contrast, when political struggle began to emerge in the latter part of the 19th century it was totally divided and segregated. It was divided not only along the new tribal divisions of "Coloured", "Native" and (later) "Indian" but along old tribal divisions as well, despite the fact that conquest had destroyed the very foundations of tribal society.

And now electoral tribalism

Trapido [African Politics in the Cape Colony, 1884 to 1910, *Journal of African History*, IX, 1 (1968), pp. 79-98] reports "... the Fingo gave their support to the South African Party, but at this time (1898 to 1911 — Ed.) they were outnumbered on the voters' roll by AmaXhosa and AmaTembu, who gave their support to the English-speaking Progressive Party ... The Fingo had, for the most part, been the first Africans to participate in electoral politics, and they resented the younger AmaXhosa politicians who became prominent in 1898 and who challenged their pre-eminence. In particular, John Tengu Jabavu, possibly the best known of the African politicians of this period and the editor of *Imvo Zabantsundu*, deprecated the activities of the 'young bloods' who, in their turn, had little sympathy for his political position."

This strategy of division and resurrecting tribalism to this end is, of course, not peculiar to our country. A Mozambican commentator looking at

tribalism in Africa and after quoting Nkrumah to the effect that "before conquest there were tribes but no tribalism" summarises the position thus: "But one of the effects of colonialism and imperialism was to break up the growing bonds of unity between the various tribes. Thus tribes which were coming together to face the European conqueror and aggressor were separated from each other and in many cases turned against each other."

And yet, for all this backwardness, the political struggle was, comparatively speaking, on a higher level than the military resistance. The tribal resisters fought to preserve their tribal societies. The political struggle, backward as it was and was to remain for a long time, represented the first steps towards the ultimate mastery of a modern, highly productive industrial society with an infinitely greater potential for satisfying the needs, wants and aspirations of its members than that of the tribal subsistence economy, all its egalitarianism notwithstanding.

"New" tribalism: A Mission product

We have referred to the "new" tribalism, the division of the oppressed into "Natives", "Coloureds" and "Indians". What were the origins of this new tribalism and who were its bearers?

This new tribalism was undoubtedly the product of Missionary endeavour. They, the missionaries, understood and, indeed, formulated the divide-and-rule policy of the British Colonial administration and implemented it both during the military conquest of the indigenous tribalists and during the civil government which followed conquest.

Since the expansion of the Cape Colony was from west to east, the Khoisan peoples of the Cape were conquered and defeated before the main wars against the Mnguni-speaking tribes of the Eastern Cape were unleashed. In order to keep the defeated Khoi-Khoisan from re-entering the fray by re-assembling as part of the Xhosa tribes with whom they had lived in amity over a very long period in the pre-conquest days, missionaries were placed amongst the "Hottentots" and they were drawn into a line of Mission Stations that stretched from virtually the Cape Peninsula all along to the eastern frontier. And although it was "Hottentots" who were organised into communities and schools by the missionaries, it was "Coloureds" who emerged from these. No doubt, the process of blotting out their tribal origins (their heathen past, the missionaries would have said) facilitated christianising them, but baptising them "Coloureds" at the same time that they were baptised "Christian" also served to sever them from their fellow tribalists who were then still the major military opponents of the colonisers.

Missionary practice suited colonial policy

Correspondingly, a new tribe of "Natives" was created, especially in that hotbed of missionary

activity: the Eastern Cape. As their alleged "mixed" blood was the distinguishing feature of the "Coloured" tribe, their African past and especially their alleged "purity" of blood was the distinguishing feature of the "Native" tribe. Likewise, when the development of the Natal sugar plantations brought indentured "Coolie" labour from India, a third tribe was added that was said to be distinguished by its membership of "a proud oriental civilization".

The new tribalism had its origin with the missionaries and served very well the political policy of divide and rule. The missionaries were also the bearers of this tribalism in that they imparted it through their churches and their schools. Those, however, who did the actual carrying of these attitudes and beliefs into the community were not so much the missionaries themselves but a mission-trained elite of ministers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, interpreters and clerks constituting what has been called "a small but visible new social group" who, because of their education and christianity, were "set apart from traditional African society".

"Intellectuals" alias "Intelligentsia"

This brings into our focus the rôle of what is generally described as the "intellectuals" or "intelligentsia". And, so far as this country is concerned, the origins, composition, character and rôle of those described — or describing themselves — as such.

A clear understanding of the nature and rôle of this group is the key to understanding the growth and development of the political movement in our country, as indeed it is in every colonial country. For this reason, it is useful to pause at this stage to consider this matter in some detail before tracing out the character and the currents running through the pre-Union political activities of the oppressed people.

A great deal of the obvious confusion that exists about the nature and the rôle of those categorised as intellectuals flows from a failure to understand the differences in position and character, on the one hand, of the intellectuals or intelligentsia in the colonial situation *who form part of the nationally oppressed and economically exploited colonial people* and, on the other, the traditional metropolitan intellectual *who has different social roots*.

The first point to make is that the metropolitan intellectual is by and large in his social origins not a member of what is called the working class. The doctors, lawyers, teachers, priests, engineers, writers, journalists, upper civil servants (though some members of the working class escape into this layer) largely have their origins in social layers traditionally following the professions and are at some social distance from the working class. If they are to be classified in this way, they would more accurately be regarded as bourgeois or *petit-bourgeois*. In

short, they form part of the privileged and more comfortable layers of society.

Workers and intellectuals

Workers' movements in metropolitan countries are usually sceptical of intellectuals who take an interest in such movements. They recognise that since most of these intellectuals do not belong to their social class and since, therefore, their loyalty is based not on a real and immediate community of political, economic and social interests but on more fragile bonds such as a recognition of the justice of the cause of such movements, their loyalty, particularly in times of social struggle and crisis, might prove equally fragile. Workers' movements in metropolitan countries, because of the many links which the intellectuals have with the boss class, are likely to feel the pressure of those links in times of crisis. Generally speaking, such fears have proved justified, though it must be stated immediately that the history of working class movements is also rich in individual intellectuals whose loyalty and contribution to these movements is outstanding and beyond all question.

Colonial "intellectuals"

The "intellectuals" in the colonial context are differently situated. (In fact, many think the word "intellectual" should not be used in this connection.) In South Africa, for example, we have to distinguish between the intellectual drawn from the ranks of the citizens and those from the more educated and professional section of the non-citizens. In the case of the latter there is no social distance at all between the so-called intellectuals (be they teacher, priest or nurse, or belonging to the infinitesimally small group of doctors, lawyers, architects and so on) and the rest of the population who literally are their brothers and sisters, parents, cousins, neighbours and friends. They suffer the same disabilities as those who work in field, factory or shop, and are as rightless as they are. They have an essential community of interest with the rest of the oppressed and exploited.

Usually, members of that group are financially better off than the mass of urban and rural labourers, but they are hardly likely to be as well off as the citizen intellectual and are normally subject to wage discrimination. They may affect (or even be able to afford) a more comfortable life-style; they may live in superior ghettos or in better houses in the ordinary ghettos. But they remain non-citizens, political outcasts, bound by a myriad links to all other non-citizens. At times of crisis they often experience the pressure coming from these myriad links, and most of them are careful not to step out of line. Nevertheless, because they have had more education they usually fill a position of leadership amongst the oppressed people. If we look at political movements in Africa

then we cannot but note the dominance of the intellectual in these movements and the crucial rôle they have played in founding, organising and leading such movements. There is no national movement in Africa where the work of the intellectuals was not essential for the growth and development of the movement.

Not an unmixed blessing

However, the fact that the intellectuals have played a crucial and essential rôle in every liberatory movement in Africa is, of course, not to say that they have always played a progressive rôle. Far from it. Sometimes what began as a blessing ended up as a curse. The national movements in former French and British colonies were all led by intellectuals who swallowed and worked the fraud of independence against their own people. Senghor is a poet and intellectual of distinction and, for all his humble origins, he is today politically nearer to Vorster than to the Senegalese peasants or to us. Kenyatta, now among the vilest imperialist accomplices in Africa, was a schoolmaster. University lecturer Eduardo Mondlane, on the other hand, founded Frelimo and largely inspired its anti-imperialist and non-collaborationist character. In our own country and movement we can count intellectuals on the side of progress as we can count them on the side of reaction, the latter coming increasingly – but certainly not exclusively – from the Bush Colleges.

"In" but NOT always "of"

This illustrates an important character of the intellectuals as a group. Their special position as an educated group amongst a largely illiterate population, the trust and respect that they enjoy because they are seen by the people as part of themselves and as people who can represent them, speak and act for them, thrust them into a position of prominence and often great influence. But they are nevertheless not an independent political factor, as some of them seem to imagine. They are *not* a separate and independent class; in fact they are not a class at all and therefore do not have an independent political position to express. They articulate the political position and interest of another class. The question is always: who has captured them? On whose side are they?

From mission boy to . . . ?

Often they are ensnared by the rulers and even though they are part and parcel of the oppressed, they serve the political ends of the ruling classes. Such are the collaborators and quislings. The intellectuals are always prominent among these because they are easily capable of expressing the political interests of other classes. Because they are part of the people and have a community of interests with the oppressed and exploited classes they can be won for the people's cause, but they must be won.

They are not automatically, just because they are also oppressed, on the side of the people.

The rulers have always been aware of the importance of the intellectuals and of their special character: the ability to articulate the interest of

either of the two major classes in our society. And so from the beginning they have set out to capture the intellectuals to articulate their interests.

They, through their missionary wing, nurtured the intellectuals themselves, imparting to them the views, attitudes and values that they desired to prevail among the oppressed. As we indicated

earlier, the "new African elite" (A. P. Walshe, "The Origins of African Political Consciousness in South Africa") was trained by the missionaries and accepted, as a result of missionary influence, the political tutelage of the Liberals and spread their politics amongst the oppressed people.

Thus the rulers controlled the political life of the oppressed people by simply training their leaders in the politics that they wished the people to follow. *Let us see how this actually functioned from the time that political struggle began during the last quarter of the 19th century till "white" Union was achieved in 1910.*

Majority Rule: Some Notes (III)

The Cape Franchise: J. T. Jabavu: Abdurahman: A.P.O.: A.N.C.

For virtually a century the politics of the oppressed people was the politics of liberalism. From the first beginnings of political stirrings amongst the nationally oppressed and economically exploited people of South Africa in the 1840's it was dominated by the liberals and this domination was maintained till the early 1940's. This was naturally facilitated by the fact that the emergent leadership had been fashioned and educated by the missionary wing of the liberal movement. The real basis for their adherence to the liberals, however, was the fact that they believed themselves to have been admitted to the charmed circle of civilised citizens on the basis of exactly the same franchise as the White citizens.

The Cape, allegedly "Colour-blind", franchise was the bond and this enfranchisement was seen to be the work of the liberal "British connection". Indeed, the Magna Carta of the Jabavu's and Abdurahman's was the declaration by the Secretary of State for Colonies, the Duke of Newcastle, which accompanied the grant of Representative Government to the Cape Colony in 1853.

"Without distinction of Class or Colour"

"When the Constitution was granted in 1853 the Duke of Newcastle wrote as follows: 'It is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government that all subjects of the Cape, without distinction of class or colour, should be united by one bond of loyalty and a common interest and we believe that the exercise of political rights enjoyed by all alike will prove one of the best methods of attaining this. It only remains for me now to assure you that in transmitting to the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope ordinances which confer one of the most liberal Constitutions enjoyed by any of the British possessions, Her Majesty's Government is actuated by an earnest desire to lay the foundation of institutions which may carry blessings and privileges as well as the wealth and power of the British Nation into South Africa, and, whilst appeasing the jealousies of the sometimes conflicting races, to promote the security and prosperity not only of those of British origin, but of all the Queen's subjects,

so that they may combine for the great common object the peace and progress of the Colony.'" (Quoted by Dr. A. Abdurahman in his 1909 Presidential Address as recorded in the A.P.O. Newspaper of May 24th, 1909.)

This policy of "political rights enjoyed by all alike" was not an accident but a deliberate and considered policy that was carefully calculated and prepared.

The "prized privilege"

As early as July, 1842 when the Cape Colony asked for Representative Government, Lord Stanley, the then Secretary of State for Colonies, in a despatch to the Governor asked pointedly: "... what is the proposed qualification for the exercise of the franchise by the electors and elected?"

At a later stage, at the instance of Governor Sir Harry Smith, Porter, the Attorney-General of the Colony, prepared a memorandum on the subject for the Governor. He said, amongst other things: "In proceedings to consider the qualifications of electors, I have to submit to His Excellency that it ought in regard to property to be fixed low. In advocating a low qualification-I am not influenced by any notion that it is necessary nowadays to fight class against class, or colour against colour . . . I deem it just and expedient to place the suffrages within the reach of the more intelligent and indus-

trious of the men of colour, because it is a privilege which they would prize, and a privilege which they deserve; and because by showing to all classes, those above and those below them, that no man's station is, in a free country, determined by the accident of his colour, all ranks of men are stimulated to improve or maintain their relative positions." (Also quoted by Abdurahman as above.) The view set out in Porter's memorandum was then considered by the Governor himself, the members of the Legislative Assembly, the Chief Justice and the two judges, and after study all of them supported the memorandum in writing. It was then submitted to the Colonial Office together with the collected comments for its guidance. It is on this basis, worked out by the Colonial administration, that the "Colour blind" franchise was introduced in 1853. The strategy was clearly to hide the *real* inequalities in Cape Colonial society under a franchise law whose terms seemed to apply to all equally, irrespective of colour. This was the strategy of the qualified franchise. All would-be voters had to have a minimum of schooling and had to own property valued at a minimum of £25. These qualifications, of course, disfranchised the overwhelming majority, that is, those not of "European descent". As was the intention. (Porter's recommendation was that it should be restricted to "the more intelligent and industrious men of colour".) Even J. Tengo Jabavu himself at the end of the ill-fated appeal to the British Crown, Commons and Lords made by him, Soga, Abdurahman, Fredericks and Leenders and led by W. P. Schreiner, against the Colour Bar in the Act of Union, was forced to admit then (the end of 1909): "In the Cape, 22 000 natives had the franchise, as against 152 000 Whites, and that was the result of sixty years working." (Lecture to New Reform Club. Reported in *A.P.O. Newspaper* 4/12/1909.) And so the "Colour-blind" qualified franchise placed political power firmly in the hands of the White minority.

This franchise nevertheless did feed the illusion that "no man's station is . . . determined by the accident of his colour", only by his progress in education and the acquisition of property. And so, till well beyond Union, the "coloured races" and "native races" sought to improve "the condition of the race" by seeking to enrol more and more voters through exhorting their people to progress in education and property. Needless to say, the real policies and processes at work in South African society, especially as the economy founded on mining developed, made advances in education and property ever more impossible for them to achieve. The reason was that these policies and processes sought always to reduce the overwhelming majority of them to their real status in society: the source of cheap labour.

Arsenic on the carrot

However, for the rest of the 19th century it was still possible to think in terms of increasing the number of voters. And whenever such a possibility existed the authorities acted to prevent the possibility from becoming a reality.

Part of the reason why the British connection was in favour of having Non-European voters in the Cape Colony was that it would be a means of ensuring that the "Dutch" colonists would not become dominant. By 1887, when Rhodes was Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, he was looking for support from these very colonists and was preparing for the formation of the "White Bloc" as the social base on which to rest the government of a unified South Africa. By now the "native vote" had become expendable and the 1887 Parliamentary Registration Act, in terms of its clause 17, provided without any reference whatever to colour that "no person shall be entitled to be registered as a voter by reason of his sharing in any communal or tribal occupation of lands or building". And thereby struck some 30 000 Africans from the voters roll. Again, the Franchise Act of 1892 raised the property qualification from £25 to £75, thereby decreasing — by the time of the 1893 registration of voters — the Non-European voters by 3 848 and increasing the White voters by 4 306. This decrease and increase respectively occurred despite the "compromise" that voters already on the roll should remain there. This "compromise" was a concession given to the Liberals Rose-Innes, Sauer and Merriman in return for their support of the measure. Since his masters supported the measure J. T. Jabavu would not oppose it. Taunted that he had acquiesced in the measure and that *Imvo* had become "a mere ministerial organ" Jabavu replied: "If there had been a party sufficiently courageous to table a motion that no change at all should be made, that party would claim our support. Failing this we had no option but to fall back upon the compromise which, maintaining the *status quo*, proceeds to legislate for posterity of which we know nothing and care less."

The "Friends of the Native"

The matter did not end there. There was a move by a group of 'Coloured' voters from Kimberley to appeal to the Imperial Government in London to veto the measure as being in conflict with the Constitution of 1853. They sent emissaries to the Eastern Cape to get support for the move. J. Tengo Jabavu advised the Africans to have nothing to do with this move: "It is well known (that) Natives trusted Messrs. Innes, Sauer and Merriman to do the best they can in a difficult situation to safeguard their interests . . . To join in a movement by extreme men for an appeal would be treachery to friends who have long stood by us. Natives cannot

afford to deal with their friends in Parliament in that way."

In the General Election of 1893, the "Moslems, Indians, Cape Men, Natives, Greoles and Coolies" in Paarl were organising to unite to support James Curry the Coloured candidate and in Cape Town there was a move to nominate Attoan Mah Effendi. The idea was to use the tactic Jabavu had used to get Rose-Innes elected. At that time there was a multiple vote system and each voter had as many votes as there were candidates. Voters were allowed to use all their votes for one candidate. Jabavu had organised the "Native voters" to use all their multiple votes for Rose-Innes and thus secured his election. The idea in the Cape was now, ten years later, to use this tactic to secure the election of the first Non-European to parliament. However, in 1893, still before the election, the Constitutional Amendment Bill was rushed through the legislature, abolishing the multiple vote and thus forestalling the election of Effendi and Curry.

The vote illusion

The vote he exercised, though increasingly insignificant in the total electoral scheme of things, had tremendous influence in regard to the illusions it fostered in the voter. He believed that he actually got his vote on merit and his vote not only showed concretely that things did actually proceed on merit even in the segregationist Cape Colony but raised the possibility that others of his race, if they persevered in education and diligence, could also secure this "prize of civilization". And because there were so few voters, it was a rare thing and set a man apart from his fellows, from the "folk on the sand hills". A man had always to show himself worthy of the vote. His conduct had to be "respectable" and "dignified". This was the mode of behaviour befitting the man who had acquired the great distinction of a voter on a colour-blind roll. Since he enjoyed his vote in a British Colony, it reinforced his belief in British liberalism and justice imparted to him by his Mission education. The contrast with the "Dutch" colonies of the "North" that brutally declared that there would be no equality between black and white, neither in church nor state, naturally further strengthened the belief. Of course the liberal politicians who assiduously sought his vote and promised to work for his advancement, who were "sympathetic", naturally fostered this illusion even further and if only more of these sympathetic candidates could be elected why, then, the progress of "the race" would be so splendid.

The voter became so attached to British Liberalism that he accepted the idea of "British Union" for South Africa as desirable even when it became plain that this Union would proceed only on the basis of his total disfranchisement.

His vote blinded him to the real status of his people and their real role in the South Africa that the British were creating to serve their Kimberley-Witwatersrand mining empire. He mistook the arch enemy for the friend, and saw as the great danger to his position that this "friend" would give in to the "Dutch".

He watched painfully from the 1880's on, how his vote was shrinking, how his liberal representatives were "acquiescing" in this whittling away of his precious rights, "doing their best in a difficult situation" and all he could do was to think of other champions from the same class. His vote tied him to the liberal parties of the rulers and he did not even think of an independent struggle. He did begin to think of his own leaders, but they, too, were tied to one or other party of the rulers.

J. T. Jabavu

The leader among the oppressed in the 19th century and perhaps up to Union was John Tengo Jabavu. He was born near Healdtown in 1859 of parents who had been converted to Christianity by the Missionaries; he came from a family of "school people", that is. He attended the Wesleyan Methodist Mission School and gained his teacher's certificate in 1875 and went to teach. He contributed letters to the press and worked gratis as a printer's devil to gain journalistic experience.

In 1881 he was invited to Lovedale by Dr. James Stewart and was given the editorship of the Lovedale Mission paper *Isigidimi Sama Xosa* which, according to A. P. Walshe, was "the first paper under African editorship launched by the Rev. Elijah Makiwane in 1876". He also continued his studies and in 1883 he was the first African to pass Matric. Around 1882/1883 Jabavu threw his weight and that of his mission-owned newspaper behind the election campaign of James Rose-Innes and was substantially responsible for having this young liberal advocate elected. Jabavu's attitude to and relationship with Rose-Innes is apparent from the report which he sent to the Aborigines Protection Society, describing Rose-Innes as "a young man around whom revolves the hopes of the natives of this Colony".

Jabavu's talents, first noted by the Missionaries, were now apparent to the political liberals and his loyalty to their cause established. He was now launched as editor of "his own" paper by the group around Rose-Innes who provided the funds. Thus *Imvo Zabantsundu* was started, and was, as Walshe reports, the means "by which he established himself as the most influential African in nineteenth century Cape politics and perhaps the most widely known educated African in Southern Africa up to the time of Union".

Jabavu was an intelligent man, intelligent enough to know why he was given the platform of *Imvo*

and what it was to be used for. He knew also that backers back for *their* reasons and as easily as they provided backing they could take it away again. One can be sure that it was not ever necessary for his backers to spell it out to Jabavu. He knew what he was about and their ways were more subtle. Besides, Jabavu, as with Dr. Abdurahman a little later, was probably more of a liberal than his original mentors. He swallowed the steady demolition of the "Native vote", ultimately swallowed the "betrayal" of the Act of Union franchise provisions and finally even swallowed the 1913 Land Act which totally destroyed his credibility with the people and his usefulness to his liberal masters.

Jabavu as a good liberal believed that the people should be prepared to remain a minority among the electorate, if not permanently there for a long time to come. They should progress slowly — indeed so slowly that it would not upset the white citizens. He accepted and believed in the liberal concept of the "inevitability of gradualness" and of not building up a reaction from the Whites. He accepted, therefore, that while there should be a "colour-blind" franchise, the responsible thing would be to elect "sympathetic and influential whites" who could influence the other Whites in favour of the "native races". This was the crux of the political strategy of the Jabavus and Abdurahmans: enlightened, liberal Whites should dominate in parliament and do justice to "the coloured and native races".

The key to this limited vision is to be found in the blindness caused by the apparently colour-blind franchise and by the position of the mission-trained elite that saw itself as above the mass of raw and uneducated Non-Whites.

Shameful end

The beginning of Jabavu's undoing came when he opposed Dr. Rubusana who had been the first African to be elected to the Provincial Council in the Cape. This was in 1910 and for the Tembuland constituency. Rubusana had affiliations with a different group of liberals from Jabavu's. He supported the "Progressives" while Jabavu supported the "Independents". Although *Imvo* criticised Rubusana for standing, it did not actually oppose him and when he did win was forced to congratulate him.

Rose-Innes the Liberal "hope" not only criticised Rubusana for standing but claimed that Rubusana, by becoming entitled to a salary, a free railway ticket and the use of a first class compartment and a lavatory and bedding such as Europeans use, was antagonising the Whites and would "damage the Native cause and put the clock back".

In 1914 when the people were still angrily repudiating Jabavu's support for the 1913 Land Act (piloted by the Liberal Sauer, now Minister of Native Affairs) Jabavu committed his "crowning folly". In the 1914 Provincial Council elections he

stood against Rubusana in Tembuland, splitting the vote and ensuring Rubusana's defeat by the White candidate Payne. Thus Jabavu lost the seat for the first and only African Provincial Councillor and doubtlessly pleased Rose-Innes.

The A.P.O.: Coloured Liberalism

By the turn of the century there appears to have been a number of "Coloured" political organisations. These were political organisations in the sense that they were concerned with the vote and more especially bartering the vote to this or that political person or party. At this stage the "Coloured voters" were not as well organised as Jabavu's Voters' Associations and their support was not at all as monolithic as was Jabavu's for the Liberal Independents. There was quite a variety of organisations: the Coloured Men's Protectorate and Political Association, the Coloured People's Vigilance Society of South Africa, the Coloured People's Political Protection Association, the Coloured League, the South African Moslems' Association, to name some, plus a number of temperance lodges associated with the Liberal Independents. They were all at their liveliest at election times.

The attempt to form the A.P.O. was an attempt to unify the Coloured voters so that they could use their vote for a unified and common purpose. Although the founders of the African Political Organisation spoke of promoting "unity between the Coloured races of South Africa" they meant no more than the Coloured voters and did not thereby include, for example, "the native races". The A.P.O. was founded in the Cape in September 1902 after an invitation to join, to form branches or to seek further particulars had been issued to the 'Coloured' Community by W. Collins, W. Sternmet, P. J. Eksteen, W. Carelse, P. Arendse and W. A. Roberts.

The founding Conference in Claremont, Cape, took the usual liberal line. Mr. Collins, the founding president, spoke on the need for proper parliamentary representation for the "Coloured People" but immediately made it plain that he was not advocating "that they should have a Coloured man to represent them", but he hoped that, when the time came, they would choose a man who would look after their interests. The A.P.O. pledged itself to obtain "better and higher education for our children" and, naturally, "to get the names of all Coloured men who have the qualifications to be registered as Parliamentary voters on the voters' list at the registration of voters".

Collins' presidential address in March 1903 declared: "This is the first time in history that we as a race are meeting together to discuss our own affairs" but this new-found unity did not last long and the organisation was irretrievably split, probably as a result of electoral differences.

The General Secretary, Matt Fredericks, per-

formed a *coup d'état* and in order to restore unity persuaded Dr. Abdullah Abdurahman, who was then outside the organisation and outside its factions, to become President and Leader of the A.P.O. This was in 1905.

By this time Abdurahman was already at home in the liberal political establishment of Cape Town and had entered the Cape Town City Council in 1904. He was one of the most skilful of the liberal politicians and, but for his colour, he would most probably have received the highest parliamentary office. Instead he became the spokesman for his "Coloured people" seen as quite distinct from the "native races" whom he would not have in his organisation, despite the insistence of Tobin, founder of the "Stone Meetings" (public political meetings on Sunday mornings at a stone at the foot of the mountain near St. Mark's Church) that the A.P.O. should be open.

Under Abdurahman's leadership the A.P.O. and the Coloured people faithfully tried to play the electoral game, worked for education, promoted temperance and thrift and established building societies but nevertheless saw their rights systematically reduced. They were enormously upset by the "betrayal" when the Liberal British Cape accepted the draft constitution prepared by the South African Convention, which made the Union Parliament the preserve of "persons of European descent".

Together with J. T. Jabavu and under the leadership of the liberal W. P. Schreiner the leaders of the A.P.O. finally petitioned the King, Lords and Commons not to pass the South Africa Act and naturally failed to convince the authors of Union that the segregated franchise was illiberal and un-British.

Yet even this betrayal, and the systematic reduction of the "Coloured voter" to his proper level as non-citizen that followed, failed to shake them from their attachment to one or other of the ruling parties and to petitions, deputations and threats of uniting with other Non-Europeans if this or that concession was not made. Of the decline and exit of the A.P.O., more later.

The A.N.C.

After Union, with Jabavu's voters' movement in decline "after the blow had fallen", African political activity was in the doldrums. One of the first African lawyers, P. ka. I. Seme, who had studied abroad, took the initiative in calling a national meeting of African leaders with a view to establishing a permanent political organisation encompassing the Union of South Africa and the protectorates. In October, 1911, he wrote an article in *Imvo* explaining the purposes of his call. This article calls for "Native Union", for exorcising "the demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xosa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between the Zulus and the Tongaas, between the Basutos and every other Native".

The proposed organisation would give "the Natives" the "only effective means whereby they will be able to make their grievances properly known and considered both by the Government and by the people of South Africa at large. Through this Congress the Natives will have the opportunity and means with which to influence the public opinion of this country and to greatly assist the South African Statesmen who are working for the peace, prosperity and the development of the land."

All the liberal illusions were there. The idea was still to inform the powers that be (as if they did not know and intend the consequences of their policies) and to influence them to change (to change their hearts), as if the cheap labour policy did or could have a heart. There was the strongly stated desire to overcome the old tribal divisions but complete acceptance of the "new tribalism", the divisions between the oppressed.

In the event the Congress was enthusiastically formed by hundreds of delegates and despite its professed development beyond tribalism, established an upper House for Chiefs. The South African Native National Congress (it changed its name to the African National Congress in 1923) elected

John L. Dube as president-general, Solomon Plaatje as Secretary-general and P. ka. I. Seme as Treasurer.

Almost immediately the A.N.C. was in crisis, for the 1913 Land Act was upon it. This first major step after Union to reduce the African people to cheap labour and to destroy the economically stable peasantry that was developing within the systems of labour tenancy and tenant-farming brought enormous suffering to the people on the land. Sol Plaatje in his "Native Life in South Africa" has chronicled the devastation caused by this law but his organisation had nothing to offer the people in their attempt to defend themselves against the enactment. Their liberal arsenal offered them nothing except their solemn protests, petitions and deputations, and these did not, as they could not, stay the march of dispossession, and offered no policy of struggle against landlessness except a possible deputation to England.

And so the people quickly lost interest in the A.N.C., especially as the A.N.C. leadership abandoned even their token opposition to support the British Cause during the war. And so it seemed that this A.N.C. died even before it was born. The people's interest moved to newer kinds of organisations, organisations that were based directly on the workers rather than around the tried and tested, well-known leaders of the people. The mightiest of these new organisations, and numerically definitely the strongest organisation of the oppressed people of this land to date, was that phenomenon that became known as the I.C.U., which stood for the In-

dustrial and Commercial Workers' Union that was formed as a result of the encounter between the Socialist Batty and the Nyasaland-born Clements Kadalie.

Majority Rule: Some Notes

1949: The Durban Riots, Nationalism and the Nation

The first year in power of an all-Nationalist government (the unfranchised never saw any basis for making and never made any distinction between its Malan and Havenga claws) witnessed the early expression of several brands of nationalism among the oppressed. The ANC Youth League was attempting to break out of Johannesburg, and wanted particularly to form a branch at Fort Hare to challenge the AAC and NEUM, which were very strong there. The unprecedented riots between 'zulus' and 'indians' in Durban rocked the entire country and sent shock waves through every section of the oppressed and exploited people.

In October 1949 Robert Sobukwe delivered his cat-among-the-pigeons Address on behalf of the Graduating Class at Fort Hare, at the Completers' Social. Studded equally with religious and (nationalistic) political references, it was very, very much a child of the times. Many of those who heard it have never forgotten it. Others have not forgotten the look of disbelief on the face of the new principal, Professor Dent, as he listened to the address.

Towards the end of 1948, the Youth League's A. P. Mda was heavily wooing G. M. Pitje, then a lecturer at Fort Hare. Nelson Mandela, then a law student in Johannesburg, was the Youth League's Secretary. But it would be as simplistic to attribute the increased militancy to the advent of a Nationalist Government as to ascribe it to personalities. There was no simple white nationalism breeds black nationalism equation, as the liberals would have it. Nor was it one of those man-of-destiny stories peddled nowadays by cynics and *ingénues* alike. A new post-war generation had been coming up, here as elsewhere in the colonial and semi-colonial world. As far as the ANC was concerned, there had long been dissatisfaction not only with conservative fuddy-duddy Dr. A. B. Xuma as such but also with the opportunistic, collaborationist and increasingly discredited record of the ANC, particularly in its whorings with the Native Representatives' Council. And, in nationalistic terms, the old guard were being challenged. In fact, in an attempt to get the best of both worlds, the Youth Leaguers soon turfed out Xuma and installed in his place as President the then treasurer of the AAC, Dr. J. S. Moroka. He resigned somewhat hurriedly from the AAC and was very much the Youth League's man until he left the Presidency with like speed, making way for Luthuli.

The Riots

But the riots in Durban in January 1949 constituted the event that really highlighted the whole question of nationalism as against national liberation (of which latter the NEUM was the outstand-

ing representative at the time, although it, too, almost ten years later, had its troubles with the nationalists in sections of the AAC leadership at the 1958 Edendale Conference which, inter alia, slid back on the question of 'the nation').

The immediate origins of the riots are said to be that a 'zulu' youth had struck an 'indian' shop assistant. The latter's employer is said to have beaten and injured the youth. This happened near a notoriously crowded and turbulent bus terminus at knock-off time. Every ghetto commuter can work out this scenario. It was estimated that approximately 150 people were killed and over 1 000 injured. It was not without significance that the riots took place in Natal, the Province in which every section of the oppressed has always been more viciously tribalised than in other parts of the country and where, to compound this, there is a relatively larger and more easily recognisable exploiting section among the oppressed who may be made into scapegoats.

Comment and self-analysis

There was no shortage of statements after the event. From Champion (a notorious tribalist left over from ICU days) and Dr. Monty Naicker, and also more representatives groups. But the most telling political analysis and work was done by the NEUM. In the field, through a campaign led by Dr. G. H. Gool. And thereafter in an outstanding pamphlet, "To the People of Natal — Race Riots and the Nation". It is a document which had far-reaching political effects at the time and is as telling and relevant today (with the *Inkatha* tribalists and its bully-boys potentially ripe for a pogrom, and the neo-liberal old guard trying to manipulate the progressives in the Indian Congress onto the wrong road of going into dummy tribal councils). The pamphlet is out of print and very difficult to get hold of, and so it is worthwhile quoting certain key passages:

"... The relations between Africans and Indians in Natal have never been particularly friendly or warm. During the past 10-12 years they have gone

through the successive stages of suspicion, antagonism and hostility, until they have reached the stage of almost open warfare. Now everyone, except the Non-European people of Natal, knows that this is the result of a deliberate policy of the *Herrenvolk* of Natal in the first instance and of the whole Union . . .

"But before we come to an analysis of the occurrence of communal riots or race incitement, let us pause to reflect on the hard fact that the very success of this devilish policy of the Natal *Herrenvolk* suggests that the soil must have been fertile and ready to receive these poisonous seeds of race-hatred. Naturally, the *Herrenvolk* are to blame for the general condition of the soil — for the poverty of the Africans, for their landlessness and helplessness and for the ignorance in which they were kept. But is this truth the whole truth? Is there no blame at all attached to the Non-Europeans? Must the entire blame be laid at the door of the *Herrenvolk*?

"Unfortunately, this is not so. One cannot excuse the Non-Europeans for becoming the willing tools of the propaganda of their enemy, the *Herrenvolk*. For we are thinking not so much of the hooligans and similar elements who committed the criminal acts and took part in the pogroms, but of the silent connivance at these outrageous events by the Africans and their organisations in Natal . . .

"However, one must not be rash in putting upon the Africans even a part of the blame, without considering whether the Indians may not be guilty of provocation . . .

" . . . it is no secret that for the past 25 years Natal has been the weakest sector of the Non-Europeans' struggle for emancipation. It not only lags behind the other sectors, but, because it is so vital, it actually retards the growth of the whole . . . Comfort used to be drawn from the remoteness of Natal and the difficulty of access and communication; matters were allowed to stand because it was comfortingly thought that Natal would not be long in falling into line. More recently the excuse has been made that 'There is an Indian problem!' Now it is time to say what the real reason is, and to say it openly and loudly. It is tribalism. Nowhere in the Union, except in Natal, has tribalism withstood the onslaught of capitalist civilisation and economy, and survived almost intact . . ."

The roots of Inkatha

With the benefit of hindsight and knowledge of the role which the rulers, with the cynical co-operation of the Gatsha Buthelezis and other agencies, are mapping out for that political and pogromistic impi, Inkatha, this pamphlet now seems prophetic on the subject. It goes on to say:

"White superiority finds its counterpart in black superiority, and the Zulus, particularly, were brought up for generations in the traditional tribal way, with the ideology of Zulu superiority. Even

though defeated like the other Africans, even though robbed of their possessions, land, cattle, means of livelihood, and even though forced to slave for the white *Herrenvolk*, the Zulus were induced not to look upon other Africans as fellows and equals, but to regard themselves as a superior race temporarily degraded. This suited the *Herrenvolk* very well, and they fostered it with every means at their disposal. Indeed, in the beginning they even doled out a few paltry concessions to keep alive this myth of the superiority of the Zulu with his 'purity of race', 'Zulu bravery' and 'Zulu steadfastness'. And so it has come about that Natal Africans have isolated themselves from the rest of the Union, to this very day. It is this isolation that prevents them from seeing the conditions under which Africans are living in the rest of the Union, with exactly the same problems of landlessness, rehabilitation schemes, stock culling, pass laws, poll tax, police raids and all the rest of the grinding and crushing machinery of oppression and exploitation.

The Flip Side

"The unfortunate thing about Natal is that the Indians have not helped at all in breaking this isolationist and segregationist outlook of the Africans. In other parts of the Union, Non-Europeans of different sections and of so-called different racial stock, with different languages, traditions and customs were thrown into the same white *Herrenvolk* economic system as a labour force. They learned to live together and, as we shall show later, they learned to withstand the attempts of the *Herrenvolk* to egg them on against one another and keep them at loggerheads. But in Natal things went differently. The Indians, like the Zulus, believed that they were superior and thus also embraced the *Herrenvolk's* ideology of segregation. Instead of building bridges to the Africans, trying to find out their problems and ills, the Indians isolated themselves from the other Non-Europeans and wrapped themselves up in their own interests and superiority. Those who have managed to climb out of the labouring class have even adopted the *Herrenvolk's* arrogant outlook and behaviour towards Africans. Naturally the Africans, while forced to accept such arrogance from the white *Herrenvolk* as conquerors would most violently resent such behaviour from a minority who but yesterday were themselves slaves. Indeed, this arrogance came only from a small section of the Indians (now the merchant class). Nevertheless the *Herrenvolk* were not slow to exploit the explosive possibilities in the behaviour of this section of the Indians towards the Africans. Here we have, in a nutshell, the background to the communal riots."

Unity and the Nation

After dealing with examples of how unified action in other parts of the country have prevented pogroms and helped to build a single nation, the leaflet says:

“... These things show what can be done in a spirit of Unity, and they make invalid the arguments of the Africans in Natal about the ‘Indian problem’. There is *no* Indian problem, just as there is no Coloured problem or African problem. These are just problems for the *Herrenvolk* trying to work out how to split the people, how to keep them apart and grind them separately to dust. For us there is only one problem in South Africa — how to destroy *Herrenvolkism* and to end this 300-year-old rule of plunder, rape, murder, brutality and blood-sucking of the people of South Africa. And the answer to this problem is to break down the barriers of segregation which the *Herrenvolk* have planted between us, to destroy the remaining traces of tribalism that make us see, think and act as isolated groups (as Zulu, Xhosa, Basotho, Coloured, Indian, Malay

and so on) and to start building the Nation of South Africa. As we have shown in the Declaration to the people of South Africa, we have got to build the Nation if we do not want to go under. It is not possible to come together in a unity to fight the *Herrenvolk* as long as we retain our tribal or sectional outlook. Only people who have merged their sectional identity in a National identity, people who can see, think and act as a nation can destroy *Herrenvolkism* and, wiping it from the face of South Africa, liberate the true Nation. China has shown us the right way, India has shown us the wrong way. China did it thoroughly by uniting the people and building a nation. India stopped short and did only half of the job, with the people still carrying most of their chains, because she allowed the enemy to split the people and wreck the nation.”