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Editorial

By Z. Pallo Jordan

When we visited the cathedral in Madgeburg, Germany some of us were surprised to find there a statue of a pitch-black knight, in full armour, with a cross emblazoned across the chest of his tunic. This, it was explained, was a representation of St Morris, a Nubian Christian general who had fought

alongside the German, French and English monarchs during the third crusade. St Morris was accepted as a worthy ally and fellow Christian by the European knights, some of whom immortalised him by erecting a statue in his memory in one of their places of worship. On the opposing side, among the Muslim troops led by Salahdin, there were also Arab, African and European Muslims, all allied as co-religionists in defense of what they collectively considered the sacred shrines of their faith. Though he was the most effective military leader of their enemies, the Christian monarchs and their knights considered Salahdin an honourable adversary. Indeed after the Crusades poets, balladeers and chroniclers throughout Medieval Europe portrayed Salahdin as the embodiment of chivalry and as the perfect knight, a tradition revived by Sir Walter Scott in his novel 'The Talisman', during the 19th century. African soldiers - from Cameroon, Tanganyika, Namibia, Burundi and Rwanda -had fought alongside German troops during the twentieth century as well. But any monuments to their memory are hard to find in present-day Germany. Their contribution to the German cause during the First World War remains largely unacknowledged. Those who were not fortunate enough to leave on time, met the same fate as others whom the Nazis considered 'untermenschen' after 1933.

It is difficult to imagine any European journalist today eulogising an Arab Muslim general, let alone holding him up as a symbol of soldiery honour.

Writing in 1907 Dr W.E.B Du Bois said the main problem of the twentieth century would be the colour line, underscoring the salience race and national origin had acquired in the ordering of human affairs since the Middle Ages. European expansion into the rest of the world during and after the 15th century entailed the conquest, colonization and enslavement of peoples of other races. By the end of the 17th century the leading maritime powers of Europe had established themselves along various points of the west African coast, at the Cape of Good Hope, in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Bengal and at ports on the east African coast; in the Caribbean, Mexico, Brazil and the Antilles in South America; at the mouth of the Hudson River, along the St Lawrence, and various other points of the Atlantic coast of North America.

Literature once again offers us an insight into how Europeans had come to regard the strangers they encountered in these far-off lands. In his last play, 'The Tempest', William Shakespeare brings on stage the character Caliban, the native of a distant island ruled by a wicked witch, his mother. Shipwrecked on the island with his beautiful daughter, the European prince and magician, Prospero, liberates Caliban and the other inhabitants from the cruel domination of the witch. He takes Caliban, a sub-human creature, under his wing and tutors him. Though not quite human, Caliban shares with humans a host of emotions and even has dreams not unlike Prospero's. But, Caliban gets too big for his breeches and repays his benefactor by committing the unpardonable sin of attempting to violate Prospero's beautiful daughter. In retribution Prospero condemns Caliban to servitude. Caliban is embittered by this turn of events and hatches every type of subversive plot to murder Prospero, but is held in check by his recognition of Prospero's superior power. Prospero's right to occupy and take power on a strange island is not only assumed but is justified by the cruelty of the previous ruler. The relationship Prospero establishes with Caliban is that of a mentor though their circumstances would suggest that it should be Caliban, a native familiar with the island's plant and animal life, its streams and forests, who would be tutoring Prospero. The portrayal of Prospero and Caliban anticipates the apologists of colonialism in virtually every respect, up to and including the ungrateful 'native' whose secret ambition is to have sex with the colonizer's daughter!

After two centuries of vigorous contact with the rest of humanity, in the course of which the leading powers of Europe and their descendants in the America's and Africa had established huge trans-oceanic colonial empires, the dominant culture in Europe assumed the biological and moral superiority of Europeans and their White descendants. Rudyard Kipling, the poet laureate of imperialism in Victorian Britain, gave expression to this view in verse:

Take up the White Man's burden,
Send forth the best ye breed,
Go bind your sons to exile,
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild,



Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Kipling, writing at a time when western statesmen gloried in the title 'imperialist', celebrated the racial domination of others by the Whites of Europe. After the First World War, Japan, sitting as an ally among the victors of that war, was humiliated by the two 'Anglo-Saxon' powers, Britain and the United States of America, who shot down her proposal that ending racial discrimination be included among policy objectives of the war.

A century of struggle waged by the oppressed peoples of the world has radically transformed both the political realities and the vocabulary we employ to describe them. 'Imperialist' is considered a term of political abuse today. Equally, terms such as 'white supremacy', 'white domination', and even the euphemism, 'white leadership', are no longer embraced even by those who subscribe to them in practice.

Despite these victories, racism and racist attitudes have not disappeared. Racism is a form of intolerance and oppression that is, regrettably, universal. It is not something that afflicts only Africans and people of African descent. It has been practiced against Asians, against the First Nations of the Americas, against the aboriginal peoples of Australasia and Oceania, against racial minorities in Europe, in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. It has targeted minorities and majorities. It plumbed the abyss of depravity when the Nazis in Europe employed industrial methods of mass murder to wipe out fully half of the world's Jewish population. That unspeakable crime was however the echo of similar acts of genocide perpetrated against a number of colonized peoples in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

The consequences of such racist policies still impact very directly on the lives and life chances of millions. Majorities and minorities who fell victim to racist practice still bear the stigma of their past status even after racist laws have been expunged from the statute books. Their ascribed status as 'inferior', 'not fully human', 'outsiders' haunts present generations in the shape of economic deprivation, exclusion from certain entitlements and even outright social ostracism.

The defeat of Nazi regime in Europe created an environment in which the international community could define new, universal human rights standards and principles. Certain forms of oppressive policy were designated 'crimes against humanity'. New benchmarks, against which the actions of all governments and states would in future be judged, were established.

Government by the consent of the governed also assumed a new significance and was effectively used by the colonized peoples as a rallying slogan to put an end to colonialism in the decades that followed. The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed the indivisibility of these rights and placed an obligation on all states to observe them. The issue of racial domination in South Africa was first placed on the international community's agenda in 1947, at the instance of India immediately after that country attained her independence. For the next ten to thirteen years the western powers, with Britain in the lead, blocked discussion of the issue on the pretext that it was an internal South African matter. It was only after the majority of African countries had achieved their independence, during the 1960's, that it became possible to invoke the generation of human rights associated with the defeat of Nazism to challenge the apartheid regime in South Africa. After years of agitation, inside and outside the United Nations Organisation (UN), in 1980 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to convene a World Conference Against Racism and Apartheid.

The first World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) was held in Paris, at the premises of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in May 1981. On that occasion too, certain states found or invented excuses for non-attendance. But it was clear that their stated motives concealed a policy tilt to shield apartheid South Africa from well-deserved opprobrium.

The 1981 WCAR adopted a Programme of Action which was to inform the activities of a host of non-governmental organizations and bodies of civil society for the following five years. The Programme of Action included the demand for economic sanctions and the isolation of the apartheid regime from every aspect of international life. The conference had afforded governments and NGOs an



opportunity to meet and collectively explore courses of action. NGOs, especially the solidarity movements and Anti-Apartheid bodies from various parts of the world were able to share experiences and improve coordination of their future actions. That conference gave added momentum to the struggles waged inside South Africa and Namibia, complimented by the solidarity activities of the international community. By the time that the second WCAR met in June 1987, the international solidarity movement, spurred on by the mass struggles of the people inside South Africa, was poised to deliver on the issue of sanctions. Though their governments boycotted the conference, the Anti-Apartheid Movements of Britain and the USA were decisive in determining the agenda of the international solidarity campaign. In the European parliament anti-Apartheid activist MPs had established a trans-national lobby that would be responsible for pressing their respective governments for more meaningful action. Margaret Thatcher's Tory government had been forced to accede to an initiative that had resulted in the setting up of an Eminent Person's Group (EPG), comprising leading Commonwealth statesmen. In the USA the Black Congressional Caucus was piloting sanctions legislation through congress.

It was clear that in every respect the national liberation movement had won the battle for international opinion. By mid-1988 the US Congress passed sanctions legislation by such an overwhelming margin that it over-rode President Reagan's veto. That opened the floodgates for sanctions and one after another European parliaments adopted sanctions laws whose momentum was such that even the Thatcher government was drawn into their slip-stream.

The previous two WCARs marked significant landmarks in the international solidarity campaign to end apartheid. Having achieved political democracy in South Africa, our country is today in a position to host the Third WCAR.

The various delegations, drawn from virtually every part of the world, will arrive in South Africa with high expectations. Many individual delegates are veterans of international solidarity movement that assisted us to end apartheid. They will arrive in the hope of seeing the outcomes produced by their efforts. Others will be drawn from newer movements striving for a more just international economic dispensation and social justice. Others will be activists representing movements struggling against racism within their own societies and countries. There will also be representatives of the First Nations of the America's and African minorities from North and South America.

Like the victory of the Indian independence movement before it, the victory of the national liberation movement in South Africa is seen by all anti-racists as a harbinger of their future. South Africa's role as host of the WCAR and the participation of the ANC delegation must assist in taking the struggle to eradicate racism to greater heights.

The WCAR is not about retribution or putting certain governments and countries in the dock. It is the expression of a new determination by the international community to eradicate one of the most degrading and demeaning practices from our collective past. It is as much about restoring the humanity of the victims of racism and racial intolerance as it is about retrieving the humanity of those who were its perpetrators. Its essential purpose is to set in motion a process of healing. But for such healing to be effective and in earnest, requires that perpetrators and victims jointly lance this pestilent growth and ensure that it does not continue to infect the human family.

Non-Racialism in Action

Acknowledging the past, Changing the present, Building the future

**Submission of the African National Congress to the World Conference
against Racism NGO Forum, August 2001**



1. INTRODUCTION

One of the critical national and international challenges that confront us as a country and a people is to succeed in the objective of creating a truly non-racial society. There is no society on earth where the phenomenon of racism has been as much an integral part of the everyday life of a people, which has permeated all levels of a people's being and self-perception, as it has been in South Africa. Many across the globe believe with good reason that because of our specific history we have the possibility to make an important contribution to the universal struggle to defeat the scourge of racism.

This statement aims to stimulate discussion in South Africa and beyond. It is a contribution to the ongoing global debate around racism and intolerance that draws on our rich history of practical and theoretical engagement with these issues. Our approach to non-racialism has evolved over ninety years of struggle for freedom, democracy and dignity. Its defining feature is seeking to build the future in the present through united action. In the course of colonialism and apartheid our people resisted assaults on their dignity, but did not surrender to the temptation of advocating black racial domination.

Instead they reached resolutely and optimistically for the antithesis of apartheid - the ideal of non-racialism: of unity in action against racism among diverse peoples. Throughout its history the African National Congress has played a decisive role in nurturing and building this humanist response to a system that sought to deny our humanity.

Racism is a system of power relations in which one racial group dominates others with the purpose of inequitably distributing social and economic goods and services within a common society, employing race as the determinant criterion of access. Few historical epochs provide a better illustration of racism as system of power relations than the Atlantic slave trade, the conquest and colonisation of Africa, and the apartheid system in South Africa. Racist ideology regarded Africans as less than human, thus providing a perverse moral sanction for these crimes against humanity.

Among the broader public in the respective societies, racist ideology also served to legitimise the actions of its perpetrators.

A freer world has emerged from this painful past. But the legacy of slavery and colonialism continues to shape relations between nations. The distribution of economic endowments has been decisively influenced by the positions racial communities and groups have occupied in this historically determined hierarchy. The underdevelopment of the disadvantaged majority was the condition for the development of the privileged minority; the poverty of the oppressed groups was the condition for the relative wealth of the oppressor group. The current process of globalisation threatens to further entrench the unequal distribution of resources in the world, both between and within societies.

However, if approached correctly, the advent of a global economy and globalised society also provides us with a unique and historic opportunity to address the inequities generated by our shared history. In order to build a better future, we must act now, in concert with the peoples of the world.

But this in turn requires that we acknowledge the past from which we have emerged and change the persistence of patterns of privilege and poverty which are its legacy in the present. For the first time in history we have the potential to act in genuine partnership with the nations of the world, to build non-racialism in action, by working together to ensure a better life for all.

2. RACISM AND SOCIETY

What is racism?

There is only one human race. Religion and science agree. It appears to have originated here, on the Highveld of Africa, hundreds of thousands of years ago, and then migrated, by foot and raft, round the world. On the way its pigment was bleached or burnt, its limbs and features adapted to its environment, it developed social structures, cultures and religions. Racism is founded on the fallacy of purity: the false belief that there exist within the human race, 'pure breeds' that can be objectively



separated. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in its famous statement, declared that:

'All human beings belong to a single species and are descended from a common stock . . .

All peoples of the world possess equal faculties for attaining the highest level in intellectual, technical, social, economic, cultural and political development. The differences between the achievements of the different peoples are entirely attributable to geographical, historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors. Such differences can in no case serve as a pretext for any rank-ordered classification of nations or peoples.'

But the fact that all the world's religions have consistently call on the pious to embrace the idea of a single human family is testimony to the persistence of the ideas of 'race' and the ideology of racism throughout human history. While the category 'race' has no biological basis, 'race' is nonetheless a social and political construct in terms of which power, status, and access to wealth and to social position can be, and have been, assigned.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) was adopted by the United Nations in 1965. Over 160 states are party to this declaration, which defines racism as:

'Any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life'.

At an individual level, racism manifests itself as the exercise of racial prejudice through acts of unfair discrimination that have the purpose or effect of undermining human dignity. Racial prejudice involves making subjective judgements about other people/s on the basis of the alleged racial characteristics, where 'race' may be defined not only by colour but also by descent or ethnic or national origin. Typically, racial prejudice involves inferring that people who share certain physical, cultural or ethnic characteristics also share certain personality traits or characters.

Such prejudices may be consciously held beliefs or unconsciously held attitudes. Racism entails bringing into effect such ideas or attitudes through acts that victimise other individuals and undermine their human dignity. As is clear in the CERD definition, it matters not whether such an act is intended to impair human dignity or unfairly discriminate: the test of racism is whether the act has the effect of doing so.

At a societal level, racism exists in the context of social institutions, economic relations and patterns of political power, which reproduce themselves and change over time. Prejudice and the commission of discriminatory actions reflect a historically specific system that legitimises and, in a perverted sense, gives moral sanction to the political oppression, economic exploitation, and inequitable treatment of a segment of society. It entails the exercise of political, economic and social power and control over racially defined categories of people by a dominant racial group..

The existence of such institutionalised racism also generates a particular moral universe, an ethical environment through which the identity of both perpetrator and victim is constantly filtered. In the words of Oliver Tambo (ANC President from 1967 - 1991):

'Racism, one of the great evils of our time, bedevils human relations, between individuals, within and between nations and across continents. It brutalises entire peoples, destroys persons, warps the process of thought and injects into human society a foul air of tension, mutual antagonism and hatred. It demeans and dehumanises both victim and practitioner, locking them into the vile relationship of master race and untermenschen, superior and underling, each with his position defined by race'

Over time the existence of racist institutions inevitably results in psychological damage to both superior and underling. We would contend that, far from imposing on themselves these psychological



chains of racism, our people have responded with heroic optimism and determination to free themselves from racial bondage. The most downtrodden have been the most courageous at the forefront of their own liberation, and have not been bound by self-doubt and timidity. However, it is clear that when subjected to institutionalised racism, victims often internalise the racism of the perpetrators. This involves turning in on oneself, blaming oneself, holding the perpetrators in high esteem and regarding the system of racial oppression as natural. The consequences of internalised racism are often manifest in low self-esteem and self-loathing, which can lead to high levels of abuse of the most vulnerable within the oppressed group (such as women and children) and a general prevalence of inwardly directed violence.

Racism, therefore, is not simply an individual pathology: it is a societal malady. Thus the solutions to problems of racism do not lie simply in the re-education of those who, in defiance of a growing global consensus, continue to hold morally reprehensible views. The eradication of racism requires that we address the relations arising out of the oppression, injustice and domination that underpin it, by fundamentally transforming our society. Slavery, Colonialism and Apartheid. Nowhere is the role of racism in justifying the morally indefensible more clearly illustrated than in the histories of the Atlantic slave trade, the conquest and colonisation of Africa and apartheid domination in South Africa. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Western Europeans developed a technological edge over the rest of the world. Industrial and military advantage made possible the conquest of other parts of the globe and the domination of other peoples. Once Europeans had established this technological superiority the might of their military became irresistible.

Political and economic domination gave birth to and was sustained by the notion that white Europeans were intellectually, culturally, spiritually and morally superior to other peoples, races and cultures. The presumed superiority of the Europeans was said to be proven by fact of domination itself. White supremacy justified conquest. Even the bloodiest and most genocidal acts of aggression in the history of humanity could be rationalised as expressions of the laws of nature in which the strong overwhelm the weak; the fittest eliminate the unfit.

The Atlantic slave trade was driven by economic imperatives. However, it could be represented as morally acceptable because of the belief that Africans were less than human. Between 10 and 20 million people were transported across a vast ocean in conditions that resulted in the death of up to 20% of the captives. The system promoted racist ideology. Gerard Mellier, the then Mayor of Nantes, a major slave-trading centre, gives a typical example of late eighteenth century European attitudes:

'At bottom, the blacks are naturally inclined to theft, robbery, idleness and treason. In general, they are only suited to live in servitude and for the works and the agriculture of our colonies'

When they reached their destinations in the Americas, African slaves were regarded as no more than an input into the productive process. The reduction of Africans to the status of chattels was for many years organised directly by the agents of European states in partnership with favoured commercial interests. This commerce in humans, sugar, cotton, tobacco, indigo and other goods produced on the basis of slave labour in the Americas played a vital role in the emergence of a global trading system and contributed decisively to the industrialisation of Europe.

The colonisation of Africa was also an important element in the first period of globalisation and European industrial expansion in the nineteenth century. Colonialism made possible the unfettered extraction of Africa's rich natural resources and created markets for Europe's manufactured goods.

In 1884 and 1885, European powers met in Berlin to divide Africa among themselves. King Leopold of Belgium was given personal sovereignty over a territory in the Congo basin, several times the size of Europe. In his quest to reap profit from the global boom in demand for rubber, Leopold conducted his commercial activities in a manner that is estimated to have resulted in the death of ten million Congolese⁵. This is one chapter in a history of many genocides perpetrated by the colonial powers: by the Germans in Namibia; by the Portuguese and Spanish in Latin America; by White settlers in North America; and by the Dutch and the British at the Cape, all of which had resulted in the annihilation of entire peoples. Taken together, conquest, colonisation and African slavery did indeed constitute an African holocaust.



Racist ideology provided a perverse moral justification in the minds of the functionaries of this terror. It also lent ethical legitimacy to crimes against humanity among the broader European public. In some cases, racist beliefs elevated the perpetrators of these crimes to the status of heroes. A Belgian children's story describes the brutal suppression of a Congolese mutiny amongst conscripted African soldiers in 1897 thus:

'The situation was desperate.

All seemed lost.

But brave De Le Court sprang into the breach. Together with two other Belgian officers and the remnants of their platoons, he immobilised the black demons who had rushed into the pursuit of the column . . .

Sinister black heads seemed to emerge from every corner, grinding their white teeth . . .

He fell . . . He understood the supreme moment of death had come . . .

Smiling, disdainful, sublime, thinking of his King, of his Flag, . . .

he looked for the last time upon the screaming horde of black demons . . .

Thus Charles De Le Court died in the fullness of youth in the face of the enemy'

Apartheid, too, was a crime against humanity. Extending from the park bench to regulation of the labour force, it sought to entrap South Africans forever within the confines of legislated racial categories. The purpose of this system, which was built upon the solid foundation of British colonialism, was clear: to perpetually subordinate black South Africans to economic and political whims of whites, in order to guarantee the accumulation and maintenance of material wealth and cultural supremacy.

JG Strjdom, who later became Prime Minister of South Africa, clearly articulated the National Party's policy objectives:

'Our policy is that the Europeans must stand their ground and must remain baas in South Africa. If we reject the herrenvolk idea [the idea of a pure, unadulterated race] and the principle that the white man cannot remain baas, if the franchise is to be extended to the non-Europeans, and if the non-Europeans are given representation and the vote and the non-Europeans are developed on the same basis as the Europeans, how can the European remain baas . . .

Our view is that in every sphere the Europeans must retain the right to rule the country and to keep it a white man's country'.

Three years after the defeat of Nazism as the world community began to embrace a universal human rights culture, the white electorate in South Africa voted into office a party whose political platform was constitutionally sanctioned racial domination in the political, economic, social and cultural fields. Our country thus became the last outpost of racist ideology, of racist practice and domination, devised and implemented by the disciples of Hitler. Chief Albert Luthuli, the President of the African National Congress from 1952-1967, said, on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961, that:

'[Apartheid] is a museum piece in our time, a hangover from the dark past of mankind, a relic of an age which everywhere else is dead or dying.

Here [in South Africa] the cult of race superiority and of white supremacy is worshipped like a god. Few white people escape corruption and many of their children learn to believe that white men are unquestionably superior, efficient, clever, industrious and capable; that black men are, equally, unquestionably inferior, slothful, stupid, evil and clumsy.

On the basis of the mythology that 'the lowest amongst them is higher than the highest amongst us,' it is claimed that white men build everything that is worthwhile in the country; its cities, its industries, its mines and its agriculture, and that they alone are thus fitted and entitled as of right to own and control these things, whilst black men are only temporary sojourners in these cities, fitted only for menial labour, and unfit to share political power.

The Prime Minister of South Africa, Dr Verwoerd, then Minister of Bantu Affairs, when explaining his government's policy on African education had this to say:



'There is no place for him (the African) in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour.'

There is little new in this mythology. Every part of Africa which has been subject to white conquest has, at one time or another, and in one guise or another, suffered from it, even in its virulent form of the slavery that obtained in Africa up to the 19th Century...

These ideas survive in South Africa because those who sponsor them profit from them. They provide moral whitewash for the conditions which exist in the country:

- for the fact that the country is ruled exclusively by a white government elected by an exclusively white electorate which is a privileged minority;
- for the fact that 87 per cent of the land and all the best agricultural land within reach of town, market and railways is reserved for white ownership and occupation and now through the recent Group Areas legislation non-Whites are losing more land to white greed;
- for the fact that all skilled and highly-paid jobs are for whites only; for the fact that all universities of any academic merit are an exclusive preserve of whites;
- for the fact that the education of every white child costs about £64 per annum whilst that of an African child costs about £9 per annum and that of an Indian child or Coloured child costs about £20 per annum;
- for the fact that white education is universal and compulsory up to the age of 16, whilst education for the non-white children is scarce and inadequate,
- and for the fact that almost one million Africans a year are arrested and gaoled or fined for breaches of innumerable pass and permit laws which do not apply to whites.'

Religious institutions played a regrettable role throughout the years of colonialism and apartheid. The concern of white missionaries and settlers for the conversion of 'the heathen' was held side by side with the conviction that 'western civilisation' and faith were inherently superior to anything black, and that Providence was the ultimate source of their imperialist power. Apartheid was developed and canonized within the Dutch Reformed Church as the will of God, and many other churches concurred in practice.

Under colonial rule and apartheid, race, gender and class oppression were synchronised in an intricate system of oppression. The colonial rulers in Africa intensified the gender oppression found in pre-colonial societies. The combination of colonial and customary oppression denied women basic social and economic rights in the family and the community. Many women were barred from living in cities, from owning land, denied family planning, the right to inherit, excluded from borrowing money or participating in political and social struggles. The purpose of such practices was partly to intensify the economic exploitation of women and maximise the unpaid labour that was their contribution towards apartheid wealth creation. The system led to widespread abuse of women, both inside and outside the family. In apartheid South Africa, black women were confronted by triple oppression, oppression on the basis of their race, their gender and often of their class.

*Racism and Society:
The 20th Century's Unresolved Burden*

As we enter the third millennium the problem of racism is as acute as ever. No country in the world, no matter how economically developed, has unravelled its historical link with racial oppression, nor resolved its current manifestations. The distribution of wealth within nations, as much as between them continues to be defined by the intersection of race, class and gender.

3. NINETY YEARS OF NON-RACIAL STRUGGLE

Our Non-Racialism

When Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as President of South Africa in May 1994, he declared:



'The South Africa we have struggled for, in which all our people, be they African, Coloured, Indian or White, regard themselves as citizens of one nation is at hand . . . The struggle for democracy has never been a matter pursued by one race, class, religious community or gender among South Africans. In honouring those who fought to see this day arrive, we honour Africans, Coloureds, Whites, Indians, Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Jews -all of them united by a common vision of a better life for all the people of this country.'

Mandela was expressing a deep and resonant tradition within the liberation struggle. For the African National Congress and its allies, non-racialism was not a programme that would be achieved after liberation. It was something to be built in the here and now. Throughout its history the ANC has played a decisive role in nurturing and building a humanist response to the system that sought to deny our humanity. Many in the international community, and even in South Africa, believe that South Africa's racial reconciliation was the result of a miracle, precipitated by the magnificent actions of heroic leaders. Certainly, both our people and our leaders have displayed heroism and magnanimity of a degree uncommon in history. But the transition to democracy was made possible by the understanding of the millions of our people that all of us, regardless of race and colour are interdependent members of a common society. This in turn was the outcome of conscious and purposive human effort over many years by a liberation movement that firmly believed that black domination would be as evil as white domination. Chief Albert Luthuli said in 1961, following the massacre at Sharpeville and the banning of ANC:

'How easy it would have been in South Africa for the natural feelings of resentment at white domination to have been turned into feelings of hatred and a desire for revenge against the white community. Here, where every day in every aspect of life, every non-white comes up against the ubiquitous sign, 'Europeans Only,' and the equally ubiquitous policeman to enforce it -here it could well be expected that a racialism equal to that of their oppressors would flourish to counter the white arrogance towards blacks.

That it has not done so is no accident. It is because, deliberately and advisedly, African leadership for the past 50 years, with the inspiration of the African National Congress which I had the honour to lead for the last decade or so until it was banned, had set itself steadfastly against racial vain-gloriousness.

We knew that in so doing we passed up opportunities for easy demagogic appeal to the natural passions of a people denied freedom and liberty; we discarded the chance of an easy and expedient emotional appeal. Our vision has always been that of a non-racial democratic South Africa which upholds the rights of all who live in our country to remain there as full citizens with equal rights and responsibilities with all others. For the consummation of this ideal we have laboured unflinchingly. We shall continue to labour unflinchingly.'

The defining feature of our non-racial, non-sexist approach is that it seeks to build the future in the present. The act of mobilising people for change simultaneously breaks down the existing order and builds a new one. Our non-racialism does not involve the subordination of one culture to another. Diversity does not detract from our commonality: it enriches our unity. Our non-racialism acknowledges our history and the nature of our society: that black people in general, and Africans in particular, have been, and continue to be the victims of the consequences created by the Apartheid social order.

Building unity in the present in order to achieve a non-racial future could only occur as an act of black self-emancipation, with the African people taking the lead in their own liberation. Indeed our non-racial ethos is a profound expression of the broad African nationalism that has always been at the heart of our struggle.

Our history of non-racial struggle

At its formation in 1912 the African National Congress became the pivot of African unity in South Africa and beyond. Its broad, outward-looking nationalism reflected both the humanist traditions of African democratic inclusiveness and the universalist values of the major religions of the world. From its inception the ANC conceived of a South Africa composed of diverse cultures living in a common



society and sharing a common sovereignty, expressed through democratic representation. In its first years, the Congress focused on uniting African people in defence of the limited freedoms that they then had. Where previously separate indigenous armies had waged war against colonial forces, the ANC sought to unite the diverse peoples in an effort at moral persuasion.

Indeed, each act of the racist state that attempted to divide our people and prevent the emergence of non-racial unity generated greater determination within the liberation movement to achieve precisely this goal. In the words of Oliver Tambo:

' . . . Since it was the express aim of the Government to enforce sharp racial divisions among the population and to set up separate and possibly hostile racial camps, the very act of co-operation and unity among all opponents of racial discrimination and white domination was in itself an attack on Government policy. It was, therefore, of great political and strategic importance for the African National Congress to rally, and to welcome, the support of other oppressed groups and of democratic whites.'

The ANC is the oldest living political organisation in Africa. Its formation stirred the imagination of the continent. African National Congresses were formed in Zimbabwe, Zambia and even as far a field as Uganda. Our anthem, 'Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika', which is sung in a host of Southern African nations, is a reflection of the pan-African vision and unity for which the ANC has always stood. When the storm of colonialism swept our continent, South Africa became the hub of the Southern African labour market. The wealth of South Africa has been created through the toil of the Southern African working classes. Our pan-African vision was sharpened by the emergence of a trade union movement that reflected this objective reality.

The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union, formed in 1919 became the first major union of black workers in the sub-continent, and was led by a Malawian worker, Clements Kadalie.

Throughout the twentieth century the ANC consciously fostered the unity of the broadest range of forces opposed to the racist state. Non-racial unity was forged in the crucible of working class struggle. The Communist Party of South Africa, (the CPSA later known as the SACP) was among the first organisations in South Africa whose membership was open to all races. The role of white Communists, some of whom became leading fighters in the struggle for national liberation, did much to build the spirit of non-racialism. Their presence was a constant reminder that our struggle was (and is) against an oppressive society and not a racial group. The enduring influence of Gandhi's philosophy of action also contributed to the broad stream of the liberation movement's non-racialism. Mahatma Gandhi conceived and inspired the tactics of Satyagraha during the 21 years he spent in South Africa after his arrival in 1893. His legacy found enduring organisational expression in Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses (TIC and NIC), which he helped to found and which entered into a formal alliance with the ANC in 1947. Within the Coloured community, the African People's Organisation (APO) emerged in the first decade of the twentieth century as perhaps the first truly national party, open to persons of all races and with branches in all the colonies that later constituted the Union of South Africa. Following the APO's demise, the ANC developed a strong coloured support base, particularly among rural and urban workers in the Western Cape. In the 1950's, the Coloured People's Congress mobilised working class coloureds in defiance of apartheid laws, and led popular and effective campaigns against segregation on Cape Town's trains. The CPC became a key component of the congress alliance in the 1950's.

Women have consistently been at the forefront of our struggle. The growth of the women's movement after the founding of the ANC Women's League in 1941 and the Federation of South African Women in 1954 and the strong influence both acquired within the congress tradition ensured the evolution of a gendered perspective on questions of race and class within the ranks of the liberation movement. Oliver Tambo was a leading exponent of women's emancipation within the liberation movement. He consistently articulated the position that evolved: that the oppression of women is inextricable linked with racial and class oppression:

'The mobilisation of women is the task, not only of women alone, or of men alone, but of all of us, men and women alike, comrades in struggle. The mobilisation of the people into active resistance and struggle for liberation demands the energies of women no less than of men. A system based on the



exploitation of man by man can in no way avoid the exploitation of women by the male members of society. There is therefore no way in which women in general can liberate themselves without fighting to the end the exploitation of man by man, both as a concept and as a social system'.¹³ The indigenous beliefs of the African people had never endorsed the notion of a God who picked favourites on racist grounds, and African converts to Christianity were amongst the first to mobilise against the domination and racist structures of imported religion. Very many of the early ANC leaders were clergy, and this strong support from people of faith has never ceased. Religious resistance stiffened through the years: the non-racial ecumenical Christian Institute led by Dr. Beyers Naude, the 'Message to the people of South Africa', produced in cooperation with the South African Council of Churches, which denounced apartheid as a false gospel, the World Council of Churches 'Programme to Combat Racism', and the 'Kairos Document of the 1980s' were all milestones in the mobilisation of communities of faith within the broad stream of the liberation struggle.

Non-racial unity decisively emerged from the crucible of the mass campaigns of the 1940's and 1950's, which united in action the organised might of bodies and movements representing all racial and class components of South African society. The Congress Alliance was born during the Campaign of Defiance against Unjust Laws of 1952. In the face of growing state repression, the movement intensified its challenge by outlining a vision of an alternative society. Thousands of volunteers trekking to all corners of the country, to hold meetings, rallies and public fora with ordinary people in factories, on the farms, in communities and churches, to prepare a schedule of popular demands for change. These were then collected and compiled. At the Congress of the People, an open assembly of democratically elected delegates held in 1955, the Freedom Charter was adopted in the midst of the mistrust between communities that the forces of racism consciously fostered. Its preamble states:

'We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:

That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people;

That our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality; That our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

That only a democratic state, based on the will of the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief; And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white, together - equals, countrymen and brothers - adopt this Freedom Charter;

And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.'

For the majority, the Charter redefined the struggle. We would no longer aim to modify the existing order, or to reform a society whose basis was fundamentally flawed: a completely new order, based on the will of the people, was put on the agenda.

The apartheid state viewed the Charter as an act of treason. The racist state was particularly horrified by the coalescence of non-racial opposition. It moved decisively to intensify repression in order to defeat the forces of democracy. One hundred and fifty six leaders of the Congress Alliance were arrested and tried for treason. But the trial backfired badly, since it cemented the unity among the leadership, held together in captivity for the duration of the trial, and focussed international attention on the apartheid policy. The racist regime's campaign of repression culminated in the massacre of 69 unarmed demonstrators at Sharpeville on March 21 1960. It followed this up ten days later by the banning of the liberation movements and the declaration of a state of emergency. All avenues of peaceful protest were closed.

The regime's attempts to divide the resistance to apartheid along racial lines produced an opposite reaction: the unity of our people in struggle. In the prisons and detention, in exile, in mass action, in armed struggle and in international mobilisation, South Africans would unite against the racist state.



The crisis of the Apartheid State and the mass struggles of the 1970's and 1980's served to further build non-racial unity around the programme of the Freedom Charter. The regime attempted to respond to its own political and economic crisis with a set of constitutional reforms intended to divert the people from non-racial unity. The tri-cameral parliament, where whites, coloureds and Indians would have separate representation was an attempt to build 'group rights', in explicit and direct opposition to the demands of the majority for a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa. This strategy was backed by the racially based distribution of government patronage, which sought to recruit elements of the oppressed groups to the side of apartheid. An alliance of organisations, including civic organisations, and trade unions responded by joining hands in their adherence to the Freedom Charter. A significant component of this movement was the United Democratic Front, which defined the moment with the slogan 'UDF unites: apartheid divides'. Many religious groups and people of faith across the country threw their weight into the struggle too, until the apartheid state became ungovernable and change became irresistible. The emergence of organisations within the white community aligned to the liberation movement, such as the Five Freedoms Forum and the End Conscription Campaign, presaged the final cracks in the coherence and unity of the ruling block.

4. BUILDING OUR NON-RACIAL DEMOCRACY

The Freedom Charter's Unfinished Business

The vision of an alternative society outlined in the Freedom Charter remains our guiding light. Our goal is the creation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. This in essence means the liberation of Africans in particular, and black people in general, from political and economic bondage. It means uplifting the quality of life of all South Africans, especially the poor, the majority of whom are African and female.

The achievement of majority rule in 1994 was a decisive step in dismantling the legacy of apartheid. It constitutes a platform from which to launch a programme of social transformation: a programme that is absolutely necessary to uproot the demon of racism from South African soil. The constitution, in addition to providing for formal equality, enjoins all branches of government to implement this transformation project.

Our liberation struggle was a struggle against a system of oppression, not against Whites as a race. The Strategy and Tactics position paper that the ANC adopted in 1969 characterised apartheid South Africa as 'colonialism of a special type':

'South Africa's social and economic structure and the relationships which it generates are perhaps unique. It is not a colony, yet it has, in regard to the overwhelming majority of its people, most of the features of the classical colonial structures. Conquest and domination by an alien people, a system of discrimination and exploitation based on race, a technique of indirect rule; these and more are the traditional trappings of the classical colonial framework. Whilst at the one level it is an 'independent' national state, at another level it is a country subjugated by a minority race. What makes the structure unique and adds to its complexity is that the exploiting nation is not, as in the classical imperialist relationships, situated in a geographically distinct mother country, but is settled within the borders. What is more, the roots of the dominant nation have been embedded in our country by more than three centuries of presence. It is thus an alien body only in the historical sense.'

The implication of this analysis is that the oppressed nation is composed of various stratas and classes, all of whom have an objective basis for opposition to the oppressor regime. However, what is special is that, unlike the struggles in other parts of Africa, South Africans would have to deal with the reality that the 'colonising power' was naturalised. The resolution of the conflict, therefore, required the destruction of the racist regime in order to build single nation out of the oppressed and the oppressor groups. Unlike the racial question in many developed countries, ours is not a struggle to ensure the protection or inclusion of a marginalized minority. Rather, we must act to ensure the advancement of an excluded majority. This does not entail tampering or reforming the system, but its complete and progressive transformation, since racial inequality in South Africa is not a set of isolated aberrations that can be corrected by the equal application of the law, or the re-education of pathological individuals. The legacy of apartheid continues to dominate all facets of South African



reality. While we are a middle-income country, 61% of Africans are poor, compared with only 1% of whites. According to the UNDP:

'Virtually every social indicator betrays the extreme inequalities that define South African society. Measured by the Gini coefficient, inequality in South Africa is among the highest in the world . . . Comparisons of inequality between races in South Africa reveal that, measured by the Gini coefficient, the gap between white and African is increasing.

The experience of extreme poverty is dramatically concentrated among Africans: 57.2 percent of Africans live below the poverty threshold, compared to 2.1 percent of whites. The poorest 40 percent of citizens remain overwhelmingly African, female and rural . . . [T]wice as many female-headed households are in the bottom quintile. When race and gender are aggregated, the figure rises to 31 percent of African, female-headed households in the lowest quintile, compared to 19 percent of African, male-headed households.'

Thus, our country remains one divided by its history into two nations. In the words of President Thabo Mbeki:

'One of these nations is white, relatively prosperous, regardless of gender or geographic dispersal. It has ready access to a developed economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure. This enables us to argue that . . . all members of this nation have the possibility to exercise their right to equal opportunity, the development opportunities to which the Constitution of '93 committed our country.

The second and larger nation of South Africa is the black and poor, with the worst affected being women in the rural areas, the black rural population in general and the disabled. This nation lives under conditions of a grossly underdeveloped economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure. It has virtually no possibility to exercise what in reality amounts to a theoretical right to equal opportunity, with that right being equal within this black nation only to the extent that it is equally incapable of realisation.'

We cannot claim, therefore, that we have yet achieved our objective of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa as envisaged in the Freedom Charter. It is still our responsibility 'to break down barriers of division and create a country where there will be neither whites nor blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity.'

In doing so it is important to draw a link between the material realities of racism, and the ideologies that strive to maintain it. Ideology is historically specific: it changes as societies change. In South Africa the idea of non-racialism has been triumphant, asserting its hegemony in every sphere. The ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority has been resoundingly defeated: it has receded from the centres of power to the lunatic fringe of a few die hards. But ideas that offer a perverse moral sanction and sense of legitimacy to continuing inequality remain common.

Modern racist ideology includes ideas and practices that endorse the notion that racial discrimination and prejudice no longer pose a significant social problem. Some argue that, since the attainment of formal equality, the main racial problem in society is that blacks are becoming too demanding and that their demands are unfair. Such arguments overlook or seek to deny the continuing patterns of racial inequality in our country and the world. They are sometimes underpinned by a resentment of mechanisms aimed at redressing these patterns of inequality and antagonism towards demands for the elimination of racism in its various manifestations. At apex of such views in South Africa is the idea that even to discuss the question of racism is itself an act of racism.

Thus to respond to the question of racism in South Africa requires us to address both the material inequities that are its legacy and also engage in a battle of conscience against those ideas which are its flower. Again in the words of our President:

'In conceptual terms we have to deal with two interrelated elements. The first of these is that we must accept that it will take time to create the material base for nation building and reconciliation. The



second and related element is that we must therefore agree that it is the subjective factor, accompanied by tangible progress in the creation of the new material base, which must take the lead in sustaining the hope and conviction among the people that the project of reconciliation and national building will succeed.'

In other words, while the long-term solution to racial problems may reside in socio-economic development, our subjective actions in the short to medium term will eventually determine the extent to which such objectives can be achieved. South Africa is making remarkable progress in both areas. Our Constitution: Taking forward the Struggle for a Non-Racial South Africa The South African Constitution fully embodies the triumph of non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy and enjoins the entire nation to advance and contribute practically to the life of these concepts. We have shown through our history that the struggle to free our people, far from denigrating the dignity of others, creates the opportunity for all to live in peace and dignity. The notion that action can and must be taken which advances the cause of the oppressed and yet causes no injury to the dignity of other groups is central to our constitutional jurisprudence. It gives legal expression to the message we have propagated in the course of ninety years of struggle for self-determination, equality, dignity and freedom.

The constitution endorses a conception of equality that is unambiguously substantive. In an unequal society, positive action is needed to overcome the continuing effects of past discrimination. Only by recognising and addressing the injustice that is inherent in any unequal society, only by building, through action, a just future in the midst of our unjust present, can we hope to achieve our goals. In the words of the Constitutional Court:

'The prohibition on unfair discrimination in the interim Constitution seeks not only to avoid discrimination against people who are members of disadvantaged groups. It seeks more than that. At the heart of the prohibition of unfair discrimination lies recognition that the purpose of our new constitutional and democratic order is the establishment of a society in which all human beings will be accorded equal dignity and respect regardless of membership of particular groups. The achievement of such a society in the context of our deeply inegalitarian past will not be easy, but that that is the goal of the Constitution should not be forgotten or overlooked.'

Corrective action is provided for in the constitution to ensure that the awesome legacy of apartheid is combated.

The constitution also provides for numerous mechanisms to monitor and enforce the ongoing transformation of society while ensuring the protection of minorities. These include a Human Rights Commission, a Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities and a Commission for Gender Equality.

Government Programmes to eradicate the demon of racism

Government has embarked on a sustained programme to uproot the demon of racism from South African soil, in the first place by addressing the inequality and injustice that are its consequences. In pursuit of a non-racial society, some key elements of the government's programmes include:

- Restructuring of the State to create a democratic, representative state from an institution that created and developed as an instrument of white minority rule. The civil service, the judiciary, the army, the police and the intelligence structures were all moulded to attain the opposite of what we now intend to achieve. Thus it is a critical part of the ANC's programme to change the doctrines, the composition and management style of all these structures to reflect and serve South African society as a whole.

This includes the involvement of more and more of those who were discriminated against, especially blacks, women and the disabled, and particular sensitivity to their needs and interests. It also involves the creation of democratic and non-racial structures of governance at all levels. At local government level this programme took a decisive step forward when the first non-racial local government elections were held in December 2000.

- A wide-ranging legislative programme aimed at addressing the legacy of apartheid through affirmative action and special protection for the historically disadvantaged. Central to this programme is the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, through which every minister and level of government is required by law to implement within their portfolios measures aimed at the achievement of equality. Such measures include the elimination of unfair discrimination in any form including the repeal of any law, policy or practice, for which that minister is responsible, that results in the perpetuation of inequality. Ministers are also required to draw up clear implementable plans for uprooting inequality. The Employment Equity Act is another instrument to ensure that we overcome the legacy of the workplace colour bar, which was one of apartheid's central features.
- Directed developmental interventions aimed at addressing the huge social backlog that exists with regards to the poorest of the poor, the vast majority of whom are African and women. Such interventions include the recently launched Integrated Rural Development Programme and the various Urban Renewal Initiatives. Land reform programmes are also crucial to address racial and gender disparities and these are receiving high priority.
- Expanding access to services for the poor: The supply of water, sanitation, housing, health care and other public goods are expanding through directed government programmes. A recent Statistics South Africa report found that access to and use of housing, clean water, electricity, telephony, health care has increased since the achievement of a democratic government.
- Developing our human resources, which is regarded as both an end and a means to an end. A central component of apartheid was the design of an education system aimed at creating in the African population, people who only aspired to be 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'. Our educational programmes include the implementation of measures to redistribute educational resources in favour of the majority, the building of a culture of teaching and learning, the introduction of a new curriculum in tune with the country's needs and the development of our teachers.
- Supporting the restructuring of the economy. The Freedom Charter envisages a society where the people share in the wealth of the country. Our economic policies aim to both stimulate economic growth and equalise the distribution of income between population groups. An important component of this are programmes to deracialise the ownership of assets, such as land and private equity. Currently, black people own less than two percent of the equity listed on the Johannesburg stock exchange. Government is, through affirmative procurement, strategic engagement, the restructuring of state assets and other measures continuing to support the growth of black enterprise at all levels, including providing more and more opportunities for small business.

*Building Non-Racialism:
Towards the 21st Century*

The existence of formal constitutional rights, and the action of government to address the terrible legacy of apartheid and expand the floor of social economic access and are crucial for the building of a non-racial, non-sexist South Africa. But the people themselves, through acts of self-empowerment, through conscious organisation and participation, must lead the process of transformation and people-centred development. Together, South Africans are fighting racism and sexism. Together South Africans are building democracy. The space is open for them to seize the moment and deepen the process of change.

The African National Congress is a mass based non-racial movement. Its ninety fighting years have equipped it to meet this challenge like no other. Over these years we have learnt much, corrected many mistakes and deepened our approach to non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy in both theory and in practice. Within our society today, the ANC remains the only extra-governmental institution where South Africans of all colours, of all creeds, from all walks of life, from all communities meet in open debate to confront the challenge of reconstruction. Through its campaigns and activities at branch, provincial and national level the African National Congress continues to act with all South

Africans in pursuit of a non-racial future. It continues to stand resolutely by the principles that have shaped its history. It continues to stand as a central pillar of our non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

Our history of non-racial struggle, over ninety years, is what gives us confidence that we will be able to lead South Africa from the nightmare of its past to a future of unity in a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa. The ANC is fundamentally committed to continuing its traditions of non-racial unity in action. For the first time, democratic governance provides the framework within which black people can begin to shape their own advancement. Together, with government action to address the material consequences of racism, and ongoing organised community action, we are convinced of steady progress in the battle against the demon of racism.

5. RACISM IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION

The liberation of South Africa was achieved through the indomitable courage of our people. Our transition was also an element of a dynamic political process: of a world redefining itself with the end of the Cold War. To the extent that the new global situation has not resolved the contradictions within and among nations, between poverty and opulence; to the extent that ethnic, religious and racial tensions continue to ravage parts of the globe; to the extent that some of these contradictions find bold expression in our own society; to this extent and more, the transformation taking place in our country is closely intertwined with the search for a new world order.

The endowments of human, social and physical capital held by the nations of the world in modern times have not been the outcome of unconstrained bargaining in a free market, where economic agents respond to price signals in their own interest and a benign invisible hand ensures the optimal allocation of resources. Far more decisive in the allocation of global resources has been the iron glove of state-led coercion. The underdevelopment of the majority of the world is directly correlated to the industrialisation of its minority. These inescapable relations of power and resource allocation are defined by the history from which the present global order has emerged: a history of slavery and colonial domination sustained by, and supportive of, racist ideologies. The ideological, economic and political legacy of this history continues to colour relations between and within countries. It continues to shape the contours of wealth and poverty in the world. It continues to define the terrain on which we must determine our common destiny. Privilege and underdevelopment, which were its outcome, are not artefacts of history, but a living legacy.

The Era of Globalised Capitalism

We enter the third millennium in the era of globalised capitalism. The collapse of the socialist bloc and the end of the cold war, the crisis of state-led protectionist industrialisation, the information and communications technology revolution and the strengthening of institutions of global governance and economic regulation have facilitated the emergence of a single world economic system. The integration of the global economy has reached a level and intensity not witnessed since the start of World War I. This is partly a result of the development of productive forces, and partly the upshot of policy choices made, and in some cases imposed, across the globe. This economic integration is but one aspect of the development of a global society. In culture, sport, policy formulation and implementation, in academic discourse; indeed in all aspects of human activity, global as opposed to local influences are becoming more and more important.

Globalisation has seen a significant change in the operation of the world economy. Corresponding to a transition from an 'international' to a 'trans-national' mode of operation, the period since the late 1980's has seen strong pressures for the free movement of commodities and capital across national borders with corporations seeking the ability to locate in any part of the world. Driven and facilitated by a revolution in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), production processes in many parts of the world are increasingly coordinated into what Manuel Castells has called 'global networks'. At the same time the application of ICT coupled with the liberalisation of capital and currency movements, has created a world in which capital flows into and out of countries are literally instantaneous.



These developments have led simultaneously led to an increase in global wealth and a widening of global inequalities. For those with wealth and appropriate skills it has meant greatly enhanced access to new opportunities. For those lacking resources or appropriate skills, or excluded from global networks, globalisation has meant growing marginalisation and poverty. Understanding this dialectic is the key to the required policy responses. It means that measures to adapt to take advantage of new opportunities thrown up by globalisation need to include conscious efforts to counter the tendency towards inequality and marginalisation that the process has thus far exhibited.

Africa in an integrated world

Today, income in the whole of Africa is little more than that of Belgium. Africa is the poorest region of the world. Colonialism intended to ensure Africa's permanent role as a supplier of cheap labour and raw materials. In doing so it deliberately degraded Africa's human resource endowments, undermined and destroyed its social capital and skewed investment towards the extraction of raw materials in order to serve European industry.

The independence of African nations was won through struggle involving the masses of African people. Its victory was one of the great human achievements of the twentieth century. It provided Africa and the world with its first opportunity to reach for the dream of freedom, equality and human dignity. But from an economic and developmental point of view the post-independence project has not realised these great expectations. In the last 30 years Africa has become more and more marginalized, and has made little progress towards restructuring its relationship with the world. GDP per capita in Africa is significantly lower today than it was in 1970.

Investment per capita has also declined and exports per capita have collapsed. In contrast, all of these indicators have significantly increased in Latin America, East Asia and South Asia. Unlike these other regions, Africa has failed to diversify its productive base and remains largely an exporter of primary products. Since independence, income inequality has increased to levels comparable with Latin America. Today 40% of Africa's population live on less than a dollar a day.

Several factors explain this tragedy of a dream unrealised. Certainly the legacy of colonialism and slavery are key among them, as are the quasi-colonial interference and war mongering that characterised the cold war. However, these factors also impacted on Latin American and Asian countries. Africa's own choices have contributed to her continued marginalisation.

The threat posed by the process of Globalisation

The process of accelerated globalisation that we have witnessed over the past twenty-five years is a thoroughly contradictory one. As already noted, in addition to an overall increase in global wealth, inequality in the distribution of wealth has widened, both between many developing and developed societies, and within societies, including within the developed world. Globalisation threatens to inaugurate a new apartheid, on a global scale, where the victims of past abuses are consigned to an economic and developmental abyss, while the beneficiaries accumulate greater wealth and power. The practices and beliefs associated with racism, xenophobia, gender and related intolerance buttress the tendency so far manifest in the globalisation process to further marginalize the developing world.

In particular, globalisation could result in the further marginalisation of Africa. The opening of the world to trade does not necessarily lead to the convergence of growth rates between the developed and developing world, and the continued exclusion of Africa from global productive networks presents the danger of the divergent growth. Racist and xenophobic attitudes can exacerbate these tendencies. For example, attitudes of Afro-pessimism can fuel sentiments that impede long term capital flows to African countries. Racism and xenophobia can also restrict legitimate access of people from the South to business opportunities and trade in the North.

As well as threatening to reinforce the material basis of racism on a global scale, the process of globalisation is also associated with the emergence of new forms of racism, xenophobia, gender and related intolerance. While the free movement of capital and goods across national borders is

encouraged, and is growing (although increasing protectionism amongst the developed nations in the context of a global recession cannot be ruled out), the movement of people across borders, especially the movement of unskilled labour from less developed to the more developed countries is becoming increasingly circumscribed. This, combined with policies that conspire to actively 'poach' the cream of skilled labour produced in the South, means that nations which stand outside the centres of capital accumulation are most disadvantaged by these restrictive migration regimes. These developments, which intensify the tendencies towards marginalisation in the process of globalisation, are spurred by xenophobia, the hatred of foreigners. In turn such restrictions give credence to these animosities.

The relationship between xenophobia and racism is inextricable as both are manifestations of intolerance to people who are different, and at the same time express real differences in power and control over resources. Through challenging racism - both social and material manifestations - which also manifests itself within all these relationships, it is possible to challenge xenophobia.

The opportunity presented by the process of globalisation

The advent of a global economy also provides us with important opportunities to address global inequities. First, the strengthening of organs of global governance and the emergence of developing economies as independent nation states on the global stage have created the political and institutional framework within which global developmental action can potentially succeed.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, the extension of the world economy was often driven through the agency of colonial domination. However, the second half of the twentieth century saw the demise of the old colonial systems and millions of formerly colonised people now enjoy (in varying degrees) formal national sovereignty and basic citizenship rights. The existence of many more independent states within the world system is an important new reality. The sovereign capacity of many new states is often severely impaired by debt, and structural adjustment programmes that have hollowed out the public sphere in these societies. Nonetheless, the existence of many relatively new independent states is an important reality in the world inter-state system, and places on the agenda the need for, and the possibility of greater equity in world trade regulations, the reform of multi-national institutions and more genuine global partnerships between peoples.

Second, the information and communications technology revolution, while powerful transnational corporations in the North dominate it, nonetheless creates an infrastructure and a potential flow of information that can underpin a greater sense of our common humanity.

Third, growing globalisation, including media globalisation, have been accompanied by the development of a wide range of generally progressive and genuinely popular social movements, focused on balanced development, peace, disarmament, gender questions, the environment, health-care and human rights questions - including the world-wide movement against apartheid and racism.

While these increasingly well-mobilised social movements are often hostile to the present character of globalisation, they are also often the products of the new realities and they have used the global information and communications infrastructure to publicise their perspectives, and to network amongst themselves.

Combined these factors open the possibility of unity in action for a non-racial world on a global scale. Partnerships between peoples and governments can be built to ensure that globalisation, far from entrenching the calamities of history and the animosities they have generated, enables us to enter a new era of common dignity. To do so requires that we take remedial action that addresses the structural consequences of historic injustices.

Remedial Action for Historic Injustices

The nature of the damage caused by slavery and colonialism is complex and manifold: it involves the wholesale destruction of peoples and groups, the erosion and in some cases theft, of social, economic and human capital and the destruction of the social fabric of entire peoples. There is no



doubt that Africans themselves must and will take the lead addressing the legacy of this African holocaust.

In recent years, there has been a growing demand that some form of satisfaction be provided for these serious and grievous wrongs. South Africa's experience convinces us that to delay or avoid this discussion would not serve the cause of human fraternity. In legal terms, such wrongs are separated from the less serious ones by describing them as crimes against humanity, or war crimes or the crime of genocide. These are international wrongs and the wrong doers are liable to universal jurisdiction, as illustrated in The Hague and Rwanda Tribunals.

Until recent times, any state could, either on its own behalf or on behalf of its citizens, bring claims for reparations. This term, which is borrowed from international law, is broad and generic. It provides for various remedies, including:

- Reviving the status quo ante, a remedy that would wipe out all the consequences of a wrong or a crime. The nature of the crimes against humanity associated under discussion mean that such an approach is hardly applicable.
- Financial or other forms of compensation is another form of reparation. This has been the preferred route, but it is based on wrongs committed to individuals who are identifiable, when the parties against which the action are brought are also identifiable and where the nature of the wrong can be compensated by monetary means.
- Satisfaction, when the aggrieved party receives, in one form or other, a recognition of the wrong committed. This could take the form of an acknowledgement that the activities such as slavery, racial discrimination and colonialism were forms of crimes against humanity. Acknowledgement could be accompanied by an apology for the grave crimes committed or simply a statement of contrition.

However, the problem about these remedies is that they remove the element of the structural consequences of these wrongs. As already noted, the core of modern racism lies in the historical injustice that continues to shape the relations of economic and political power. Structural changes in the world economy that would contribute towards eradicating the material basis for global racism include:

- Debt reduction or cancellation, beyond the limits envisaged in the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative;
- Reversing the growing trend amongst countries of the North towards a reduction in Overseas Development Assistance to the countries of the South;
- Ensuring equitable market access for the South by ending protectionism and unfair state subsidy, which have the purpose or effect limiting fair competition from developing countries.
- Taking positive and direct action towards bridging the digital divide in order to ensure that Africa in particular is not further marginalized in the formation of global networks.
- Democratising the multi-lateral institutions of global economic governance.
- Promoting an environment conducive to increased long term capital flows to developing world, in particular by countering unfounded Afro-pessimism, which is often rooted in racist prejudice.

Above all a world free of racism requires us to acknowledge the past and change the present. In South Africa, more than anything else, repairing the damage caused by apartheid is the central focus of all government programmes. Our vision is a society founded on the principles of the Freedom Charter: a society of justice, equality and peace. This overriding aim animates our being. It is a deep spiritual commitment which arises from the roots of our human race. Its achievement requires partnerships between South Africans: non-racial partnerships across the colour bar, partnerships between men and women, partnerships between civil society and the state.

We are convinced that unity in action on a global scale can build the partnerships required to address past wrongs. Remedies must be developmental: they must be directed towards reversing the manifest developmental consequences of racism in history.



Forward to African Development

In order to build such global partnerships, South Africa has raised the question of the ongoing marginalisation of Africa in numerous international fora. The New African Initiative adopted by the 37th Ordinary Session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Lusaka in July 2001 boldly declares that:

'Africa recognises the centuries-old historical injustice and the need to correct it. The central injunction of the new partnership is, however, for combined efforts to improve the quality of life of Africa's people as rapidly as possible. In this, there are shared responsibilities and mutual benefits between Africa and her partners.

We are convinced that an historic opportunity presents itself to end the scourge of underdevelopment that afflicts Africa. The resources, including capital, technology and human skills that are required to launch a global war on poverty and underdevelopment exist in abundance. And are within our grasp. What is required to mobilise these resources and to use them properly is bold and imaginative leadership that is genuinely committed to a sustained effort of human upliftment and poverty eradication, as well as a new global partnership based on shared responsibility and mutual interest.'

The plan, which incorporates the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP), as expanded through the integration of Plan Omega, provides a basis on which to structure this partnership for the realisation of our shared global objectives.

6. CONCLUSION

The transition to a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa was not as miraculous as is sometimes believed. It is the outcome of purposive human action in many struggles waged over a number of years. The concept of non-racialism evolved gradually within the liberation movement. It advocated the overarching value of bringing all South Africans together in struggle against a common enemy. Such unity in action would neither undermine African leadership of our struggle nor deny the distinct characteristics and value of different communities and cultures. Nelson Mandela in his speech from the dock in 1964 stated:

'Above all, we want equal political rights, because without them our disabilities will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to the whites in this country, because the majority of voters will be Africans.

This makes the white man fear democracy.

But this fear cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the only solution which will guarantee racial harmony and freedom for all. It is not true that the enfranchisement of all will result in racial domination. Political division, based on colour, is entirely artificial and, when it disappears, so will the domination of one colour group by another. The ANC has spent half a century fighting against racialism. When it triumphs it will not change that policy.

This then is what the ANC is fighting. Their struggle is a truly national one. It is a struggle of the African people, inspired by their own suffering and their own experience. It is a struggle for the right to live. During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.'

Our non-racialism does not derive from intellectual discussions alone, though there have been many. It emerged in the course of action, with all the blemishes, weaknesses and problems encountered in a living organism.



The scars of its own evolution are reminders of its historical endurance. Like the building of non-racialism in South Africa, the creation of a world free from racism requires partnership in purposive action in the fight against racism. Globalisation, far from rendering us impotent in the face of powerful market forces, has opened the possibility of united action by the people and government's of the world, to restructure global economic, political and cultural relations for the benefit of humanity. Repairing the damage inflicted by centuries of colonialism and slavery demands that we join hands in global non-racialism.

The richness of the planet's cultural diversity is in itself the latent all-embracing spiritual force from which we can create a world that is free of conflict and poverty, racism and intolerance. Through the centuries we have witnessed disregard and contempt for the inalienable dignity of human beings, we have witnessed barbarous acts that have outraged the conscience of humankind: slavery, genocide, colonialism and war. We have proclaimed that the advent of a world in which all human beings enjoy fundamental human rights and freedoms is highest desire of all. Our aspirations can only be achieved if all nations, all peoples, all governments, join in the common action. We call on the World Conference Against Racism to build unity in action for a non-racial world, to acknowledge the past, to change the present and to build the future.

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A New African Initiative Executive Summary

The New African Initiative is a vision shared by African leaders to eradicate poverty and place their countries on a path of sustainable growth and development, and to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. The New African Initiative rests on the determination of Africans to extricate their continent from underdevelopment and exclusion.

The continued marginalisation of Africa constitutes a serious threat to global stability. But there is an historic opportunity to end this abnormal situation, if bold, imaginative and genuinely committed leadership is exercised, and if a new global partnership based on joint responsibility and mutual interest can be constructed.

Africa is the cradle of humankind. It been an indispensable resource base for the global community, providing natural resources, ecological benefits, and cultural influences. For centuries, Africa supplied cheap labour and raw materials to the world economy, and its wealth was not used for the continent's own development. Colonialism destroyed or distorted existing social structures, leaving a legacy of weak states and private sectors.

Post-independence governments faced other difficulties, including poor leadership, corruption and cold war divisions. Inadequate policies and international economic pressures led to precipitous economic decline during the 1980s, followed by costly stabilization, including a crushing foreign debt burden and sharp public spending cuts, further weakening states and their capacity to address poverty.

There is new reason for hope in Africa: some economies have begun to recover, many governments have made substantial progress in entrenching democracy, human rights, and sound economic management, and the African people no longer accept poor economic and political leadership. By building upon these initial steps, the New African Initiative promises to be fundamentally different from earlier continental initiatives.



The world is currently undergoing an economic revolution - globalisation -which has increased Africa's marginalisation, but at the same time provides the means for its rejuvenation. Global integration - if effectively managed by Africa's governments and peoples - presents Africa's best hope for future economic prosperity and poverty reduction. Africa's development also offers much to the globalising world: resources, markets, labour skills and investment opportunities. Conversely, further collapse in Africa - and the spread of conflict, disease, refugees and environmental degradation -threatens not only the continent itself, but global peace and security.

Strategy for Sustainable Development

The initiative's long-term objective is to eradicate poverty and place African countries on a path of sustainable growth and development. The proximate objectives to achieve this are average GDP growth of above 7 percent per annum for the next fifteen years, and meeting the International Development Goals in respect of poverty reduction, health, education, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

To accomplish these goals, African leaders pledge to promote the following policy programme:

- African ownership, leadership and accountability;
- Peace, democracy, human rights and sound economic management as preconditions for sustainable development;
- Promotion of increased investment through lowered risk;
- Negotiation of additional ODA flows and increased debt reduction to address poverty reduction in the short to medium term;
- Increased investment in human resource development;
- Strengthening of regional co-operation and economic integration;
- Improved infrastructure to reduce the cost of doing business;
- Creation of vibrant market economies;
- Strengthened capacity of the state;
- Protection of traditional (indigenous) knowledge. African leaders also commit to negotiating a new partnership with the industrialised countries and multilateral organizations, focussing on improved access for African products to industrialised country markets, and on a more efficient ODA delivery system which addresses the performance of both donors and recipients. The initiative will become the framework for the various existing partnerships between Africa and industrialised countries and multilateral institutions.

Programme of action

The Peace and Security, Democracy and Political Governance, and Economic and Corporate Governance Initiatives will all rely on the envisaged Heads of State (HOS) Forum to ensure that principles are observed and commitments fulfilled.

The Peace and Security Initiative will in addition build the capacity of African institutions for conflict management and resolution, peace-related interventions, post-conflict reconstruction, and combating small weapons trade. The HOS Implementation Committee will consider recommendations within six months, setting out detailed costed measures in these areas. Long-term conditions for peace and security in Africa require measures to address political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised, and are dealt with in other MAP themes.

The Democracy and Governance Initiative will strengthen political and administrative frameworks, promoting democracy, transparency, accountability, integrity, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The foci will be civil service reform; strengthened parliamentary oversight; participatory decision-making; and effective combating of corruption. The HOS Implementation Committee will consider recommendations within six months, specifying appropriate diagnostic and assessment tools, and capacity-building programmes.

The Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative will address financial management and governance in both public and private sectors. The HOS Implementation Committee will commission a team of Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks and consider within six months its recommendations on appropriate standards and codes of good practice.

Public financial management will be the main priority. The initiative will promote reform and capacity-building programmes with targets, timeframes, and agreed monitoring mechanisms. The UN ECA will be commissioned to assist in this initiative.

The Human Resource Development Initiative includes poverty reduction, health and education and skills development. The Poverty Reduction programme will provide focused leadership prioritizing poverty reduction, by requiring poverty impact assessments of country plans prepared for initiatives in all themes. The HOS Implementation Committee will establish a Gender Task Team to focus upon the specific issues of poverty amongst women. The initiative will work with the multilateral institutions to accelerate implementation of existing approaches, such as the Comprehensive Development Framework.

The Health Programme will strengthen communicable disease programmes by promoting international efforts to increase available financial resources and to develop cheaper, more effective essential drugs, supplies and alternative delivery systems. MAP will also promote secure health systems in Africa as a necessary support for disease programmes. This will require international support of at least US\$10 billion per annum, and health becoming a budget priority for African governments. Health system development will include capacity-building among health workers, and the general promotion of health literacy.

In Education, the initiative focuses upon improvements in curriculum development, quality improvements and ICT access for schools. It will develop norms for education expenditure levels and outcomes, and establish an ICT task team to accelerate connectivity for primary schools.

The Infrastructure Initiative will improve access, affordability and reliability of services for firms and households across all infrastructure sectors, and enhance regional co-operation and trade through expanded cross-border connectivity. All sectors require substantial new investment, but private finance is contingent upon policy and regulatory reform within countries and harmonization across countries, as well as the construction of an adequate skills bases in technology and engineering. The initiative will work with sector-specialized agencies to build capacity (including networks of training institutions), and with the African Development Bank and other development finance institutions to develop appropriate financial vehicles, including public-private partnerships, and to mobilise sustainable financing, including grant and concessional finance.

The Infrastructure Initiative also includes sector-specific goals and strategies. In ICT, the goals include doubling teledensity to 2 lines per hundred people by 2005, to promote e-readiness by developing consistent country assessment protocols, and to develop ICT-proficient youth by accelerating projects to connect schools and youth centers.

In Energy, the initiative aims to increase access to reliable and affordable commercial energy supply from 10 percent of Africa's population to 35 percent in 20 years, and to improve energy supply reliability and cost to firms to enable 6% economic growth per annum. The HOS Implementation Committee will establish task teams to recommend priorities for regional generation, and transmission projects, to accelerate the development of LNG supply to low income housing, and to expand the programme for biomass energy conservation beyond SADC.

In Transport, the initiative will promote cross-border flows of people and goods by reducing delays and idle time, and work with the regional organizations to catalyse transport development corridors. Task teams will address regulation and harmonization problems in border crossing and visa procedures, concessioning in ports, roads, railways and maritime, and multi-modal transport.

In the Water and Sanitation sector, the initiative aims to achieve sustainable access to safe and adequate water supply and sanitation, especially for the poor. It will accelerate cross-border multi-

purpose water resource projects such as the investigation of Congo River utilisation, establish a task team on disaster management and climate change, and promote sanitary waste disposal projects and urban water conservation.

In the area of Science & Technology Platforms, it will establish regional co-operation on product standards and on GIS systems and develop networks amongst existing Centres of Excellence on the continent. The initiative will work with UNESCO and FAO to harness biotechnology to develop Africa's rich biodiversity, and will expand geoscience research to enhance exploitation of Africa's mineral resources.

The theme concerning Diversification of Production and Exports contains a large number of detailed recommendations for the agricultural, mining, manufacturing and tourism sectors. Taken together, these will increase productivity and lower production costs, enhance product quality and technical standards to promote exports to industrialised countries, and improve marketing. Many of the quality, technical and marketing recommendations involve cross-border co-operation amongst countries.

The Market Access Initiative supports WTO participation and a new round of multilateral negotiations, which should take account of Africa's special circumstances, by promoting access for African exports to a wide range of markets. It will promote the capacity of African governments to operate within the WTO context. The HOS Implementation Committee will engage with industrialised country partners to broaden and deepen access to developed country markets, while also deepening trade integration initiatives within Africa.

The Capital Flows Initiative aims to fill an annual resource gap of 12 percent of GDP, or US\$64 billion, related to the 7 percent per annum growth rate needed to meet the IDGs. It focuses on debt reduction and ODA as complementary short- to medium-term external resources, and private capital flows in the longer-term. The Initiative assumes that improved governance is necessary for increased capital flows, and requires participation in the Economic and Political Governance Initiatives.

The Debt Initiative seeks to extend debt relief by shifting the criterion from debt 'sustainability' to costed poverty reduction outcomes. In the interim, debt service ceilings should be tied to fiscal revenue, with a higher ceiling for countries that do not qualify for IDA. The HOS Implementation Committee will negotiate with creditor governments to secure the concessional resources - debt relief plus ODA - required. Countries would engage with existing debt relief mechanisms - HIPC and the Paris Club - before resorting to the Debt Initiative, which will require agreed poverty reduction strategies and debt strategies.

The ODA Reform Initiative seeks increased ODA flows in the medium-term, and reform of the ODA delivery system to ensure more effective utilization by recipients. It will establish an ODA forum of African countries, to develop a common African position on ODA reform and to negotiate with the OECD DAC and other donors a Charter underpinning the Development Partnership. The Charter will advocate enhanced governance for recipients, and complementary independent monitoring of donor performance, to realise benefits from increased ODA flows.

The Private Capital Flows Initiative addresses high risk levels facing investors, relating to insecurity of property rights, regulatory weakness and markets. While several other themes will help to lower these risks over time, interim mechanisms in this initiative include credit guarantee schemes and strengthened and harmonized investment-related regulatory and legislative frameworks. The initiative will also implement a PPP (public-private partnership) capacity-building programme through the African Development Bank and regional development banks. A financial market integration Task Force will promote financial market deepening within countries, and cross-border harmonisation and integration.

The Environment Initiative prioritises six substantive issues: combating desertification; wetland conservation; invasive alien species; coastal management; global warming; and transfrontier conservation areas.

Attention will also be paid to environmental governance and financing of projects. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002, provides an important focus.

Top priorities, responsibilities and obligations

Recognising the need to sequence and prioritise, the initiating Presidents will, in collaboration with development partners, fast-track programmes in communicable diseases, ICT, debt reduction and market access. A number of projects are also identified on the website. (www.mapstrategy.com) To achieve the objectives of the New African Initiative, African leaders will take joint responsibility for implementing policies and programmes in the areas identified in the Programme of Action. African leaders will look to the industrialised countries and multilateral institutions for financial and technical support, especially in the priority programmes listed, as well as co-operative approaches in multilateral institutions and fora.

Implementation

Participation in the programme is open to all African countries. The initiative will be directed by a Heads of State Implementation Committee appointed by the Organisation of African Unity or its successor, and supported by a committee of senior officials drawn from the countries on the Implementation Committee. The Implementation Committee will report to the OAU Summit of Heads of State or its successor. If some OAU member states choose not to participate, the Implementation Committee will report to a Heads of State Forum of participating countries. The Heads Of State Implementation Committee will identify strategic issues, review progress towards mutually agreed targets and compliance with mutually agreed standards, and take steps to address problems and delays.

Each regional structure will appoint an Implementation Committee for managing and monitoring the programme at a regional level. Further, each country will be required to appoint a National NA Implementation Committee.

A full-time secretariat (based in one of the initiating countries for the first 3 years) will co-ordinate and monitor programme implementation.

'Reversing slavery's legacy'

The African Union and Millennium African Recovery Plan

By Dr Eddie Maloka

The crisis facing the African continent is well known. Poverty, disease and ignorance, forty years after independence, still remain high on the list of key challenges facing the continent primarily because of serious structural distortions that see African economies, internally not integrated as they are, continue to rely on the production of cheap raw materials for export to the West. Over 70% of Africa Sub-Saharan states (SSA) are in the World Bank's category of 'low-income' countries, thus representing about 60% of all the world's countries in this category. With SSA's population growth averaging 2.8% during 1994-98 and the GDP growth rate at 3.5% during the same period, this is still far below the 6% GDP growth rate that is required to significantly impact on the lives of Africans. No wonder four in every 10 Africans live in absolute poverty; and, according to the United Nation's Economic Commission for Africa; expectations are that the proportion of people living in poverty is will increase in this millennium.

These social factors aside, Africa remains very marginal in global trade and FDI flows. While almost 50% of SSA's total exports are by South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Ivory Coast; and almost 70% of



total SSA imports by South Africa, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Angola, SSA's share of the total global trade is less than two percent. SSA's estimated total GDP of USD319.5 billion in 1998 is less than the 1997 combined total sales of General Motors, Ford Motor and Royal Dutch/Shell Group of USD439 billion.

What complicates matters even further is SSA's total external debt that stood at USD214.8 billion in 1999 and expected to increase to USD219.6 billion in 2000; while the debt-service ratio averaged over 20% between 1996 and 1999.

This situation has created a fertile ground for the flourishing of Afro-pessimism. For example, the US National Intelligence Council released in December 2000 its *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue about the Future with Nongovernmental Experts* - a futures perspective on how the world is most likely to be in 2015. The document, informed as it were by a set of drivers, makes a very pessimistic prediction of the future of Sub-Saharan Africa: 'The interplay of demographics and disease - as well as poor governance - will be the major determinants of Africa's increasing international marginalisation in 2015'.

According to the document, 'the relentless progression of AIDS and other diseases will decimate the economically productive adult population...'; indeed, 'poverty and poor governance will further deplete natural resources and drive rapid urbanization'.¹

Of course, *Global Trends'* forecast was informed, on the one hand, by Afro-pessimism as a dominant discourse on Africa and, on the other, by the failure to recognize as a driver the role that the African leadership could play in addressing the plight of the continent. For this reason, *Global Trends* could not anticipate either the African Union or the MAP initiative.

The recent Blantyre Summit of the OAU and the Extraordinary Summit held in March 2001 at Sirte, Libya, may be a historic step in Africa's quest for unity. The former OAU Secretary-General, Salim Salim, had no doubt about the historic significance of the Sirte Summit: 'The Assembly of Heads of State and Government proudly declares the African Union by a unanimous decision'.² Similarly President Thabo Mbeki wrote about the same Summit: 'Contrary to what some have written that ours is a 'hopeless Continent', the decisions taken at Sirte cannot but give hope to the millions of Africans from the confluence of the Indian and Atlantic oceans in the south, to the Mediterranean in the north, that the enhancement of African unity will enable all of us to overcome the problems that have confronted us for centuries'.³ For over two decades, African leaders have been grappling with possible solutions to our continent's predicament. During the first two post independence decades, the 1960s and 1970s, Africa's developmental endeavors, influenced, of course, by modernization theory, were aimed at modeling our continent in Europe's image. It was hoped that the statist developmental approaches in the form of, for example, import substitution industrial strategies, would leapfrog the continent into the 'modern' era. But as we know, the first few years of boom and optimism were followed by a long period of crises and stagnation.

The turning point was the 16th OAU Summit of July 1979, which resulted in the adoption of the historic Monrovia Declaration, which laid basis for the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) that was to be adopted the following year at a Special Economic Summit in Nigeria. The LPA was not only an attempt to concretize ideas entailed in the Monrovia Declaration, but also intended, with some sense of short-medium-long-term targets, to set a developmental agenda for the 1980s, and towards the year 2000. Informed by the belief that 'the same determination that has virtually rid our continent of political domination is required for our economic liberation', the LPA was anchored on two key principles: collective self-reliance and self-sustaining development and economic growth. According to LPA, 'Africa must cultivate the virtue of self-reliance. This is not to say that the continent should totally cut itself off from outside contributions. However, these outside contributions should only supplement our own effort; they should not be the mainstay of our development'.⁴ The following were to be the LPA guidelines:

- Africa's huge resources must be used primarily to meet the needs and purposes of its people;
- Africa's total reliance on export of raw materials must change

- In terms of self-reliance, Africa must mobilize all her human and material resources for her development
- These efforts should enhance the move towards African economic integration
- National governments should develop economic, social and cultural policies that are informed by the LPA objectives. The LPA identified seven priority areas: notably, in food and agriculture (which aimed at achieving food self-sufficiency), human resource development (whose targets included eliminating illiteracy by 2000), transport and communication, and industry. Indeed, the 1980s were declared the 'Industrial Development Decade in Africa'. The aim was that the proposed LPA interventions would lead to the formation of sub-regional bodies throughout the continent and the establishment of an African Common Market and, ultimately, an African Economic Community. In the sense, the LPA was seen as the continent's struggle against underdevelopment.

But rather than enter a self-reliant path of development, most African states continued their dependence on external players. Nor could the OAU meet to assess the implementation of LPA, because the continent was very divided, especially over the issue of Western Sahara and the crisis in Chad, for example. It was only in 1985, at the 21st Summit, that the OAU could return to LPA, but by then the continent's crises were in full swing: the impact of the 1981-82 recession, the burden of external debt, and natural misfortunes such as famine, floods, desertification and drought.

Nonetheless, the 1985 Summit adopted an 'African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery' which was aimed at revitalising the LPA. These efforts were a contribution towards a UN Special Session on Africa that adopted a 'Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990'.

Five years later, the continent was still far from meeting the LPA targets, but the international and internal situation had markedly improved. The end of Cold War and the mounting wave of democratization across the continent not only created a better environment, but the future of many African dictators who presided over the LPA could no longer be guaranteed. In this context, the OAU Summit of 1991 adopted the Abuja Treaty in an attempt to revive the LPA and take forward, in concrete terms, the question of regional integration and the creation of an African Economic Community by 2025.

The Treaty envisaged a 34-year long, six-stage, linear process through a trade integration approach that begins with trade liberalization and a Custom Union, to the Common Market and Economic Community. The principles of the Treaty included 'solidarity and collective self-reliance', recognition and protection of human and peoples rights, and accountability and popular participation in development. The organs of the AEC included some of the institutions that were to be incorporated into the African Union; that is, the Pan-African Parliament, the Economic and Social Council, Specialised Technical Committees, as well as the Court of Justice. Indeed, the Treaty's shortcomings were due to its economic approach, hence with the convening of the OAU Extra-Ordinary Summit in Sirte, Libya, in 1998, politics took a lead and time frames of the Treaty were revised.

Furthermore, the relevance of the OAU itself came under scrutiny, especially that the organization's founding principles were defined in terms of the struggle against colonialism and some narrow concern with national sovereignty. Thus the immediate focus in the post-Sirte phase became the transformation of the OAU into an African Union with the Pan-African Parliament, financial institutions (the African Central Bank, African Monetary Fund, and the African Investment Bank), Court of Justice and the Economic and Social Council as the strategic institutions. Accordingly, the Constitutive Act establishing the Union was adopted at the OAU Summit in Togo in July 2000, and the draft Pan-African Parliament (PAP) protocol by African parliamentarians in Pretoria two months later. The March 2001 Extraordinary Summit at Sirte was convened primarily for taking the Act and the PAP protocol forward.

Indeed, the African Union is a strategic development that puts the continent in a much better position, institutionally and politically, to address the plight of Africa; the Union, unlike the OAU, has both a political and economic mandate. As opposed to the OAU Charter that was very silent on issues of democracy and human right, the AU Act not only incorporates the latter issues, but also excludes from the community any leader who assumes power through unconstitutional means. Furthermore, as



opposed to the OAU Charter that made some passing reference to co-operation, the AU as a mechanism, on the other hand, is anchored on a strong belief on regional integration.

The Millennium African Recovery Plan (MAP), as an initiative that development parallel to the establishment of the AU, is a framework not only for a Pan-African drive towards the recovery of the continent, but also for partnership with the North. The MAP is anchored on five areas that must be targeted for the realization of Africa's recovery: (a) peace, security and governance; (b) investing in Africa's people; (c) harnessing Africa's strategic advantages; (d) investing in infrastructure and information technology; and (e) developing financing mechanisms. The MAP as adopted at the last OAU Summit as the New Africa Initiative, is built around three strategies focused on the following: (a) preconditions for development; (b) priority sectors; and (c) mobilizing resources. What distinguishes MAP from the LPA or even the Abuja Treaty, is (a) the leading role played by African leaders in putting together the initiative; and (b) the commitment by African leaders to a set of principles that are essential for the development of MAP. Not only were the LPA led by the OAU Secretariat and the UN Economic Commission for Africa; there was also no political and institutional mechanism for ensuring that African leaders themselves set an example on how they run their countries and the whole continent.

The AU constitutes an institutional base for the realization of the African Renaissance and MAP an implementable, programme for the renaissance.

Indeed, Strategy and Tactics document recognizes 'in the first instance the difficulties wrought on the continent by years of colonialism and unjust international relations, including debt crisis, underdevelopment, social dislocation, and in some instances untenable political relations underpinned by forms of government that imperialism encouraged for its own selfish interests'. However, the AU and MAP take this perspective forward in that they address, in concrete terms, the continent's four strategies challenges: development, peace and security, democracy and governance, and improving Africa's position in the world.

The AU and MAP can also provide a framework for tackling the issue reparations that are being demanded from the West for the benefit those countries derived from slavery and colonialism. Of course, the issue of reparations presents itself at two levels; there will have to be a two-pronged approach - one aimed at the African Diaspora and the other at the continent. The Diaspora has its complications and dynamics that cannot be addressed here, but for Africa it is possible that reparations can fit in the third strategy (mobilising resources) identified in the MAP document.

The resources mobilized through this vehicle can be used in the implementation of the Programme of Action entailed in the MAP document.

More importantly, the MAP process will be guided by a political mechanism made up of the continent's leadership.

The advantage of this MAP-driven approach to reparations as opposed to financial hand-outs to descendents of slaves and victims of colonialism, is that the resources deriving from this process can be used for the long-term benefit of the whole continent - reverse the legacy of slavery and colonialism. The AU and the MAP have put us on course for the realization of the African Century.

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'A complex web of oppression'

Gender oppression as a dimension of racism in South African National Congress

By Thenjiwe Mtintso

'We are apt to observe that to be born in the South, to be born a women, disabled, or amongst the poor - all these circumstances often define one's life possibilities as part of the wretched majority.'

Nelson Mandela in his address to the World Summit on Social Development, 1995

In August 2001, politicians, academics, activists and other experts from around the world will attend the World Conference Against Racism in South Africa. Interestingly, the Conference refers to racism, xenophobia and related intolerances but is silent about the worldwide phenomenon of gender discrimination and oppression. Presumably gender oppression which actually exists within all forms of oppression in all countries is subsumed under 'other intolerance' - perhaps just a little bit of a nuisance and not a fundamental world problem.

Two Nations

South Africa's history has been shaped by injustice, oppression, discrimination and exploitation with all their consequences of inequality and prejudice. The colonial and apartheid regimes created a system that not only dispossessed black people of social, economic and political power and rights but also controlled, brutalised and dehumanised them. Black people in general and Africans in particular were reduced to subhumans and the apartheid regime thus institutionalised racism. This 'Colonialism of a Special type' was unique in that the coloniser lived side by side with the colonised within one country.

While apartheid has been formally overthrown, its legacy of fundamental inequalities between black and white and racism continues to date. Racism is thus more than a set of attitudes and aberrations. It is a complex reality of power relations, which govern every aspect of our lives including access to resources. This is the reality of the 'two-nations' in one country - one nation wealthy and white and the other poor and black. ¹

Class, race and gender

However, these two broad groups are not homogenous, just as those that were under CST were not. As President Thabo Mbeki stated, '...South Africa is a country of two nations. One of these is white, relatively prosperous, regardless of gender or geographic dispersal. It has ready access to a developed economy, physical, educational, and other infrastructure... The second and larger nation of South Africa is poor and black, with the worst affected being women in rural areas, the black population in general, and the disabled...'² Class exploitation, racial oppression and gender domination are systems of power relations that intersect with each other while existing within each other. There is, for instance, no pure class/race oppression that does not have a gender dimension and vice versa. It was in recognition of these dynamics that the liberation movement in general and the Women's Movement in particular talked of and fought against 'triple-fold oppression'.

Colonialism brought in its trail patriarchy, the system of domination of women by men and male control at all levels of society based on the socially constructed notions of gender, gender roles and gender relations. That patriarchy interfaced with indigenous forms of patriarchy and was used to benefit apartheid.

In South Africa, while there is the overarching system of patriarchy, different women experience different forms of male domination and oppression according to their class, status, religion, race and even ethnic and cultural backgrounds. While these social constructs exist independently and have



their own logic and life, they simultaneously exist within each other and also intersect with each other. It is thus vital to understand that fundamental complexity of relationship between class, race and gender in order to eliminate social oppression in South Africa and internationally.

For example, white, middle-class women will experience patriarchy differently to rural African women. Most of them escaped the socially prescribed gender roles as they foisted these roles on their 'maids', the domestic workers who they exploited to the full. They thus benefited from and continue to benefit from the racism and sexism.

For the majority of women in South Africa, oppression emerges in terms of patriarchal control, their relation to the means of production (they are mostly poor workers or unemployed) and the fact that they are black. The essence of 'the triple oppression' - exploited as a class, oppressed as a national group and dominated as women, is a fitting description of the complex relationship between class, race and gender in our context.

The SACP aptly describes this 'triple oppression' when it says, '...the specific capitalist growth path in our country involved the appropriation of existing patriarchal customs and traditions, and their articulation into the reproduction of the capitalist system. This articulation saw the vast exacerbation of the coercive features of pre-existing patriarchy. In particular, the brunt of the reproduction of a massive army of reserve cheap labour was borne by the unpaid (and hidden) labour and effort of millions of women. The reproductive functions often carried (at least to some extent) by society at large in other developed economies (by way of pensions, public education, health-care and housing, and municipal water and power infrastructure) has been borne, at huge personal cost, by millions of black women in our country (and in our region). It is they who have had to care for the young, the sick, the unemployed and the aged. It is they who have to spend their lives fetching water and fuel. The legacy of this continues to impact dramatically upon the life-opportunities, resources, and general marginalisation of the women of our country and region (SACP, 1998:19-20).

Geographical location, the 'rural/urban divide' and its racist and gendered character has its roots in the migrant labour system. This was created by the colonial and apartheid governments to provide cheap labour for mining and other industries, while preventing the black labour force from living permanently in 'white' areas. The apartheid policies prevented black women from living in urban areas. Women were therefore left to eke out a bare existence from the barren land as remittance from male relatives was very little and erratic.

The struggle

Apartheid used repression and brutality to maintain itself and to suppress any resistance to it. The history of South Africa is the story of oppression and repression on the one hand and resistance and the greatest heroism on the other. The African National Congress and its Allies led the heroic struggles for democracy, non-racism and non-sexism. At the core of these struggles were women, the majority of who were African. It was clear to the women that their liberation depended not on some goodwill of the apartheid state or on the victory of the struggles by men, it depended on their own effort, side by side with all democratic forces. The brutal repression did not deter women. Led by their organisations, women marched in the streets, they demonstrated, they mobilised, organised and fought against racism.

Under the ambit of the FEDSAW and the ANCWL they, for instance marched to Pretoria on August 9, 1954, forcing the then Prime Minister to flee from their wrath. Our streets, our villages, every inch of South African soil, were turned into battlefields with black women leading the onslaught against apartheid. They were brutalised and violated, banished, detained, jailed, exiled and murdered. Still this onslaught did not deter them. They returned from jail and continued with the struggle. They went into exile and joined the liberation and armed forces; they dodged police when they were under banning orders and joined the underground structures; they confronted police with stones in their hands and babies on their backs; they returned from the torture chambers with more vigour. They organised a strong Women's Movement that led the protracted struggles throughout the era of colonialism and apartheid in our country. Generation after generation they continued to rally around their clarion call of 'wathintabafazi wathintimbokodo uzakufa' (now you have touched the women, you

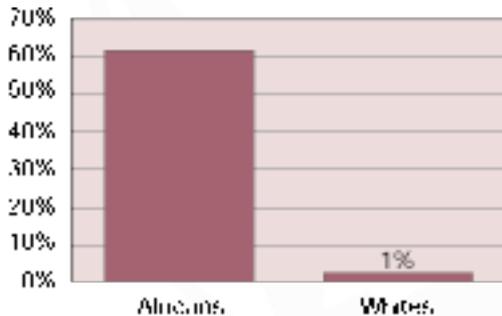


have dislodged a boulder, you are going to be killed). While apartheid has been dislodged, the struggle against the vestiges of apartheid, racism and sexism continue.

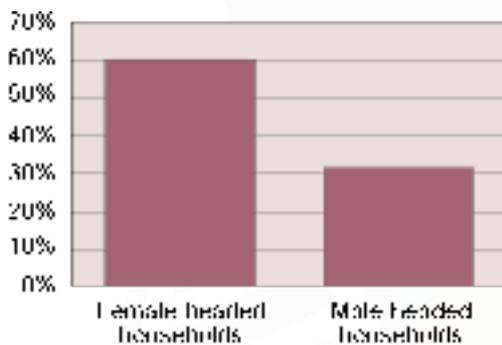
The legacy

As earlier indicated, while apartheid has been dismantled its legacy of racism continues. The following are but a few statistics as examples of the racial and gendered divides in our country. They show the racialisation and feminisation of poverty, a product of the Colonialism of a Special Type and its patriarchal character.

1. Percentage of people living in poverty by race group.3



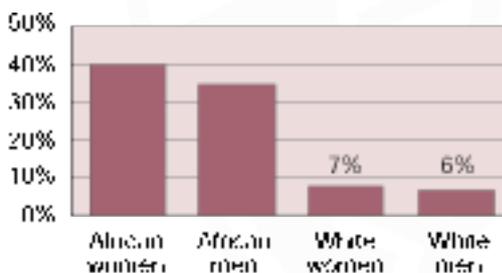
2. Poverty rate among female-headed and male-headed households. 4



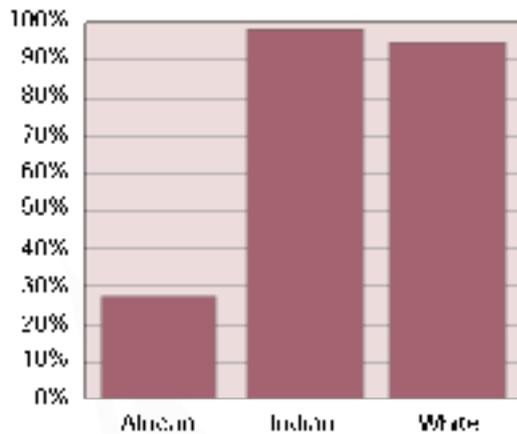
On average, there are three times as many female-headed households within the African community, as compared to the white community 5.

Female-headed households are mainly in the rural areas and in informal settlements and tend to be poorer than those headed by African men.

3. Urban unemployment figures for 2000.6



4. Access to piped water in dwellings by race groups.7



The lack of access to a water source inside the home is more common in rural and peri-urban areas, and 71% of African households in these areas have to fetch water from outside the home. The water source is often some distance from the dwelling, and on average, women spend over an hour every day fetching water.

The need for fundamental transformation.

The system of class, race and gender oppression in our country cannot be reformed. Equality cannot be brought by assimilation, absorption or accommodation of blacks, or women or the working class. Complete and fundamental transformation of the system has to be undertaken. The material basis, the legacy and the ideology of racism, capitalism and sexism have to be eradicated.

The advent of democracy ushered in a new era in our country. South Africans under the democratic government have already started on the path of the transformation process. Constitutional, legislative, institutional frameworks and mechanisms have been put in place. Programmes have already been embarked upon to address the painful legacy. The democratic environment creates better opportunity for the reconstruction and development of our society.

However, attitudes tend to lag far behind the other conditions and realities. Racist and sexist attitudes still prevail. While there should be no competition between the fight against racism and sexism, the reality is that society tends to respond more (in support, against or apologetically) to acts of the former than the latter. This is perhaps because gender oppression is so entrenched and yet hidden; it begins within the family and permeates throughout all aspects of society. It often appears to be normal and natural, and is thus more difficult to identify and mobilise against than racial discrimination. Cultural, religious, psychological explanations also reinforce its 'natural, god-given or culturally divined' aura.

The various forms of discrimination and oppression form a complex web, which is difficult to unravel by pulling only one string, the whole tapestry has to be undone.

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Zionism under focus

From military occupation to the keys for a just settlement

By Iqbal D Jhazbhay

Introduction

As South Africans gear up for the UN World Conference against Racism, a highly-publicised row, transcending international boundaries, threatens to derail preparations, if not the very Conference itself.

The first is a threat by the US to boycott the Conference, unless the international community agrees to its demands that the draft Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, drop any reference to Zionism as a form of racism. The talismanic effect of the boycott threat has, as a result, fed perceptions that the US has heaped scorn on the considerations and status of every state or country in the world, by openly indicating its bias towards Israel.

Whether these hold true or not, ample evidence suggests that US foreign policy has been leaning heavily towards Israel. This is fuelled by the fact that it was also Zionism that caused the US to keep away from the first UN conference against Racism in 1978 and the second in 1983 - both hosted by Geneva. In this respect, President Bush's administration has come under attack for pursuing a unilateralist approach to world affairs that risks undermining relations with many countries, particularly in Europe.

Coupled with this is an intensification of the brutality of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's regime in its efforts to quell an 11 month-old uprising against the Palestinians. With the ever-increasing violent images being beamed into television screens worldwide, it would be difficult to pardon the international community of responsibility to act swiftly and effectively, to help bring about peace to the region.

Much of Sharon's iron fist politics, though portrayed (with a completely straight face) as a 'shift' in the country's policy towards the Palestinians, show scant, if any, differences from those employed by his predecessors - former Prime Minister's Barak, Netanyahu, Rabin or Ben-Gurion. The paunchy General Sharon, also a former army officer like his predecessors, is the only figure, in his estimation, capable of showing Palestinians the kind of reasoning that will set them, 'the natives' straight, notably the Palestinian National Authority of President Yasser Arafat. Both are deeply troubling events, which require serious focus.

What are the issues: the UN & Zionism?

Most intellectuals and countries remain convinced that the real problem at the root of these outrages is the general political failure to come to inclusive and proper terms with democratic politics. There is, therefore, no substitute for the premise that Palestinians and Israelis be recognised on the playing field, as equals in rights and expectations. Then, and only then, can one proceed to do justice to their miserable day-to-day lives.

To the uninitiated, which Israeli misinformation capitalises heavily upon, the notion of a 'resurrection' of the biblical land of Israel for 'God's chosen people' sounds like a reasonable concept, hardly one warranting cries of racism. It therefore becomes necessary to extrapolate on the concept as defined by Israel's founding fathers, and determine its niche, if any, within international politics.

Zionism defined as the, 'national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel.' Again, this may appear fairly innocent, were it not for the acquisition of citizenship, which, in most states in the world, is the founding premise from which the duties, responsibilities, and indeed, rights of individuals of nation states, is derived.



Provided you are Jewish, Israeli citizenship can be acquired with little fuss. Many nationals of other countries, including South African Jews, can obtain it simply whilst visiting the country on holiday or work, and hold dual passports whilst living permanently in, or as a citizen of another country. The 'Law of Return', passed by the Israeli Knesset in 1950, grants every Jew the right to go to Israel as an 'oleh' or immigrant. Coupled with this is the Israeli Nationality Law, which automatically confers citizenship on any Jew entering the country, unless they specify otherwise. As a consequence, all Jews everywhere are Israeli citizens by right, and are entitled simply to show up in the country and declare themselves to be Israeli citizens, provided they pose no imminent danger to public health or state security.

Where then, it may be asked, is there racism? Plainly, these 'automatic rights' of citizenship are not applicable to the 'other' residents of the land - the Palestinians. It is this aspect of Zionism that has been regularly criticised for its racist aspects. Vibrant attempts have been made to define Zionism as Socialist Zionism, Political Zionism, Practical Zionism, Religious Zionism, and Radical Messianic Zionism. But the message is clear - citizenship, which makes the individual privy to all the rights afforded by this status, is racially-determined.

Though there are a large number of Arab Israeli citizens, the 'automatic' granting of citizenship does not apply.

The international community has not woken only recently to the subtle racism of the doctrine of Zionism. In 1975, the UN General Assembly passed resolution no. 3379 which: 'Determines that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination'. This UN resolution recalled UN resolution of 1953, which takes note of 'the unholy alliance between South African racism and Zionism'. In addition, the 1975 resolution, took note that the Organisation of African Unity in 1975 considered ' that the racist regime in occupied Palestine and the racist regime in Zimbabwe and South Africa have a common imperialist origin, forming a whole and having the same racist structure and being organically linked in their policy aimed at repression of the dignity and integrity of the human being'. In 1991, this UN 1975 resolution no.3379 was revoked.

Advocates for an end to military occupation, and a negotiated settlement of equals between Palestinians and Israelis, such as Professor Israel Shahak -an emeritus Professor of Chemistry at Hebrew University, a Holocaust survivor from Poland, and the founder of the Israeli League of Human Rights - had the following to say on the Zionist movement: 'Unless we recognise the real issue - which is the racist character of the Zionist movement and the State of Israel and the roots of that racism in the Jewish religious law [Halacha] - we will not be able to understand our realities. And unless we understand them, we will not be able to change them.'

Durban Declaration:

UN Resolution Revisited?

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has taken its toll on the innocent and the suffering of the country - blood has halted negotiations, littered the neighbourhoods with scores of injured and the tragic memory of the dead victims, and has left indelibly new boiling points. These were reflected in the preparatory UN regional conferences against racism, organised in Europe (Strasbourg), Latin America (Santiago), Africa (Dakar) and Asia (Tehran), respectively. Thus, the inter-governmental Durban Draft Declaration of the UN World Conference against Racism states: (brackets denote its contested nature within the international community) '[The World Conference recognises with deep concern the increase of racist practices of Zionism, anti-Semitism in various parts of the world, as well as the emergence of racial and violent movements based on racism and discriminatory ideas, in particular, the Zionist movement which is based on racial superiority;]'

How to trace the path ahead? The international movement needs, and has a responsibility to find the key to re-open the door to a just and lasting settlement, beyond racism. It needs our encouragement and must be put onto a more cheerful and promising course.



A case in point was the recent meeting convened in South Africa of the Non-Aligned Movement's Committee on Palestine, and the recent G-8 declaration calling on Israel and Palestine to accept international observers.

Israel must not use 'emotional blackmail' tactics, which it commonly does, such as to shift the scene back to 1948 - nor be in the grip of a powerful neurotic fear from its commitments to equality and an end to the military occupation of Palestinian land.

In addition to the sentiments of governments and intellectuals reflected above, the non-governmental draft Durban Forum Declaration against Racism called for the: 'Employment of all effective measures available to participants, relevant UN organs and member States to ensure that Israel complies with its obligations under human rights, humanitarian law and UN resolutions with the view to end its colonial policies and Apartheid system'.

Silence is not a response nor is a warm endorsement of Israeli feelings in the face of economic interests and lobbies. No one prefers useless killings to negotiations, or paranoia in favour of real politics. South Africans, having emerged from a race struggle, have a stake in those struggles, not in the demonisation of any group, Palestinian or Israeli.

The time is overdue for the shady chorus from the Democratic Alliance to the Israeli lobbies, which want to mystify Israel's aura, to shift to an authentic tone of acknowledgement and negotiations. No amount of verbal fumbling and shuffling is adequate to an occasion that is both urgent and demanding. The children of Israel and Palestine deserve the best.

It is hypocrisy for Israeli ambassadors to plaintively, not to mention patronisingly, talk about 'full democratic representation' for non-Jews in Israel, 'preferential criteria' for Jews and, dubbing as 'disturbing remarks' the urgent diplomatic efforts of our leaders, without acting against the punitive discriminatory actions against Palestinians. A burden is laid on our consciences not to postpone the real democracy, particularly the freedom of Palestinians, until later.

The worst possible discriminatory punishment of Palestinians, such as forced closure of villages, to demolish their houses, raze their refugee camps, to kill unprotected men, women, children, and impose military occupation, are humanly unacceptable and immoral. One cannot make a deal with such occupation humiliation, like cancer that continues to expand, unless it is identified, tactically surrounded and then fully engaged humanely.

We need to recall what President Thabo Mbeki said, late last year: 'It is inexcusable that, more than fifty years after the United Nations affirmed the right of Palestinians to sovereign statehood and more than thirty years after the United Nations Security Council, in a binding decision, called on Israel to withdraw from all Arab territories that it had occupied in the war of June 1967, the suffering and humiliation of foreign military occupation still continue.' Our task is to labour and struggle humanely to confront military occupation, discriminatory actions and, then, march on to the road of finding the keys for a just settlement between Palestinians and Israelis. Then, we have truly shown our solidarity with the forces of social progress and peace.

Engaging Anti-Semitism Finally, in our search for the keys of a just settlement, it is the better part of honesty to dissociate oneself from crude anti-Semitic attacks, silly unreflective dogmas about Israel, and lip service formulas to the besieged Palestinians, such as those emanating from reactionaries. These serve nought, but to display to the world a mind-set that is both sectarian and hopelessly out of tune with the human spirit? Instead, we are called upon, from the womb to the tomb, to re-attest the manifest principles of equality and non-discrimination, without distinction of any kind.

Conclusion The Durban World Conference against Racism, is an appropriate occasion to celebrate heroic individuals and groups like Rabbis for Human Rights and the movement led by Jeff Halper to end house demolitions in Palestine, with the serious programme: no occupation and no discrimination. A further exception are the few brave Israelis like the New Historians group of Michel Warschavsky, who have pressured the Israeli government to end the occupation and, not to lecture a people under occupation about the 'disappointed hopes' of Israelis.



Such programmes by intelligently brave individuals inspire us not to allow the world to spin into further shame. It is up to us in Durban and beyond to speak up against the terrible abuses of power. Israel and the US cannot have the field to themselves, which results in exploitation, and 'suicide' bombing backlashes that have been virtually incalculable.

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Religion and racism

By Cedric Mayson

When humans happened, they thought a God had called them out of the Reeds, the River, the Sea, or the Sky, and gave them pre-eminence in the Garden of Eden. They learnt the basic spiritual insights of human beings to survive by communal caring for one another. This has been called the primary spiritual experience, and it is still basic to the functioning of the human race.

As the centuries passed, civilisations developed. Cultural, political and economic groups saw themselves as superior, a chosen race, designed by their gods to conquer others. Religious institutions developed, linked with these rich social rulers, which have been called secondary religion. The claim to be divinely favoured gave religion a racial identity, a conceit which has persisted through the ages.

Behind barriers of ocean and desert Africa developed its own primary experience of life. Instead of brick buildings, ships and gunpowder, it embraced a rich communal understanding of land, and ubuntu/batho as the way of life for the human community. African religion emphasised the spiritual characteristics of people in community, not the divisive ecclesiastical and academic power structures of the north, and it was not racist.

Then the competing colonial nations arrived, planting stone crosses on the African coast as symbols of imported secondary religions. They thought Jesus was white, and attributed the superiority of whites to God, which authorised them to conquer. The British, ruling more of Africa than anyone else, had no doubt about the superiority of their civilisation and its faith, writes Jan Morris. 'Time and again the spokesmen of imperialism appealed to Providence as the ultimate source of British power'.

White Christians took up 'the White Man's burden' of civilising the world -providing it didn't cost Europe anything. Racism wrapped their fear, greed, and prejudice in a package of respectable religiosity. Not all Christians agreed. These believed that God had no favourites, and in Christ there was no East or West. FD Maurice said: 'We have used the Bible as if it were a mere supplementary police manual, an opium dose for keeping beasts of burden patient while they are being overloaded.' The famous missionary CF Andrews criticised his peers: 'Such dominance of one race over all others is by no means a sacred trust from God: it is rather a sordid commercial conquest and exploitation in which the 'white' race prejudice forms an important and integral part.' But these were the exceptions.

In general, racism forced an alien history onto Africans who were stereotyped as subsidiary human beings - black, ignorant, and savage.

This view hardened into the cultural racism of the churches, the economic racism of the colour bar, and the structural racism of apartheid. White Christians sang hymns about 'lesser breeds without the law', excluded blacks from Parliament, and passed a racist Constitution, 'in humble submission to Almighty God.' By the mid-19th century African Christians were rejecting these imported church structures and people like Nehemiah Tile, James Dwane, Shembe, Mother Christina Nku, and Bishop Lekganyane formed their own indigenous churches.



Christians were at the heart of the struggles for political liberation from the earliest years, and when the African National Congress was formed in 1912, clergy led it. They have been in it ever since.

The apartheid regime was adopted in 1948 as a Christian policy.

Government never doubted apartheid was the way of the Lord and racism was not an issue, but a way of life. Opposing racist injustice was denigrated as advocating a 'social' gospel which distorted the 'real' or 'personal' gospel.

Non-Christian religions were practised by non-white people which gave Islam, Hinduism and African Traditional Religion a racial stereotype. Like the Jews, they spoke the languages of 'other races', and were 'not like us'.

Religion became a site of struggle over racism. The non-racial ecumenical Christian Institute (CI) begun by Dr Beyers Naude in 1961, and the Message to the People of South Africa published jointly with the SA Council of Churches in 1968, rejected racist doctrines as a 'false gospel'. In the same year the World Council of Churches at Upsala inaugurated the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR).

Such insights seldom reached the people in the pews because clergy were scared of their congregations and the Security Police. Churches continued to practice racism in appointments, training, stipends, office bearers, and congregational structures. Several divided on racial grounds.

Others refuted these attitudes as heresy, and in 1986 issued 'A Challenge to the Church', sub-titled 'The Kairos Document': 'State Theology' is simply the theological justification of the status quo with its racism, capitalism, and totalitarianism. It blesses injustice, canonises the will of the powerful and reduces the poor to passivity, obedience, and apathy ... This god is an idol.' Similar views were expressed by the Call of Islam, Jews for Justice, and the inter-faith World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP-SA). By 1992 all the main religions of South Africa participated in producing the 'Declaration on religious rights and responsibilities' which had no trace of racism in it, and was used in preparing the 1996 Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Racism is blind. When whites say 'I'm not a racist' in a church stuffed full of carpets, stained glass windows, fancy pews, hymns books, with a huge car park, they are not demonstrating the blessing of God but the blindness of racism. They are too comfortable to be challenged by the economic disparity of congregations.

Many middle class, well-educated people still have to learn that white, generous, kind, worshipping people 'just like us' produce societies which oppress and kill, and justify it in racist or nationalist terms. Decent religious people ran the slave trade and colonial oppression, goose stepped their way to the gas chambers, obliterated the populations of Dresden and Hiroshima, incinerated Vietnam, invented apartheid, and impoverish millions in the Third World today by globalised usury.

Religions condemn racism, but continue to support neo-colonialism, neo-liberalism, and religious fundamentalism, which prevent the transformation of society. Since the restrictions of apartheid legislation were removed, many people have done little to actually build a united, non-racist, non-sexist democratic South Africa.

Racism is unnatural: it does not affect children until they are educated into it, so part of the answer is to rear a generation NOT taught to be racist. Young people can lead the change in adult attitudes (as they did in Soweto in 1976) if the youth of today are equipped to enable them to build a non-racist society tomorrow. What tools are our parents, educators, and religious institutions giving them? Non-racism is caught not taught. An Institute for Justice and Reconciliation survey shows that 60 percent of South Africans have never eaten in the home of people of another 'race'. Ten minutes positive conversation can dissolve a life time of ignorance and prejudice. It needs a personal commitment to enact a non-racist life style. Bishop Mvume Dandala has said: 'The process of moving away from racism into a free society where we deal with one another purely on the basis of being human, will involve a very conscious effort by individuals to commit themselves to this path.' Culture and religion are often confused. Cultures change constantly with the social environment, but people are not



deserting their religious values when they adopt a new culture. People constantly adapt to other cultures and many switch from one to another several times a day depending on who they are with and where they are. Spiritual values are crucial tools in shaping this new democratic, non-racist, non-sexist culture that liberation has made possible, and it is racism, not religion, that resists these changes. Despite having freedom of religion, many still perpetuate divided denominations, exclusive congregations, and sexist and non-democratic practices. But no one will force a fuller humanity upon them by imposing inclusive relationships. No-one will force us to break out of the racist ghettos of the inherited Group Areas system. The rich still cling to their privileged suburbs, but no one will reinvent compulsory removal schemes in reverse. No one will compel whites and blacks, Muslim and Jew, Hindu and Christian, Catholic and Pentecostal, to be friends.

But we know that separated-ness produces strife. When people live apart from one another, racism snarls and gnashes its blood stained teeth in suspicions, fears, jealousies, and rumours, fomented by religious or political extremists and sensationalist media which promote oppression in the name of freedom.

Both Religion and Politics are functions of neighbourhoods. Their national activities signify little until translated into living partnerships. People in all sectors can take deliberate steps to establish a united South Africa in local neighbourhoods, breaking out of the stereotypes that are producing racial clashes all over the world, and replicating the harmony known in some religious and political circles in the earlier struggle. We all have homes: are they sites of the new non-racist South Africa, or part of the past? Religions congregate - but do the congregations meet together? Are they credible communities building a collective consciousness of non-racist communities constituting a transformed society and overcoming inherited wrong thinking, wrong doctrine, language, distance and culture? Throughout history movements for change have been initiated by small groups who act ahead of the big battalions. How can religious/political initiatives establish local schools for citizens of a transformed free society? Experience shows that a common focus is needed to turn vision and theories into facts. Groups experienced unity when they took collective action against slavery, fascism, colonialism, and apartheid. Crucial points of united action across a Broad Front are clear to everyone committed to make South Africa great today, including Moral Regeneration, the Problem of the Rich, and a new focus for Spiritual strength.

We are ham-strung by western values, and when we focus together on the moral regeneration of our society in Africa we shall get rid of racism. 1994 changed structures: freedom today requires changed attitudes to take up the changes in structure. The problem of the Poor requires us to answer the problem of the Rich.

How can we mobilise the vast wealth controlled by so few in our country to banish the poverty suffered by so many? An economic focus can bring all races together.

We need to recover a focus on Spiritual strength. The great visions for our country from the Freedom Charter to the Millennium Africa Plan, including everything that non-racist youth or women or bosses or workers dream of, demands it. We need love, joy, peace-making, patience, kindness and goodness, loyalty, humility and self-control. The community needs people of vision and compassion, strength and sympathy, generosity and good humour.

But it is a simple sociological fact that millions of people today find traditional religious activities irrelevant, and those who have left will not go back. We are all spiritual, but we are not all religious. We need to develop the secular spirituality which throbs beneath the experience of being human together, so that racism will join feudalism and slavery as something that people used to do in the old days.

If racism and its associate evils are to be identified and left behind, we need to re-discover that primary spiritual experience of communal caring for one another. It still happens.



'The Regeneration of Africa'

By Pixley ka Seme

Published in the African Abroad, 5 April 1906

I am an African, and I set my pride in my race over against a hostile public opinion. Men have tried to compare races on the basis of some equality. In all the works of nature, equality, if by it we mean identity, is an impossible dream! Search the universe! You will find no two units alike. The scientists tell us there are no two cells, no two atoms, identical. Nature has bestowed upon each a peculiar individuality, an exclusive patent from the great giants of the forest to the tenderest blade. Catch in your hand, if you please, the gentle flakes of snow. Each is a perfect gem, a new creation; it shines in its own glory - a work of art different from all of its aerial companions. Man, the crowning achievement of nature, defies analysis. He is a mystery through all ages and for all time. The races of mankind are composed of free and unique individuals. An attempt to compare them on the basis of equality can never be finally satisfactory. Each is self. My thesis stands on this truth; time has proved it. In all races, genius is like a spark, which, concealed in the bosom of a flint, bursts forth at the summoning stroke. It may arise anywhere and in any race.

I would ask you not to compare Africa to Europe or to any other continent.

I make this request not from any fear that such comparison might bring humiliation upon Africa. The reason I have stated, - a common standard is impossible! Come with me to the ancient capital of Egypt, Thebes, the city of one hundred gates. The grandeur of its venerable ruins and the gigantic proportions of its architecture reduce to insignificance the boasted monuments of other nations. The pyramids of Egypt are structures to which the world presents nothing comparable. The mighty monuments seem to look with disdain on every other work of human art and to vie with nature herself. All the glory of Egypt belongs to Africa and her people. These monuments are the indestructible memorials of their great and original genius. It is not through Egypt alone that Africa claims such unrivalled historic achievements. I could have spoken of the pyramids of Ethiopia, which, though inferior in size to those of Egypt, far surpass them in architectural beauty; their sepulchers which evince the highest purity of taste, and of many prehistoric ruins in other parts of Africa. In such ruins Africa is like the golden sun, that, having sunk beneath the western horizon, still plays upon the world which he sustained and enlightened in his career.

Oh, for that historian who, with the open pen of truth, will bring to Africa's claim the strength of written proof. He will tell of a race whose onward tide was often swelled with tears, but in whose heart bondage has not quenched the fire of former years. He will write that in these later days when Earth's noble ones are named, she has a roll of honor too, of whom she is not ashamed. The giant is awakening! From the four corners of the earth Africa's sons, who have been proved through fire and sword, are marching to the future's golden door bearing the records of deeds of valor done.

From these heights of the twentieth century I again ask you to cast your eyes south of the Desert of Sahara. If you could go with me to the oppressed Congos and ask, What does it mean, that now, for liberty, they fight like men and die like martyrs; if you would go with me to Bechuanaland, face their council of headmen and ask what motives caused them recently to decree so emphatically that alcoholic drinks shall not enter their country - visit their king, Khama, ask for what cause he leaves the gold and ivory palace of his ancestors, its mountain strongholds and all its august ceremony, to wander daily from village to village through all his kingdom, without a guard or any decoration of his rank - a preacher of industry and education, and an apostle of the new order of things; if you would ask Menelik what means this that Abyssinia is now looking across the ocean - oh, if you could read the letters that come to us from Zululand - you too would be convinced that the elevation of the African race is evidently a part of the new order of things that belong to this new and powerful period.

The African already recognizes his anomalous position and desires a change.

The brighter day is rising upon Africa. Already I seem to see her chains dissolved, her desert plains red with harvest, her Abyssinia and her Zululand the seats of science and religion, reflecting the glory of the rising sun from the spires of their churches and universities. Her Congo and her Gambia



whitened with commerce, her crowded cities sending forth the hum of business, and all her sons employed in advancing the victories of peace-greater and more abiding than the spoils of war.

Yes, the regeneration of Africa belongs to this new and powerful period! By this term regeneration I wish to be understood to mean the entrance into a new life, embracing the diverse phases of a higher, complex existence. The basic factor which assures their regeneration resides in the awakened race-consciousness. This gives them a clear perception of their elemental needs and of their undeveloped powers. It therefore must lead them to the attainment of that higher and advanced standard of life.

The African people, although not a strictly homogeneous race, possess a common fundamental sentiment which is everywhere manifest, crystallizing itself into one common controlling idea. Conflicts and strife are rapidly disappearing before the fusing force of this enlightened perception of the true intertribal relation, which relation should subsist among a people with a common destiny. Agencies of a social, economic and religious advance tell of a new spirit which, acting as a leavening ferment, shall raise the anxious and aspiring mass to the level of their ancient glory. The ancestral greatness, the unimpaired genius, and the recuperative power of the race, its irrepressibility, which assures its permanence, constitute the African's greatest source of inspiration. He has refused to camp forever on the borders of the industrial world; having learned that knowledge is power, he is educating his children. You find them in Edinburgh, in Cambridge, and in the great schools of Germany. These return to their country like arrows, to drive darkness from the land. I hold that his industrial and educational initiative, and his untiring devotion to these activities, must be regarded as positive evidences of this process of his regeneration.

The regeneration of Africa means that a new and unique civilization is soon to be added to the world. The African is not a proletarian in the world of science and art. He has precious creations of his own, of ivory, of copper and of gold, fine, plated willow-ware and weapons of superior workmanship.

Civilization resembles an organic being in its development-it is born, it perishes, and it can propagate itself. More particularly, it resembles a plant, it takes root in the teeming earth, and when the seeds fall in other soils new varieties sprout up. The most essential departure of this new civilization is that it shall be thoroughly spiritual and humanistic -indeed a regeneration moral and eternal! O Africa! Like some great century plant that shall bloom In ages hence, we watch thee; in our dream See in thy swamps the Prospero of our stream; Thy doors unlocked, where knowledge in her tomb Hath lain innumerable years in gloom.

Then shalt thou, walking with that morning gleam, Shine as thy sister lands with equal beam

Pixley ka Seme was a founding member of the African National Congress and served as ANC President from 1930 to 1936.

'Africa and Freedom'

*By Chief Albert Luthuli
Extract from Nobel Lecture, 11 December 1961*

Africa in Revolution

This Award could not be for me alone, nor for just South Africa, but for Africa as a whole. Africa presently is most deeply torn with strife and most bitterly stricken with racial conflict. How strange then it is that a man of Africa should be here to receive an Award given for service to the cause of peace and brotherhood between men. There has been little peace in Africa in our time. From the northernmost end of our continent, where war has raged for seven years, to the center and to the south there are battles being fought out, some with arms, some without. In my own country, in the year 1960 for which this Award is given, there was a state of emergency for many months. At Sharpeville, a small village, in a single afternoon 69 people were shot dead and 180 wounded by small arms fire; and in parts like the Transkei, a state of emergency is still continuing. Ours is a



continent in revolution against oppression. And peace and revolution make uneasy bedfellows. There can be no peace until the forces of oppression are overthrown.

Our continent has been carved up by the great powers; alien governments have been forced upon the African people by military conquest and by economic domination; strivings for nationhood and national dignity have been beaten down by force; traditional economics and ancient customs have been disrupted, and human skills and energy have been harnessed for the advantage of our conquerors. In these times there has been no peace; there could be no brotherhood between men.

But now, the revolutionary stirrings of our continent are setting the past aside. Our people everywhere from north to south of the continent are reclaiming their land, their right to participate in government, their dignity as men, their nationhood. Thus, in the turmoil of revolution, the basis for peace and brotherhood in Africa is being restored by the resurrection of national sovereignty and independence, of equality and the dignity of man.

There is a paradox in the fact that Africa qualifies for such an Award in its age of turmoil and revolution. How great is the paradox and how much greater the honor that an Award in support of peace and the brotherhood of man should come to one who is a citizen of a country where the brotherhood of man is an illegal doctrine, outlawed, banned, censured, proscribed and prohibited; where to work, talk or campaign for the realization in fact and deed of the brotherhood of man is hazardous, punished with banishment, or confinement without trial, or imprisonment; where effective democratic channels to peaceful settlement of the race problem have never existed these 300 years; and where white minority power rests on the most heavily armed and equipped military machine in Africa. This is South Africa.

Even here, where white rule seems determined not to change its mind for the better, the spirit of Africa's militant struggle for liberty, equality and independence asserts itself. I, together with thousands of my countrymen, have in the course of the struggle for these ideals, been harassed, and imprisoned, but we are not deterred in our quest for a new age in which we shall live in peace and in brotherhood.

It is not necessary for me to speak at length about South Africa; its social system, its politics, its economics and its laws have forced themselves on the attention of the world. It is a museum piece in our time, a hangover from the dark past of mankind, a relic of an age which everywhere else is dead or dying. Here the cult of race superiority and of white supremacy is worshipped like a god. Few white people escape corruption and many of their children learn to believe that white men are unquestionably superior, efficient, clever, industrious and capable; that black men are, equally unquestionably, inferior, slothful, stupid, evil and clumsy. On the basis of the mythology that 'the lowest amongst them is higher than the highest amongst us,' it is claimed that white men build everything that is worthwhile in the country; its cities, its industries, its mines and its agriculture, and that they alone are thus fitted and entitled as of right to own and control these things, whilst black men are only temporary sojourners in these cities, fitted only for menial labour, and unfit to share political power. The Prime Minister of South Africa, Dr Verwoerd, then Minister of Bantu Affairs, when explaining his government's policy on African education had this to say: 'There is no place for him (the African) in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour.' There is little new in this mythology. Every part of Africa which has been subject to white conquest has, at one time or another, and in one guise or another, suffered from it, even in its virulent form of the slavery that obtained in Africa up to the 19th Century.

Reality of conditions in South Africa There is nothing new in South Africa's apartheid ideas, but South Africa is unique in this: the ideas not only survive in our modern age, but are stubbornly defended, extended and bolstered up by legislation at the time when in the major part of the world they are now largely historical and are either being shamefacedly hidden behind concealing formulations, or are being steadily scrapped. These ideas survive in South Africa because those who sponsor them profit from them. They provide moral whitewash for the conditions which exist in the country: for the fact that the country is ruled exclusively by a white government elected by an exclusively white electorate which is a privileged minority; for the fact that 87 per cent of the land and all the best agricultural land within reach of town, market and railways is reserved for white ownership and occupation and now through the recent Group Areas legislation non-Whites are losing more land to white greed; for the



fact that all skilled and highly-paid jobs are for whites only; for the fact that all universities of any academic merit are an exclusive preserve of whites; for the fact that the education of every white child costs about £64 p.a. whilst that of an African child costs about £9 p.a. and that of an Indian child or Coloured child costs about £20 p.a.; for the fact that white education is universal and compulsory up to the age of 16, whilst education for the non-white children is scarce and inadequate, and for the fact that almost one million Africans a year are arrested and gaoled or fined for breaches of innumerable pass and permit laws which do not apply to whites.

Thus it is that the golden age of Africa's independence is also the dark age of South Africa's decline and retrogression, brought about by men who, when revolutionary changes that entrenched fundamental human rights were taking place in Europe, were closed in on the tip of South Africa - and so missed the wind of progressive change.

Long tradition of struggle But beneath the surface there is a spirit of defiance. The people of South Africa have never been a docile lot, least of all the African people. We have a long tradition of struggle for our national rights, reaching back to the very beginnings of white settlement and conquest 300 years ago.

Our history is one of opposition to domination, of protest and refusal to submit to tyranny. Consider some of our great names; the great warrior and nation builder Shaka, who welded tribes together into the Zulu nation from which I spring; Moshoeshe, the statesman and nation-builder who fathered the Basuto nation and placed Basutoland beyond the reach of the claws of the South African whites; Hintsa of the Xhosas who chose death rather than surrender his territory to white invaders. All these and other royal names, as well as other great chieftains, resisted manfully white intrusion.

It may well be that South Africa's social system is a monument to racialism and race oppression, but its people are the living testimony to the unconquerable spirit of mankind. Down the years, against seemingly overwhelming odds, they have sought the goal of fuller life and liberty, striving with incredible determination and fortitude for the right to live as men - free men.

Vision of non-racial democratic South Africa How easy it would have been in South Africa for the natural feelings of resentment at white domination to have been turned into feelings of hatred and a desire for revenge against the white community. Here, where every day in every aspect of life, every non-white comes up against the ubiquitous sign, 'Europeans Only,' and the equally ubiquitous policeman to enforce it - here it could well be expected that a racialism equal to that of their oppressors would flourish to counter the white arrogance towards blacks.

That it has not done so is no accident. It is because, deliberately and advisedly, African leadership for the past 50 years, with the inspiration of the African National Congress which I had the honour to lead for the last decade or so until it was banned, had set itself steadfastly against racial vain-gloriousness.

We knew that in so doing we passed up opportunities for easy demagogic appeal to the natural passions of a people denied freedom and liberty; we discarded the chance of an easy and expedient emotional appeal. Our vision has always been that of a non-racial democratic South Africa which upholds the rights of all who live in our country to remain there as full citizens with equal rights and responsibilities with all others. For the consummation of this ideal we have laboured unflinchingly. We shall continue to labour unflinchingly.

The true patriots of South Africa, for whom I speak, will be satisfied with nothing less than the fullest democratic rights. In government we will not be satisfied with anything less than direct individual adult suffrage and the right to stand for and be elected to all organs of government. In economic matters we will be satisfied with nothing less than equality of opportunity in every sphere, and the enjoyment by all of those heritages which form the resources of the country which up to now have been appropriated on a racial 'whites only' basis. In culture we will be satisfied with nothing less than the opening of all doors of learning to non-segregatory institutions on the sole criterion of ability. In the social sphere we will be satisfied with nothing less than the abolition of all racial bars.



We do not demand these things for people of African descent alone. We demand them for all South Africa's, white and black. On these principles we are uncompromising. To compromise would be an expediency that is most treacherous to democracy, for in the turn of events the sweets of economic, political and social privileges that are a monopoly of only one section of a community turn sour even in the mouths of those who eat them. Thus apartheid in practice is proving to be a monster created by Frankenstein. That is the tragedy of the South African scene.

Courage that rises with danger In their fight for lasting values, there are many things that have sustained the spirit of the freedom-loving people of South Africa and those in the yet unredeemed parts of Africa where the white man claims resolutely proprietary rights over democracy - a universal heritage. High amongst them - the things that have sustained us, stand the magnificent support of the progressive people and governments throughout the world, amongst whom number the people and government of the country of which I am today guest; our brothers in Africa; especially in the Independent African States; organizations who share the outlook we embrace in countries scattered right across the face of the globe; the United Nations Organization jointly and some of its member-nations singly. In their defence of peace in the world through actively upholding the quality of man all these groups have reinforced our undying faith in the unassailable rightness and justness of our cause. To all of them I say: Alone we would have been weak. Our heartfelt appreciation of your acts of support of us, we cannot adequately express, nor can we ever forget; now or in the future when victory is behind us, and South Africa's freedom rests in the hands of all her people.

We South Africans, however, equally understand that much as others might do for us, our freedom cannot come to us as a gift from abroad. Our freedom we must make ourselves. All honest freedom-loving people have dedicated themselves to that task. What we need is the courage that rises with danger.

Whatever may be the future of our freedom efforts, our cause is the cause of the liberation of people who are denied freedom. Only on this basis can the peace of Africa and the world be firmly founded. Our cause is the cause of equality between nations and people. Only thus can the brotherhood of man be firmly established. It is encouraging and elating to remind you that despite her humiliation and torment at the hands of white rule, the spirit of Africa in quest for freedom has been, generally, for peaceful means to the utmost.

If I have dwelt at length on my country's race problem, it is not as though other countries on our continent do not labour under these problems, but because it is here in the Republic of South Africa that the race problem is most acute. Perhaps in no other country on the continent is white supremacy asserted with greater vigour and determination and a sense of righteousness.

This places the opponents of apartheid in the front rank of those who fight white domination.

In bringing my address to a close, let me invite Africa to cast her eyes beyond the past and to some extent the present with their woes and tribulations, trials and failures, and some successes, and see herself an emerging continent, bursting to freedom through the shell of centuries of serfdom. This is Africa's age - the dawn of her fulfilment, yes, the moment when she must grapple with destiny to reach the summits of sublimity saying - ours was a fight for noble values and worthy ends, and not for lands and the enslavement of man. Africa is a vital subject matter in the world of today, a focal point of world interest and concern. Could it not be that history has delayed her rebirth for a purpose? The situation confronts her with inescapable challenges, but more importantly with opportunities for service to herself and mankind. She evades the challenges and neglects the opportunities to her shame, if not her doom. How she sees her destiny is a more vital and rewarding quest than bemoaning her past with its humiliations and sufferings.

Chief Albert Luthuli was President of the ANC from 1952 to 1967. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961.



'I am prepared to die'

By Nelson Mandela

Statement from the dock at the Rivonia Treason Trial, 20 April 1964

I am the First Accused. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Arts and practised as an attorney in Johannesburg for a number of years in partnership with Oliver Tambo. I am a convicted prisoner serving five years for leaving the country without a permit and for inciting people to go on strike at the end of May 1961.

At the outset, I want to say that the suggestion made by the State in its opening that the struggle in South Africa is under the influence of foreigners or communists is wholly incorrect. I have done whatever I did, both as an individual and as a leader of my people, because of my experience in South Africa and my own proudly felt African background, and not because of what any outsider might have said.

In my youth in the Transkei I listened to the elders of my tribe telling stories of the old days. Amongst the tales they related to me were those of wars fought by our ancestors in defence of the fatherland. The names of Dingane and Bambata, Hintsa and Makana, Squngthi and Dalasile, Moshoeshe and Sekhukhuni, were praised as the glory of the entire African nation. I hoped then that life might offer me the opportunity to serve my people and make my own humble contribution to their freedom struggle. This is what has motivated me in all that I have done in relation to the charges made against me in this case.

Submit or Fight The African National Congress was formed in 1912 to defend the rights of the African people which had been seriously curtailed by the South Africa Act, and which were then being threatened by the Native Land Act. For thirty-seven years - that is until 1949 - it adhered strictly to a constitutional struggle. It put forward demands and resolutions; it sent delegations to the Government in the belief that African grievances could be settled through peaceful discussion and that Africans could advance gradually to full political rights. But White Governments remained unmoved, and the rights of Africans became less instead of becoming greater. In the words of my leader, Chief Lutuli, who became President of the ANC in 1952, and who was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize: 'who will deny that thirty years of my life have been spent knocking in vain, patiently, moderately, and modestly at a closed and barred door? What have been the fruits of moderation? The past thirty years have seen the greatest number of laws restricting our rights and progress, until today we have reached a stage where we have almost no rights at all'.

Even after 1949, the ANC remained determined to avoid violence. At this time, however, there was a change from the strictly constitutional means of protest which had been employed in the past. The change was embodied in a decision which was taken to protest against apartheid legislation by peaceful, but unlawful, demonstrations against certain laws. Pursuant to this policy the ANC launched the Defiance Campaign, in which I was placed in charge of volunteers. This campaign was based on the principles of passive resistance. More than 8,500 people defied apartheid laws and went to jail.

Yet there was not a single instance of violence in the course of this campaign on the part of any defier. I and nineteen colleagues were convicted for the role which we played in organizing the campaign, but our sentences were suspended mainly because the Judge found that discipline and non-violence had been stressed throughout.

This was the time when the volunteer section of the ANC was established, and when the word 'Amadelakufa' was first used: this was the time when the volunteers were asked to take a pledge to uphold certain principles.

Evidence dealing with volunteers and their pledges has been introduced into this case, but completely out of context. The volunteers were not, and are not, the soldiers of a black army pledged to fight a civil war against the whites. They were, and are, dedicated workers who are prepared to lead



campaigns initiated by the ANC to distribute leaflets, to organize strikes, or do whatever the particular campaign required. They are called volunteers because they volunteer to face the penalties of imprisonment and whipping which are now prescribed by the legislature for such acts.

During the Defiance Campaign, the Public Safety Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act were passed. These Statutes provided harsher penalties for offences committed by way of protests against laws. Despite this, the protests continued and the ANC adhered to its policy of non-violence. In 1956, 156 leading members of the Congress Alliance, including myself, were arrested on a charge of high treason and charges under the Suppression of Communism Act. The non-violent policy of the ANC was put in issue by the State, but when the Court gave judgment some five years later, it found that the ANC did not have a policy of violence. We were acquitted on all counts, which included a count that the ANC sought to set up a communist state in place of the existing regime. The Government has always sought to label all its opponents as communists. This allegation has been repeated in the present case, but as I will show, the ANC is not, and never has been, a communist organization.

In 1960 there was the shooting at Sharpeville, which resulted in the proclamation of a state of emergency and the declaration of the ANC as an unlawful organization. My colleagues and I, after careful consideration, decided that we would not obey this decree. The African people were not part of the Government and did not make the laws by which they were governed. We believed in the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that 'the will of the people shall be the basis of authority of the Government', and for us to accept the banning was equivalent to accepting the silencing of the Africans for all time. The ANC refused to dissolve, but instead went underground. We believed it was our duty to preserve this organization which had been built up with almost fifty years of unremitting toil. I have no doubt that no self-respecting White political organization At the beginning of June 1961, after a long and anxious assessment of the South African situation, I, and some colleagues, came to the conclusion that as violence in this country was inevitable, it would be unrealistic and wrong for African leaders to continue preaching peace and non-violence at a time when the Government met our peaceful demands with force.

This conclusion was not easily arrived at. It was only when all else had failed, when all channels of peaceful protest had been barred to us, that the decision was made to embark on violent forms of political struggle, and to form Umkhonto we Sizwe. We did so not because we desired such a course, but solely because the Government had left us with no other choice. In the Manifesto of Umkhonto published on 16 December 1961, which is Exhibit AD, we said: 'The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices - submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means in our power in defence of our people, our future, and our freedom'.

The Manifesto of Umkhonto was issued on the day that operations commenced.

The response to our actions and Manifesto among the white population was characteristically violent. The Government threatened to take strong action, and called upon its supporters to stand firm and to ignore the demands of the Africans. The Whites failed to respond by suggesting change; they responded to our call by suggesting the laager.

In contrast, the response of the Africans was one of encouragement.

Suddenly there was hope again. Things were happening. People in the townships became eager for political news. A great deal of enthusiasm was generated by the initial successes, and people began to speculate on how soon freedom would be obtained.

A land of extremes and remarkable contrasts South Africa is the richest country in Africa, and could be one of the richest countries in the world. But it is a land of extremes and remarkable contrasts. The whites enjoy what may well be the highest standard of living in the world, whilst Africans live in poverty and misery. Forty per cent of the Africans live in hopelessly overcrowded and, in some cases, drought-stricken Reserves, where soil erosion and the overworking of the soil makes it impossible for them to live properly off the land. Thirty per cent are labourers, labour tenants, and squatters on white farms and work and live under conditions similar to those of the serfs of the Middle Ages.



The other 30 per cent live in towns where they have developed economic and social habits which bring them closer in many respects to white standards.

Yet most Africans, even in this group, are impoverished by low incomes and high cost of living.

The complaint of Africans, however, is not only that they are poor and the whites are rich, but that the laws which are made by the whites are designed to preserve this situation. There are two ways to break out of poverty. The first is by formal education, and the second is by the worker acquiring a greater skill at his work and thus higher wages. As far as Africans are concerned, both these avenues of advancement are deliberately curtailed by legislation.

The lack of human dignity experienced by Africans is the direct result of the policy of white supremacy. White supremacy implies black inferiority.

Legislation designed to preserve white supremacy entrenches this notion.

Menial tasks in South Africa are invariably performed by Africans. When anything has to be carried or cleaned the white man will look around for an African to do it for him, whether the African is employed by him or not.

Because of this sort of attitude, whites tend to regard Africans as a separate breed. They do not look upon them as people with families of their own; they do not realize that they have emotions - that they fall in love like white people do; that they want to be with their wives and children like white people want to be with theirs; that they want to earn enough money to support their families properly, to feed and clothe them and send them to school. And what 'house-boy' or 'garden-boy' or labourer can ever hope to do this? Pass laws, which to the Africans are among the most hated bits of legislation in South Africa, render any African liable to police surveillance at any time. I doubt whether there is a single African male in South Africa who has not at some stage had a brush with the police over his pass. Hundreds and thousands of Africans are thrown into jail each year under pass laws. Even worse than this is the fact that pass laws keep husband and wife apart and lead to the breakdown of family life.

Poverty and the breakdown of family life have secondary effects. Children wander about the streets of the townships because they have no schools to go to, or no money to enable them to go to school, or no parents at home to see that they go to school, because both parents (if there be two) have to work to keep the family alive. This leads to a breakdown in moral standards, to an alarming rise in illegitimacy, and to growing violence which erupts not only politically, but everywhere. Life in the townships is dangerous. There is not a day that goes by without somebody being stabbed or assaulted.

And violence is carried out of the townships in the white living areas. People are afraid to walk alone in the streets after dark. Housebreakings and robberies are increasing, despite the fact that the death sentence can now be imposed for such offences. Death sentences cannot cure the festering sore.

Africans want to be paid a living wage. Africans want to perform work which they are capable of doing, and not work which the Government declares them to be capable of. Africans want to be allowed to live where they obtain work, and not be endorsed out of an area because they were not born there.

Africans want to be allowed to own land in places where they work, and not to be obliged to live in rented houses which they can never call their own.

Africans want to be part of the general population, and not confined to living in their own ghettos. African men want to have their wives and children to live with them where they work, and not be forced into an unnatural existence in men's hostels. African women want to be with their menfolk and not be left permanently widowed in the Reserves. Africans want to be allowed out after eleven o'clock at night and not to be confined to their rooms like little children. Africans want to be allowed to travel in



their own country and to seek work where they want to and not where the Labour Bureau tells them to. Africans want a just share in the whole of South Africa; they want security and a stake in society.

I am prepared to die! Above all, we want equal political rights, because without them our disabilities will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to the whites in this country, because the majority of voters will be Africans.

This makes the white man fear democracy.

But this fear cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the only solution which will guarantee racial harmony and freedom for all. It is not true that the enfranchisement of all will result in racial domination. Political division, based on colour, is entirely artificial and, when it disappears, so will the domination of one colour group by another. The ANC has spent half a century fighting against racialism. When it triumphs it will not change that policy.

This then is what the ANC is fighting. Their struggle is a truly national one. It is a struggle of the African people, inspired by their own suffering and their own experience. It is a struggle for the right to live.

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

Nelson Mandela was President of the ANC from 1991 to 1997. He was South Africa's first democratically-elected President, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

'The role of the Indian people in the South African revolution'

*By Dr Yusuf Dadoo
Extract from interview in 1968*

On the Congress Movement

Q: You spoke earlier of the Congress Movement. Can you tell us something of the background of the alliance between the South African Indian Congress, the African National Congress and the other organisations of the Congress Movement?

Dr. Dadoo: Freedom is indivisible. A section of the population cannot be free if the rest is in bondage. In the course of their struggle against unjust laws, and for the redress of their grievances, the Indian people began to realise that no fundamental changes were possible without unity of action between all the oppressed people. And it was this realisation that made the younger members of the Indian Congress, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, set about trying to change the policies of the Congress in order to seek cooperation in the common struggle with the premier national organisation of the African people, the ANC, and with the national organisation of the Coloured people. A similar spirit also prevailed among the younger elements in the African political movement and in the Coloured community. This led to the formation of united front bodies to campaign to show the people that they must act unitedly, and to bring about changes in the national organisation (and necessary changes of leadership) to follow the new policies of cooperation and united struggle.

To bring about the changes in the Indian Congress, vigorous campaigns had to be conducted amongst the Indian people, and many bitter battles had to be fought against the 'moderate' leadership of the time. Members of the progressive groups were assaulted, sometimes brutally. In the Transvaal, a volunteer of the progressive group was actually killed.



But with the crushing of the moderate leadership it was possible for the Indian people once again to conduct a militant campaign - the Passive Resistance Campaign against Smuts' 'Ghetto Act' in 1946. This was entirely a struggle of the Indian people, but a few African and Coloured volunteers participated as a gesture of solidarity.

Simultaneously there was a change in the leadership of the ANC, and this made possible cooperation between the Indian Congress and the African National Congress through a pact known as the Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact of 1947. After that many joint struggles were conducted, such as the stay-at-home on May 1, 1950, the stay-at-home on June 26, 1950 (the first South Africa Freedom Day), and the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign of 1952 in which over 8,000 volunteers of all races defied laws and went to prison.

Under the leadership of the ANC, in alliance with the organisations of the Indian and Coloured people, of the workers and of the progressive whites, the Congress of the People was held in 1955 - at which the Freedom Charter was adopted by over 3,000 delegates of all races. This Charter became the programme of all the organisations participating in the Congress Movement, and laid the basis for a united struggle for the transformation of South Africa. A Joint Consultative Council of all the organisations continued to operate until the premier organisation, the ANC, was banned in 1960.

The Campaigns of 1946 and 1952

Q: What, in your opinion, did the Indian Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 and the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign in 1952 achieve?

Dr. Dadoo: With the departure of Gandhiji from South Africa in 1914 and with the removal from the political scene of some of his staunchest lieutenants because of death or old age, the leadership of the Indian community fell into the hands of 'moderates' who believed in compromising with the Government on each and every legislative measure of racial discrimination against the Indian people. The Indian Congress was reduced to representing, by and large, the voice of the small Indian merchant class only.

The campaign for all-out resistance against all discriminatory legislation conducted by the younger progressive group among the Indian people culminated not only in ousting the moderate leadership but also in transforming the Indian Congress into a mass organisation of the whole people.

The Indian Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, enacted by the Smuts Government brought together in a united struggle all sections: the working people who constituted 80 percent of the Indian community, the professional class and traders. The unity it wrought was indeed so powerful that not a single Indian accepted even the limited franchise which the Act offered.

The Campaign of 1946, furthermore, laid a strong basis among the Indian people for the subsequent unity with the African National Congress and the other organisations of the Congress Movement in the struggle for liberation.

The Campaign also made a significant impact internationally. It made the Indian community appreciate more fully the importance of international solidarity in the world-wide struggle against racialism, colonialism and imperialism. At the request of the SAIC, India demonstrated her solidarity by breaking off relations with South Africa and imposing economic sanctions.

At its request India also took up the treatment of the South Africans of Indian and Pakistani origin at the United Nations. This was soon broadened to include the whole question of apartheid. Thus it is that the question of the apartheid policies of the fascist South African Government has been on the agenda of the United Nations Organisation ever since its inception.

The Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign, similarly, not only increased the attention of the world to the liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples; it also welded the masses of the African, Coloured and



Indian peoples into a united force. Furthermore, it gave rise to the formation of the Congress of Democrats, a small but active group of white democrats, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, who later joined the united front, popularly known as the Congress Alliance.

Role of the Indian people

Q: What precise role do you expect the Indian people to play in this new phase of the struggle?

Dr. Dadoo: As an integral part of the South African population, the Indian community of half a million people has a very important role to play in the new form the struggle has taken. As a leader of the Indian people, it is my duty to ask them to respond unreservedly to the call made by the Acting President of the African National Congress, our comrade Oliver Tambo, in which he says: 'As our forces drive deeper into the south we have no doubt that they will be joined not by some, but by the whole African nation; by the oppressed minorities, the Indian and Coloured people; and by an increasing number of white democrats'.

The militant Indian youth, who played not an insignificant part in the early struggles of Umkhonto since 1961 - several of them are serving long terms of imprisonment on Robben Island and in other South African jails together with their African, Coloured and White comrades-in-arms - have yet a larger role to play in the liberation army, and in mobilising the Indian people in town and country to support and help the freedom fighters in every possible way.

The Indian people must and will, I am certain, help to make the path of freedom fighters easy. They must also mount ever-increasing resistance to every aspect of apartheid: the Group Areas Act must not be allowed to govern them; they must oppose and reject the regime's stooge body, the South African Indian Council, which is being used by Vorster as an instrument to obtain the collaboration of the Indian people in the implementation of apartheid policies. Every form of opposition to apartheid is of help to the freedom fighters in the war against white supremacy.

Q: The argument has often been put to the Indian people in South Africa that as a minority group they would be no better off under African rule than they are under white rule. In the light of what has happened in Kenya, for instance, what is your answer to this argument?

Dr. Dadoo: This is absolute nonsense - it is merely the tactics of divide and rule used by the authorities in order to maintain the divisions of the people, as they already do by law, keeping the national groups apart and preventing intercommunication. This is the argument of the South African Police who seek to intimidate the people from participating in the struggle; it is the argument of their agents provocateurs in our midst who deliberately try to provoke hostility between African and Indian, African and Coloured, to convince each that their grievances are not the fault of an oppressive government, but of another oppressed group. They use this tactic precisely because it is our unity in the face of oppression that the oppressor most fears.

It must be understood that the fundamental of the liberation struggle is first and foremost the liberation of the majority of the population, the African people, and that it is unthinkable that there could be liberation without African majority rule.

Dr Yusuf Dadoo was a former President of the South African Indian Congress and Chairman of the South African Communist Party.

'Class and Colour in South Africa'



By Jack and Ray Simons
Extracts from Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950, Lusaka, Zambia, 11 September 1968

Some decades ago, South Africa was held in high esteem as a senior member of the British Commonwealth, a bastion of western capitalism, and the most advanced economic region in Africa. Her people, black and white, could claim with some justification that their material conditions were the best in Africa. The south had the highest national income per head of population, the largest volume of trade, and the widest scope of opportunity for acquiring education or obtaining employment. Men from east and central Africa went south in search of higher wages or higher learning.

Three centuries of white settlement - phased by colonial wars, expropriations of tribal lands, slavery, forced labour and industrialism - had produced a variety of human types, an integrated multi-racial society and a way of life shared by some members of all racial groups. Colour prejudice was endemic and deeply ingrained among whites; but their policy of racial discrimination, though vicious and degrading, differed in degree rather than in kind from the discrimination practised elsewhere under colonial rule.

If racism was most bitter and intense in the south, it experienced a measure of compensation in a countervailing radicalism that stretched across the colour line in pursuit of an open-ended, non-racial social order. Nowhere else in Africa did so many whites, Asians and Coloured participate with Africans in a common struggle against class or colour oppression. A peaceful transition to parliamentary democracy without colour bars seemed plausible to some observers, as the tide of decolonization began to swell at the end of the war.

Twenty years of unbroken rule by Afrikaner nationalism have all but destroyed the hope of a peaceful revolution. South Africa remains by far the largest producer of goods and capital in Africa. Her public services - the infrastructure of political and economic organization - are still the most advanced. Her standards of public morality, law enforcement and race relations have deteriorated to such a level, however, that she is now a byword among nations for bigotry, intolerance and despotic rule. She has been turned into a police state under the control of a white oligarchy which uses fascist techniques to enforce racial totalitarianism and to suppress movements for social equality.

A wide gulf has consequently opened between the south and the rest of Africa. Millions of men and women in countries north of the Zambezi are being exhorted and trained for the tremendous task of modernizing their societies. Southern Africans, in contrast, are being forcibly regrouped - by a white bureaucracy - into tribal communities under hereditary chiefs.

Thousands of Africans in the independent states occupy the highest positions in government, education, industry, commerce and finance positions of a kind that are reserved for whites only in the south.

The balance of advantage is being tilted in favour of regions that are still considered backward by southern standards. The best that black and brown South Africans with professional qualifications can do for themselves is to escape to these countries, where their skin colour is a social asset and where they can apply their skills with dignity and in freedom. For, as long as they remain under white man's rule, they must expect to be outstripped in every field of social activity by their self-governing racial patriots in the north.

Southern Africans have taken up arms against white supremacists to redress the balance. The freedom fighters are the vanguard of a people preparing to rise for the recovery of lost liberties and for the right to move freely on terms of equality with all men at home and abroad. Their struggle is an old one. It began 300 years ago, when the brown men of the Cape - the Nama who were called Hottentot and the Khoi who were called Bushmen - fought the white invaders with bows, arrows and spears. Bantu-speaking warriors - the Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana and Venda - continued the struggle, until each nation in turn was defeated and absorbed in the white man's order.



Wars of independence were succeeded by a struggle from within the industrialized society for parliamentary democracy, national liberation, or socialism. This book traces the interactions between the two main streams of resistance to white domination: the national movements of Africans, Indians and Coloured; and the class struggles of socialists and communists.

Whether wage worker or peasant, businessman or professional, intellectual or chief, no African was admitted to parliament, municipal councils, the army, civil service, mining and financial houses, or managerial and technical posts. The African elite included men and women who would have risen to eminence in any open society; yet all were relegated by reason of race to a civic status lower than that of the meanest white. All Africans endured the humiliation and restrictive effects of pass laws, racial classification, residential segregation, and discrimination in public life. None could escape the state's coercive sanctions.

The African National Congress spoke for the entire African population when it presented a claim to full citizenship. The achievements of Congress were considerable. It exposed the myths of white superiority and prevented them from hardening into sacred taboos. It kept the spirit of resistance alive and prevented Africans from sinking into a condition of submissiveness, of apathetic acquiescence in white power. It awakened a national consciousness that transcended language, tribal, provincial and class barriers. It gave the people dignity, pride in their cultural heritage, and a determination to regain their land and liberty. By refusing to compromise, or to accept less than total integration into the entire range of political and economic institutions, Congress stripped white South Africa of its humanitarian pretensions and revealed the true face of apartheid for all the world to see.

Jack and Ray Simons were leading members of the ANC and South African Communist Party.

'The Historical Injustice'

By Thabo Mbeki

Extract from speech delivered in Ottawa, Canada, February 1978

Modern political science recognises the fact that social systems are founded on definite historical origins. If the saying 'out of nothing, nothing comes' is true, then it must follow that the future is formed and derives its first impulse in the womb of the present. All societies therefore necessarily bear the imprint, the birth-marks of their own past and whether to a greater or lesser extent must depend on a whole concatenation of factors, both internal and external to each particular society.

Those of us who claim to be revolutionaries, must resist all attempts to persuade us that our future lies in the hands of an ungovernable fate. For the imperative of our epoch has charged us with the task of transforming ourselves from the status of objects of history to that of masters of history.

We must, by liberating ourselves, make our own history. Such a process by its nature imposes on the activist the necessity to plan and therefore requires the ability to measure cause and effect; the necessity to strike in correct directions and hence the requirement to distinguish between essence and phenomenon; the necessity to move millions of people as one man to actual victory and consequently the development of the skill of combining the necessary and the possible.

Rise of Capitalism and Colonial Expansion To understand South Africa we must appreciate the fact and fix it firmly in our minds that here we are dealing with a class society. In South Africa the capitalists, the bourgeoisie are the dominant class. Therefore the state, other forms of social organisation and the 'official' ideas are conditioned by this one fact of the supremacy of the bourgeoisie. In its essential features South Africa conforms to other societies where this class feature is dominant.

Yet a cursory comparative glance around the world would seem to suggest that such a statement is hardly of any use in helping us to understand the seemingly unique reality of apartheid South Africa.



More and perhaps better explanation is called for. The landing of the employees of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape of Good Hope 326 years ago, in 1652, represented in embryo the emergence of class society in our country. And that class society was bourgeois society in its infancy.

The settlers of 1652 were brought to South Africa by the dictates of that brutal period of the birth of the capitalist class which has been characterised as the stage of the primitive accumulation of capital`.

Of this stage Marx wrote: 'The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in the mines of the aboriginal' population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black skins, signalled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation.' 1 'The transformation of the individualised and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, of the pigmy property of the many into the huge property of the few, the expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence and from the means of labour, this fearful and painful expropriation of the mass of the people forms the prelude to the history of capital. It comprises a series - of forcible methods... The expropriation of the immediate producers was accomplished with merciless vandalism, and under the stimulus of passions the most infamous, the most sordid, the pettiest, the most meanly odious,' so wrote Marx. 2 Such indeed was the slave trade; (such also incidentally the eviction of the Scottish Highland peasants many of whom came to settle here in Canada-vandalism of the most merciless kind.) Such indeed was the expropriation of the African peasantry.

It should therefore come as no surprise that six years after the arrival of the Dutch settlers, in 1658, the first group of slaves arrived in the Cape Colony.

In 1806, when England seized the Cape Colony from Holland by force of arms, there were 30,000 slaves in the Colony as against 26,000 settlers. There were also another 20,000 'free Coloured, Nama and in white employ...' 3 Equally, it should come as no surprise that these 20,000 African wage-earners had been compelled into this position by the process, described by Marx and other historians of the period, of the 'expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence and from the means of labour...' Described as 'free' in relation to the 30,000 slaves in the Colony, they were also 'free' in so far as they had been liberated by force of arms, disease and starvation from their status as independent producers with their own hunting, grazing and arable land, their livestock and their working implements.

Calvin's Doctrine distorted Nowhere is this clearer than in the fate that befell Calvinist theology.

Tawney has said that: 'Calvinism was an active and radical force...(Its adherents were) disposed neither to idealise the patriarchal virtues of the peasant community, nor to regard with suspicion the mere fact of capitalist enterprise in commerce and finance... Calvinism was largely an urban movement... (Its teachings were directed primarily) to the classes engaged in trade and industry, who formed the most modern and progressive elements in the life of the age...' 6 Writing of a British Governor-General in India, Marx says: 'His favourites received contracts under conditions whereby they, cleverer than the alchemists, made gold out of nothing. Great fortunes sprang up like mushrooms in a day; primitive accumulation went on without the advance of a shilling.'4 And there we have the reason why Europe carried out this early accumulation at home and abroad with such merciless enthusiasm and passion - because the process assured men of property stupendous and immediate profit. Brought up in this European hothouse of rapine, the settlers in South Africa could not but continue this process in their colony. The result was that when England abolished the slave trade in 1834, 'nearly two centuries after the arrival of the first batch of slaves, the descendants of the original colonists rebelled against this decision.

Judging themselves too weak to reimpose slavery by arms, the Boers resolved to take themselves out of the area of British jurisdiction. Thus began the so-called Great Trek of the Boers into the interior of our country.



Of course, all along, the Boers were determined that again they would have to seize our land and livestock and enslave our people.

We see therefore that the methods and practices of primitive accumulation which represented a transitional phase in the development of capital in Europe, assumed permanence in the South African economy and life-style of the Boers. They acquired a fixity characteristic of feudal society, legitimised by the use of force and sanctified by a supposedly Calvinist Christianity.

The South African settlers of 1652 had themselves been the expropriated of Europe. But, as in America, here in Canada, in Australia and elsewhere, after a little while, they were able to re-establish themselves as independent producers, acquiring land in the manner we have described, on the basis of the expropriation of our people, despite the most fierce resistance of the indigenous people.

It was exactly the blissful regaining of their status as masters of their own house, their re-emergence as independent producers, that froze the Boer community at a particular moment of historic time and thereby guaranteed their regression.

Thrown up by the birth of a higher social system, they reverted precisely to that natural economy which capital was so vengefully breaking up. But capital had already taught them that in the pursuit of a better life, everything, including murder, was permissible and legitimate.

A natural economy presupposes the absence of accumulation, 'consisting of the petty dealings of peasants and craftsmen in the small market town, where industry is carried on for the subsistence of the household and the consumption of wealth follows hard upon the production of it, and where commerce and finance are occasional incidents, rather than the forces which keep the whole system in motion.'⁵ Thus it is the direct opposite of a capitalist economy even when the latter is at its primitive stage of accumulation.

When they reverted to a patriarchal economy, the Boers therefore abandoned all that was dynamic and revolutionary in the formation of bourgeois society and transmuted the rest into something stultified and reactionary.

The Boers had brought this Calvinism with them from Holland and were joined later by the Calvinist French Huguenots. But when they grafted this eminently bourgeois theology onto their patriarchal economy, they in fact transformed its content into a species of Lutheranism, which was essentially a theological school which sought to idealise feudalism and save it from destruction by the capitalist mode of production which was springing up all around it.

From Calvinism the Boer took the doctrine of predestination and perverted it.

For Calvin, the chosen of God were those who survived the jungle of capitalist enterprise in industry and trade and emerged as successful men of business, without regard to race or nationality.

In the patriarchal economy this was transmuted to read: the chosen of God are those who are white. For his part Luther had said: 'An earthly kingdom cannot exist without inequality of persons. Some must be free, others serfs, some rulers, others subjects.'⁷ Racism, today so much part of South African reality, constituted a justification, an attempt to rationalise, to make acceptable the enslavement and expropriation of the black people by the white.

In Boer society and in the end among almost all the Whites, racism as an ideology, squired the attributes of a psychological fixation, with the characteristic of fixated behaviour that an ineluctably irrational perception of a particular set of relationships coexists with and distorts the perception of all other sets of relationships. In the circumstance that, in any case, ideological formations bear a complex rather than a simple relationship with the material world, generating a momentum which carries them beyond the material conditions that created them, we could expect that this racism would in time present itself as an autonomous force, God-given or nature-given, as an incontrovertible condition of human existence.



To go back to Calvin, where his theology had sanctified individualism to detach the bourgeoisie from the narrow and rigid world of feudalism and thrown him, unhampered by old prejudices, into the world market, the Boers sang praises to a stultified individualism even narrower than that of the feudal epoch, an individualism which drew its strength from the economic self-sufficiency of each Boer family, the isolation of the homesteads one from another and the isolation of a whole community from the rest of the world; an individualism which became truly itself and complete only to the extent that it despised and set itself in contrast to everything that was black: an individualism therefore which was and is characterised by a rapid racism.

British Involvement British capital subdued this petrified and arrogant individualism during the Anglo-Boer War. In 1910 Boer and Briton entered into a social contract in which the Briton undertook to help ease the Boer out of the Dark Ages while promising to respect his traditions. For his part, the Boer pledged not to resist the advance and domination of British capital.

Between them, Boer and Briton agreed that they would share political power and, finally, that the indigenous African population would not be party to this contract but would be kept under the domination and at the disposal of the signatories, to be used by them in whatever manner they saw fit.

There were therefore written into this agreement, the so-called Act of Union of 1910, the continuation of the methods and practices of exploitation characteristic of primitive accumulation of capital which had remained fossilised in the Boer economy but which British capital had outgrown, certainly in Britain.

Why did the British ruling class, having won the war against the Volksraad, thus regress? One reason of course is that we are here dealing with the post 1885 Berlin Conference period. It could therefore be argued that the predominant colonialist practices and attitudes of the time made natural and inevitable that the British ruling class would do in South Africa what it was doing in other colonies.

Yet this explanation would not be complete. For Britain had maintained an uninterrupted colonial hold on South Africa, to one extent or another, since 1806.

The decisive point to bring to the fore is that British capital, throughout the 100 years before 1910, had itself, in South Africa, clung tenaciously to the methods and practices of primitive accumulation.

Thus while in 1807 the British administration prohibited the importation of slaves into the Cape Colony, in 1909 it introduced a vagrancy Act directed at the Khoi people. ⁸ Under this law, all Khoi people not in the employ of a white person were declared vagrants. Vagrancy was made an offence. To prove that one was not a vagrant one had to produce a pass. To get the pass you had to enter into a written labour contract with a white employer.

This measure was introduced to meet the labour short-fall created by the non-importation of slaves. It was therefore used to drive those Khoi people who still maintained an independent existence, off the land, to turn them into permanent wage earners and to create the means to direct this labour where it was needed.

In the end, it was the British armies which defeated the African people, the British who drove us off our lands, broke up the natural economy and social systems of the indigenous people. It was they who imposed taxes on the African peasants and, starting with the Masters and Servants' Act of 1856, laid down the labour laws which govern the black worker in South Africa today.

In Europe, the economic freedom of the worker to hire himself out freely to the highest bidder, which came with and was part of the bourgeois revolution was of course connected with, accompanied and enhanced by the political freedom of the worker to represent themselves in matters of state through the vote, itself an integral part of the victory of the bourgeoisie over feudal society.

In South Africa this was not to be. Here, the capitalist inherited the rights of the feudal lord and appropriated to himself the right to determine where, when, at what price and under what conditions



the African shall sell his labour power to the capitalist. He also appropriated to himself the right to decide 'what is good for the native'.

It is therefore clear that British capital in South Africa differed from the Boer patriarchal economy with relation to primitive accumulation in two major respects.

The first of these was that it outgrew chattel slavery and therefore abolished it: the second, that, as capital, its aim continued to be that of greater and greater accumulation, through the pursuit of maximum profit.

It was therefore inevitable that British capital would be all that more thorough in the expropriation of the African peasant, all that more brutal in the exploitation of African labour, more scientific and less wasteful.

The historic compromise between the British bourgeoisie and the Boer peasantry represented hence not an historical aberration but the continued pursuit of maximum profit in conditions of absolute freedom for capital to pursue its inherent purposes.

British capital had at other times and in other circumstances made other compromises. One of the most important of these was undoubtedly that made with the British working class.

In its struggle against its feudal predecessors, the British bourgeoisie had called upon and received the support of the working people. It therefore had to take cognisance of the fact that its political victory did not belong to it alone.

It further took note of the fact that the denial of political freedoms to its ally while claiming them as a natural right for itself, posed the danger that these working masses would pass beyond the struggle against the feudal lords and take on the bourgeoisie itself.

While convincing the workers of the sacredness of private property.

especially its own, bourgeois property, it nevertheless conceded them their political democracy. Thereby and mainly because of this concession, it destroyed the possibility for capital to continue using primitive methods of accumulation within Britain.

Capital in South Africa never had to contend with such a situation.

Historically, it owes the working class nothing and has therefore conceded to it nothing, (excepting of course the white workers, about whom later.) It is clear that during its war with the so-called Boer republics, the British ruling class consciously avoided putting itself in a state of indebtedness to the black people. For instance, in January 1901, Lord Milner, the British High Commissioner 'told a Coloured deputation... that he could not accept their offer to take up arms against the republican forces.'⁹ The same thing happened when another Boer rebellion had to be put down in 1914.

That the bourgeoisie was aware that the denial of democratic rights to the workers was in the interests of capitalism was evident when indentured labour was imported from China after the Anglo-Boer war.

Then, the mine-bosses stated that 'a big body of enfranchised white workers 'would simply hold the Government of the country in the hollow of their hand' and 'more or less dictate not only on the question of wages, but also on political questions'.¹⁰ Translating the advantages of black worker disenfranchisement into cash, the Chamber of Mines stated in its 1910 Annual Report that it 'viewed the native purely as a machine, requiring a certain amount of fuel' It decreed accordingly that the diet of the African miners living in the mine compounds should be determined in terms of the formula 'the minimum amount of food which will give them maximum amount of work.'¹¹ Of the bourgeois countries, South Africa is unique to the extent that profit maximisation is the overt, unhidden and principal objective of state policy, and can therefore be regarded with respect to this characteristic as

an almost perfect model of capitalism, cleansed of everything that is superfluous its essential characterisation; a model which displays to all, in their true nakedness, the inner motive forces of this social system and its fundamental inter-connections.

The position that black people occupy in this model can be defined as follows:

- they are the producers of wealth;
- they produce this wealth not for their own benefit but for its appropriation by the white population; and,
- they are permitted to consume part of this wealth but only in that proportion which will 'give the maximum amount of work' on a continuing basis.

This may sound harsh and anti-human but it characterises 'pure capitalism'.

Let us see for instance what Marcuse in his studies of Max Weber had to say: 'The 'formally most rational' mode of capital accounting is the one into which man and his 'purposes' enter only as variables in the calculation of the chances of gain and profit. In this formal rationality, mathematimisation is carried to the point of the calculus with the real negation of life itself...'12 If this sounds too abstract, the white South African Member of Parliament G.F. Froneman translates it into the concrete when he says: '(within white society, Africans) are only supplying a commodity, the commodity of labour...It is labour we w importing (into the white areas) and not labourers as individuals...'13 Froneman went on to say that the numbers of Africans to be found in the so-called white areas therefore make no difference to the composition of Society-society with a capital S-precisely because the African is not an individual, comparable to a white individual.

Rather, he is the repository of the commodity labour power, which can and must be quantified in a profit and loss account to the point of the very 'negation of life itself'. In that very real sense the African therefore belongs to the category of commodities to an equal extent as gold, diamonds and any other commodity you care to mention, to be bought and sold.

hoarded and even destroyed depending exclusively on the state of the market.

The denial of the humanity of the Slav' which occurred during the period of primitive accumulation of capital is therefore repeated here but at a higher and more rational level.

That rationality demands that to ensure maximum profit that portion of the national wealth which accrues to the black people as consume' should be kept at the barest minimum.

Consequently, the real wages of the African mined are today lower than they were in 1911. 14 Note also the almost total absence of social security benefits for the African people. To provide these benefits would be to increase the cost of reproduction of the producer and conversely to decrease capital's show of the national cake.

It might be argued that our thesis might begin to collapse when we tackle the question of the white worked.

Appearance would have it that in maintaining a white labour aristocracy, capital is behaving in a most irrational fashion, that capital itself has become so impregnated with racial prejudice that it cannot seek to extract maximum profit from a white worker.

Yet we must bear in mind that the capitalist class does not view itself solely as the appropriator of wealth in contradistinction to our being the producers.

The capitalist class is also heavily burdened with matters of state administration. It has taken on itself the task of ruling our country. As early as November 1899, Lord Milner had said: 'The ultimate end (of British policy) is a self-governing white Community, supported by well treated and justly governed black labour from Cape Town to Zambesi (sic).' 15 A principal pre-occupation of this self-governing



community must therefore be to ensure that the 'justly-treated and well-governed' do not one day rise up and transform themselves also into a self-governing community.

From the very beginning, British capital knew that it had to face this possibility and that if it fought without any allies; it would lose in such a confrontation.

The historic compromise of 1910 has therefore this significance that in granting the vanquished Boer equal political and social status with the British victor, it imposed on both the duty to defend the status quo against especially those whom that status quo defined as the dominated.

The capitalist class, to whom everything has a cash value, has never considered moral incentives as very dependable. As part of the arrangement, it therefore decided that material incentives must play a prominent part.

It consequently bought out the whole white population. It offered a price to the white workers and the Afrikaner farmers in exchange for an undertaking that they would shed their blood in defence of capital.

Both worker and farmer, like Faustus, took the devil's offering and, like Faustus, they will have to pay on the appointed day.

The workers took the offering in monthly cash grants and reserved jobs.

The farmers took their share by having black labour, including and especially prison labour directed to the farms. They also took it in the form of huge subsidies and loans to help them maintain a 'civilised standard of living'.

The indebtedness of these farmers to the profit-making bourgeois in 1966 was equal to \$1.25 billion, amounting to nearly 12 per cent of the gross national product.¹⁶ In 1947 a commission of the Dutch Reformed Church included in its report the prophetic words: 'In the country, one feels dependent on God; in the towns on men, such as one's employer.'¹⁷ In the struggle that marks the growing onslaught of the black producers on the society of the parasites, the white worker will have to pay for that dependence on the employer-industrialist, the white farmer for that dependence on the employer-creditor.

The God of Calvin is a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate him: the God of Capital will after all have his pound of flesh! Engels wrote in 1895 that: 'When Bismarck found himself compelled to introduce (universal) franchise as the only means of interesting the mass of the people in its plans, our workers immediately took it in earnest and sent August Bebel to the first constituent Reichstag. And from that day on, they have used the franchise in a way which has paid them a thousandfold and has served as a model to the workers of all countries. The franchise has been...

transformed by them from a means of deception, which it was before, into an instrument of emancipation... And so it happened that the bourgeoisie and the government came to be much more afraid of the legal than the illegal action of the workers' party, of the result of elections than those of rebellion.' Engels continues: 'Of course, our... comrades do not thereby, in the least renounce their right to revolution. The right to revolution is, after all, the only really 'historical right', the only right on which all modern states without exception rest...'¹⁸ Yet it came to pass that in large measure the working class of western Europe and North America did in fact for some time anyway renounce its right to revolution.

Some of the mass parties of the workers became parties of Order and Reform.

And to the extent that bourgeois Law and Order was the basis on which the proletariat founded its trade unions and secured for itself higher wages, better working conditions and the right to strike, this was an inevitable outcome.



That bourgeois Law and Order also gave the proletariat the right to form its own political party and the right to install that party in power, all within the legal framework of bourgeois democracy.

In the work from which we have just quoted Engels says: 'The irony of world history turns everything upside down. The Parties (of the property owning class) ... are perishing under the legal conditions created by themselves.

They cry despairingly...legality is the death of us; whereas we, under this legality, get firm muscles and rosy cheeks and look like life eternal...

(There) is nothing left for them to do but themselves break through this fatal legality.' 19 The condition of the black workers of South Africa, the place in society allocated to us by the capitalist class, demands that we must assert our right to revolution.

Capital in its South African mould turns things right side up again. We are perishing under the legal conditions created by the bourgeoisie whereas they, under this legality, get firm muscles and rosy cheeks and look like life eternal. We have no choice but to break down this fatal legality.

For the burden of our argument has been exactly this that in the totality of the social relations that describe the apartheid system, we have a place only and exclusively in so far as we are 'the ragged trousered philanthropists'-the exploited producers. We are otherwise the outsiders, the excluded-on our own continent, in our country! In this context, take the Bantustan programme. In its objectives stated by the creators of this policy, the black producers will have the right to be complete human beings only in these areas which have been set aside as our so-called homelands.

Otherwise, when we enter so called white South Africa, we have the following dramatis personae: 'He who (is the) money-owner...strides in front as capitalist; the possessor of labour power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market and has nothing to expect but -a hiding.' 20 The Bantustan policy is therefore not a deus ex machina, a contrived and inartistic solution of a difficulty in the drama of South African life.

Rather, it is but the legal codification, the pure representation in juridical form, of the centuries-old socio-economic reality of the alienation of the black producer from the society which he daily produces and reproduces.

At the level of abstraction, there are two alternatives out of this condition -available to the black workers.

One of these is to cut the umbilical cord that ties us to bourgeois South Africa, for us to cease to be producers on somebody else's account. What would then happen? We could then join the demi-monde of the thieves and murderers, the pimps and prostitutes and, by becoming true and complete outcasts, recast ourselves in the parasitic model of our bourgeois progenitor, outside the bounds of bourgeois legality. Such an alternative is obviously absurd.

The racist regime is on the other hand pushing us into the Bantustans. This constitutes a death sentence for thousands of our people. For South Africa's land policy, of which the Bantustans are the historical outcome, is founded precisely on the land dispossession of the African people which ensures that hunger compels us to bang our own hides to market.

The second, and in fact, the only historically justifiable and inevitable alternative is that we cling very firmly to our position as producers, that we hoist the bourgeoisie with its own petard.

The irony of the South African situation is that exactly because capital permits us to enter the city, to pass through the sacred portals of a white church, and set foot in the even more sacred sanctuary of madame's bedroom, but only as workers, capital thereby indicates to us daily that it is in fact our labour that makes the city to live, that gives voice to the predikant, the preacher and provides-the necessary conditions for procreation.



Since then we are, in a very real sense, the creators of society, what remains for us is to insist and ensure that that society is made in our image and that we have dominion over it.

In as much as the producer and the parasite who feeds on the producer represent antithetical forces, the one working, the other idle; the one wanting to escape the obligation of the nurse-maid and the other striving to ensure that he is for ever the fed, in as much therefore must a South Africa over which we have dominion be the antithesis of a present-day South Africa.

The Freedom Charter That free South Africa must therefore redefine the black producer or rather, since we the people shall govern, since we shall have through our own struggle, placed ourselves in the position of makers of history and policy and no longer objects, we shall redefine our own position as follows:

- we are the producers of wealth;
- we produce this wealth for our own benefit to be appropriated by us the producers;
- the aim of this production shall be the satisfaction, at an increasing level, of the material and spiritual needs of the people;
- we shall so order the rest of society and social activity, in education and culture in the legal sphere, on military questions, in our international relations, et cetera, to conform to these goals.

In my view, this redefinition contains within it the theoretical basis of the Freedom Charter, the political programme of the African National Congress adopted in 1956.

It should be of some interest to point out that this programme was written exclusively on the basis of demands submitted by thousands upon thousands of ordinary workers, peasants, businessmen, intellectuals and other professional people, the youth and women of all nationalities of South Africa.

It is a measure of their maturity that these masses should have so clearly understood the fundamental direction of their aspirations. It is a demonstration in practice of how much the bourgeoisie, by refusing to temper its greed, did ultimately teach us to identify our true interests without any equivocation.

Whenever we stand up and say 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people...',²¹ we always meet with three different reactions.

This is what a free South Africa will be like. For as the masses themselves long discovered, the antithesis to white supremacy, exclusiveness and arrogance is not a black version of the same practice.

In the physical world, black might indeed be the opposite of white. But in the world of social systems, social theory and practice have as much to do with skin pigmentation as has the birth of children with the stork. To connect the two is to invent a fable with the conscious or unconscious purpose of hiding reality.

The act of negating the theory and practice of white apartheid racism, the revolutionary position, is exactly to take the issue of colour, race, national and sex differentiation out of the sphere of rational human thinking and behaviour, and thereby expose all colour, race, nation and sex prejudice as irrational.

Our own rational practical social activity, rational in the sense of being anti-racist and non-racist, constitutes such a negation; it constitutes the social impetus and guarantee of the withering away of this irrationality.

Consider the circumstances in which we might position 'black capitalism' as the antithesis to 'white capitalism'. Fortunately, Fanon has already warned us that one of the results of imperialist domination



is that in the colonial middle class 'the dynamic pioneer aspect, the characteristics of the inventor and the discoverer of new worlds which are found in all national bourgeoisies are lamentably absent.' 'In its beginnings, the national bourgeoisie of the colonial countries identifies itself with the decadence of the bourgeoisie of the west. We need not think that it is jumping ahead; it is in fact beginning at the end. It is already senile before it has come to know the petulance, the fearlessness, or the will to succeed of youth.' 22 Thus black capitalism instead of being the antithesis is rather confirmation of parasitism with no redeeming features whatsoever, without any extenuating circumstances to excuse its existence. If you want to see a living example, go to the Transkei.

Even more, by thus expelling racism to the realm of the irrational by our own practice we would help to deny those who want to exploit and oppress others, including our very selves, the possibility of finding justification for their actions in such prejudices.

We particularly, who are the products 'of exemplary capitalist exploitation, must remember that when German capital found opportunity, especially during the 2nd World War, to revert to primitive forms of accumulation, under the stimulation of passions the most infamous, the most sordid, the pettiest, the most meanly odious, lilt used exactly these prejudices literally to enslave and slaughter millions of people.

We must remember that the exploitation of the so-called gasterbeiter in Western Europe today is founded, in part, on contempt for their nationality: that in the United States and Northern Ireland the black and Irish worker respectively are oppressed and exploited on the basis of colour and national prejudice.

The charge of traitor might stick if we were to advance a programme of equality between black and white while there remained between these two communities the relations of exploiter and exploited.

But we have already said that our victory presupposes the abolition of parasitism and the re-integration of the idle rich as productive members of society as well as our writing off the debt of the white worker and farmer so that they can start again afresh, as equals with other producers, in law and in every other respect, without the heavy weight of blood money in their pockets and on their consciences.

The Freedom Charter itself says that 'the national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people.' It also goes on to say 'all the land (shall be) redivided among those who work it to banish famine and hunger.' 23 We believe sincerely that it is only in conditions of such an equality as is underpinned by these provisions that we shall each be able to discover and unfold our true individuality, require the right to be human, and thereby create the conditions for the creative realisation of the considerable talent of our people, both black and white, which today is so firmly stifled by the suffocating purposes of a small exploiting and oppressive minority.

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Thabo Mbeki has been President of the ANC since 1997. He was elected President of South Africa in the country's second democratic election in June 1999.

'Racism, apartheid and the new world order'

*By Oliver Tambo Speech in acceptance of the Third World Prize
on behalf of Nelson and Winnie Mandela,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1986*

The most senior leaders of the oppressed people of South Africa have been in prison for almost a quarter of a century now. They, who would have contributed so enormously to the making of a prosperous, happy and peaceful society, whose leadership would have moved millions to strive for the achievement of this goal, these have been condemned to commune only with the prison guards for the rest of their natural lives.

While these titans of freedom pounded rocks and sewed mailbags behind prison walls, those who had issued the command that they should be jailed were busy imprisoning a whole society. They decreed that none shall speak of anything except what the gaolers permitted to be said; that none shall act according to their consciences except with the authorisation of the gendarme. They proclaimed that the truth shall not be told except that which the regime of repression deemed to be the truth. They, on the other hand, would have the right to designate oppression as liberty; those who are enslaved would be described as free men and women, while he or she that dared to fight for genuine freedom would be categorised and treated as a criminal.

The cause for which our people are paying the supreme sacrifice daily and for which Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Harry Gwala, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi and others have been sentenced to life imprisonment, has a significance which extends far beyond the borders of our country.

Pernicious Ideology of Racism For, what they are fighting against is the pernicious ideology of racism, the accumulated refuse of centuries of an anti-human prejudice which seeks to define people as inferior, as not fully human, by virtue of their race.

They are engaged in struggle to end the practice which gave birth to these ideas, the practice of racial discrimination, racial oppression, domination and exploitation.

Racism, one of the great evils of our time, bedevils human relations, between individuals within and between nations and across continents. It brutalises entire peoples, destroys persons, warps the process of thought and injects into human society a foul air of tension, mutual antagonism and hatred.



It demeans and dehumanises both victim and practitioner, locking them into the vile relationship of master race and untermenschen, superior and underling, each with his position defined by race.

As black South Africans, we have lived within the entrails of the racist beast for many a long year. We have seen constructed a system of social organisation based on the premise and the practice that those who are white are inherently superior and those who are black must, in their own interests, be the objects of policies decided exclusively and solely by the white people.

Quite clearly, this edifice required some pseudo-theoretical precepts to underpin it and give it the appearance of rationality. The theoreticians of racism in our country drew on the gross perversions of science which assumed their clearest forms during the second half of the last century in Europe and the United States. In these centers of imperialist power, there grew up theories that biology and social anthropology provided the basis to justify the notion that all black people carried with them both an innate and a cultural inferiority to the white, giving the latter the right and the duty of guardianship over the former.

Theoreticians of 'Racial Purity' Implicit in this thesis is the idea that these higher human beings have a similar right and duty to maintain the purity of the human species up to the point and including the commission of the crime of genocide.

One of the earliest of these racist theoreticians in our country, this century, was one other than General Jan Smuts, who opposed Nazism only because it threatened British imperial power. Speaking amidst the splendour of the London Savoy Hotel in 1917, Smuts had this to say: 'It has now become an accepted axiom in our dealings with the Natives that it is dishonourable to mix white and black blood... We have felt more and more that if we are to solve our Native question, it is useless to try to govern black and white in the same institutions of government and legislation. They are different not only in colour but in minds and in political capacity...'² More than 40 years later, when these insulting racist ideas had been translated into the apartheid system, here is what two other theoreticians of this system wrote: 'The three foundation stones of apartheid are Western culture, Christian morality and a specific racial identity. In the case of the Afrikaner, there is a powerful connecting link between these three elements. His own particular biogenetic character is, for example, associated with a particular socio-cultural way of life and to give up either, through amalgamation with a more primitive culture or race, must necessarily result in the destruction of the other.'³ Of course the inanities that were being conveyed as biogenetic and socio-cultural theory, during the second halves of both the 19th and the 20th centuries, were nothing but an attempt to justify a colonial relationship of the domination and exploitation of the black peoples by the whites. They had absolutely nothing to do with scientific truth.

Once implanted, and despite their exposure as fraudulent and bankrupt, these ideas seemed to take on an independent existence, nurtured by the continued practice of white supremacy in many parts of the globe. Originating from practice, they served to encourage the entrenchment, perpetuation and extension of this practice. To emphasise the point that they reflected an immutable natural order of things, the fertile human mind goes further to enrobe these racist ideas and practices with the cloak of religion.

Crime in the Name of Religion

It is indeed in this way that it becomes possible for racism to give those who believe themselves to be superior, the power to challenge the very God they dragoon to serve their interests and whom they claim to worship. Thus, whereas the Christian scriptures, for instance, see all human beings as having been created in God's image, all racists will, for reasons that are perfectly obvious to them, retort that this cannot be so. And so it is that the foulest of crimes, against life itself, are perpetrated in the name of religion, as is the case in our own country. The idea of a civilising mission, so dear to the earlier missionaries, derived exactly from this view that the European was a higher being deposited on this planet to play God over 'the Natives'.

From what we have said so far, it is self-evident that the practical relationship that characterised the interaction between Europe and the colonised world, today's Third World, could not be but a hothouse



of ideas for justifying this relationship. In its essence, racism is therefore about domination and works both to justify existing domination and to prescribe domination as the sine qua non for the solution of all future problems.

Among the objectives pursued by our illustrious host here today, the Third World Foundation, are 'to assist in the evolution of a fundamentally just and equitable relationship between the Third World and the developed countries' as well as 'to create greater awareness of the problems of poverty, hunger and ignorance in the Third World.'

Colonial Relations Persist That it is necessary to address these issues, as indeed it is, attests to the fact that the imbalance of strength, the inequality of power and the incompatibility of objectives that marked the relations between the imperialist Powers and the colonised peoples remain to this day. It is not necessary for us to elaborate further on this to those who are gathered here and have to contend with its disastrous consequences daily.

The point we must, however, emphasise is that it is exactly in these conditions that racism thrives, as it did during the colonial period. Hence we still find current, notions, that at the base of the 'North-South' dichotomy, lies the difference between white people in the North who are inventive industrious and disciplined and the blacks in the South who are innately indolent, imitative and happy-go-lucky.

Western Europe has large numbers of so-called gasterbeiter who are mainly non-European workers from the South. The jobs they do, the squalor in which many of them live, the ghettos in which they are concentrated, once more emphasise the distinction between black and white as well as the lowly position of the former and the superiority and domination of the latter.

Similarly, in the United States, one has only to see the statistics of unemployment, drug addiction, homelessness, single-parent families and so on, to realise the extent to which the black population is marginalised and serves as a living example for the most backward elements to 'prove' the assertion that to be black is to belong to a category of the human species that is less than human and which must be used as befits its status.

All of us present here know that the causes that account for the relationship between black and white, the North and the South, that we have been talking about, are neither biogenetic nor socio-cultural. Rather, they are socio-economic and are therefore capable of being changed or removed.

Those who are interested in an end to racism must necessarily be concerned that these organisations should succeed. Inasmuch as the huge nuclear arms expenditures are incompatible with development, so is the growing relative and absolute underdevelopment of millions upon millions of black people incompatible with the objective of ridding the world of racial arrogance, discrimination and tyranny.

Need for a New Economic Order

The urgent need for a New International Economic Order has been dramatically illustrated by the famine in Africa, the international debt crisis and the collapse of the price of oil and other raw materials. The hard and continuing struggle for the New Order is fundamentally about the redistribution of the world means of production, to bring about the economic independence of the Third World and enable its peoples to banish hunger, disease and ignorance for ever, to assert their dignity as human beings and bring fulfilment to their lives. The accomplishment of this objective would itself redress the political imbalance which threatens the independence of many nations, thanks to the extension of the infamous Monroe Doctrine by the present United States Administration to cover the entire Third World.

We, the peoples who were objects of imperialist expansionism, for ever the infantile dwarfs who required the benign or brutal patronage of the white superperson, in earlier times had to be liberated from the state of noble savagery. Whether this resulted in our transportation across the seas as slaves or in enslavement in our own countries, as subject peoples, was but the unfolding of the manifest destiny.



Today, still the infantile dwarfs as of yore, unable to think for ourselves, inanimate fruit ready for the picking by whosoever has sufficient strength to rule the garden patch, we are being taken under the protective wing of the United States, to save us from falling victim to an alleged communist expansionism.

Angola and Mozambique, Nicaragua and Libya, Grenada, El Salvador, and Namibia are the victims of this eminently racist policy which asserts the supremacy of the interests of the United States over those of the peoples of the Third World, which presumes, as General Smuts put it, that we have neither the minds nor the political capacity to exercise the right to self-determination.

Apartheid -

Concentrated Racism Apartheid in South Africa exists as the concentrated expression of the worldwide cancer of racism that we have been talking about. In our country, the ideas and practices of racism reign supreme, as they did in Nazi Germany - the essence and the purpose of State policy, the instrument to effect and guarantee the domination and exploitation of the black majority by the white minority.

Because of its high pedigree in reactionary political thought and praxis through the world, the apartheid system serves also as the nursery for the cultivation and propagation of the same man-hating policies which the United Nations Organisation was formed to stamp out. It is because there is today widespread recognition of this reality that there exists that important instrument of international law - the [International] Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

We assert it as incontrovertible truth that mankind is under an obligation to suppress and punish this crime against humanity. On the basis of the experience of our own people of the horrendous practice of racism, we can categorically state it here that this crime cannot be suppressed by means of words or by persuading its perpetrators to desist from the commission of a crime.

Racism, the theory and practice of the domination of one race by another, and specifically its apartheid expression, cannot be reformed. Like Nazism, its antecedent and sister crime against humanity, it must be overthrown and uprooted forcibly, in its totality. Those who argue to the contrary and even claim that Pretoria has embarked on reform, are either grossly misled or are bent on protecting the regime or racial tyranny by seeking to refurbish its image to make it mere acceptable.

In any case, a cancer cannot be its own cure. The fanatical racists, who have spent more than half a century drawing up the blueprints of the apartheid system and transforming those theoretical constructions into the South African society we know today, cannot, at the same time, be the agents for the abolition of the system.

All they know and will ever know, is the need to maintain the system of white supremacy, and to maintain it by the use of all the violence that they can muster. Today our people are dying in large numbers, murdered on the orders of Pretoria's army and police generals. The bloodletting continues without reserve because, after all, those that are being killed are, in the eyes of the generals, lesser beings who can be disposed of without compunction, because they are less than human. Some Western Governments are pleased to describe this as the maintenance of law and order! The reality of the perpetuation of racism in South Africa is that the apartheid regime is supported by the same forces which, during the last century, deemed that the perspectives held out by the French and American revolutions were not for the colonised. The dominant forces in the major Western countries do this not despite the system of apartheid, but because of it.

They support racism because it expresses the imperative of the system they represent, namely, to dominate, and serves their purposes as an instrument for the extreme exploitation of those who are dominated. For these reasons, they spurn our appeals for comprehensive sanctions against apartheid South Africa, which we repeat today and urge upon the world community as the most effective means to bring about change in our country with the minimum of violence and destruction.



Imperialism Seeks to Dominate

It was not a slip of the tongue but a frank admission of the truth when Ronald Reagan characterised the apartheid regime as an ally of long standing. His policy of constructive engagement with apartheid represents an engagement with racism that arises from the nature of imperialism - an engagement which, in the context of his goal to dominate the Third World, is constructive because it helps to strengthen the allied apartheid regime.

True to character, the Reagan Administration and others in the West make certain, whenever they address the question of negotiations to resolve the conflict in our country that they put the supposed interests and aspirations of the white minority first. They turn their own national experience of political change on their heads in order to serve the cause of racism in South Africa.

For example, it is argued forcefully that it is inappropriate and unreasonable for us to demand that all South Africans, both black and white, should have an equal right to elect the government of their choice - in other words, to have a system of one person one vote in a unitary State.

Similarly, it is argued that it is we, the victims of the violence inherent in the apartheid system, we who have to bury our murdered children every day, who must lay down arms and cease our armed struggle to make negotiations possible. Countries which are proud of the armed revolutions which brought their peoples democracy are, because of their support for the racists, equally fervent in their denunciation of our armed combatants as terrorists.

Likewise, we must renounce all claims to the national wealth of our country, which we have created with our labour, because, by some queer logic, to say that the wealth of the country must be shared by all the people is, in the South African context, to threaten the human rights of the white minority.

From Washington, London, Bonn and Paris issues the call that it will be absolutely vital to safeguard the rights of the white minority. And yet from all these, which pride themselves as the centers of democracy, there is never a word about the rights of the majority - the nonracial majority! Instead, these centers of democracy are engaged in a desperate bid to find flunkies and collaborators from among the black people who will be imposed on us as our true representatives and paid for their services, in order to preserve white privilege.

We Shall Abolish Racism

But certainly, no amount of political maneuvering or killing of our people will blunt or stop the offensive of our masses, under the leadership of the African National Congress, to destroy racism in our country. Already the realisation is abroad among our people that victory is in sight.

It is a victory that we will use to build a truly democratic South Africa, one in which we shall abolish racism once and for all, and end the unjust and unequal relations of domination and exploitation that exist between black and white in our country today and which are expressed in the concept and the practice of apartheid.

By that means, we shall also make our contribution to the struggle for a just and equitable international political, economic and social order and add as much as we can to the construction of a new world, free from hunger and poverty and free from the threat of termination of life itself through the use of nuclear weapons in a Third World War.

We count ourselves fortunate that we have among our people such outstanding humanists as Nelson and Winnie Mandela, as well as others such as Albertina Sisulu, Greta Ncapai, Dorothy Nyembe, Thandi Modise, Frances Baard, Vesta Smith, Amanda Kwadi, Barbara Hogan and Marion Sparg, people who hate racism and love all humanity enough to be prepared to die in the defence of liberty of all persons, regardless of their colour or race.



We are proud that we come of a people that, like all others, is not prepared to tolerate evil and acquiesce in the perpetuation of tyranny. In their names, we are happy to receive this eminent prize. We thank the Third World Foundation and all who are associated with it for having so honoured us.

This prize will serve as a further spur for us and, we are certain, for the rest of humanity, to redouble our efforts to free all the political prisoners in our country and to liberate the millions of our people who are held hostage by a racist clique.

Notes

1. From: Sechaba, July 1986, and Third World Foundation.

On May 5, 1986, President Tambo received the fifth annual Third World Prize on behalf of Nelson and Winnie Mandela in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Mandelas were awarded the prize in recognition of their 'outstanding contribution to Third World progress'.

2. Quoted in: Wilkins and Strydom, *The Broederbond*, Paddington Press Ltd., London, 1979.
3. N. J. Rhoodie and H. J. Venter, quoted in: Pierre van den Berghe, *South Africa - A Study in Conflict*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1967.

Oliver Tambo was the ANC's longest-serving President, from 1967 to 1991.

'The South African working class and the National Democratic Revolution'

By Joe Slovo

Extract from SACP 'Umsebenzi' Discussion Pamphlet

Class Struggle and National Struggle

The South African Communist Party, in its 1984 constitution, declares that its aim is to lead the working class towards the strategic goal of establishing a socialist republic 'and the more immediate aim of winning the objectives of the national democratic revolution which is inseparably linked to it'. The constitution describes the main content of the national democratic revolution as '...the national liberation of the African people in particular, and the black people in general, the destruction of the economic and political power of the racist ruling class, and the establishment of one united state of people's power in which the working class will be the dominant force and which will move uninterruptedly towards social emancipation and the total abolition of exploitation of man by man'.

The national democratic revolution - the present stage of struggle in our country is a revolution of the whole oppressed people. This does not mean that the oppressed 'people' can be regarded as a single or homogeneous entity. The main revolutionary camp in the immediate struggle is made up of different classes and strata (overwhelmingly black), which suffer varying forms and degrees of national oppression and economic exploitation. The camp of those who benefit from, and support, national domination is also divided into classes.

Some 'learned theorists' are continuously warning workers against talk of a 'revolution of the whole oppressed people', accusing those who use such formulations of being 'populists' rather than revolutionaries. Let us hear Lenin on this question since he was also in the habit of using the same words to describe the upsurge in Russia: 'Yes, the people's revolution. Social Democracy ... demands that this word shall not be used to cover up failure to understand class antagonisms within the people ... However, it does not divide the 'people' into 'classes' so that the advanced class becomes locked up within itself ... the advanced class ... should fight with all the greater energy and enthusiasm for the cause of the whole people, at the head of the whole people' (Selected Works, Volume 1, p.503).



Of course, the long-term interests of the diverse classes and strata of the revolutionary camp do not necessarily coincide. They do not have the same consistency and commitment even to the immediate objectives of the democratic revolution. It is obviously from within the ranks of the black middle and upper strata that the enemy will look for sources of collaboration. We will return to this question.

But, in general, it remains true that our National Democratic Revolution expresses the broad objective interests not only of the working class but also of most of the other classes within the nationally-dominated majority, including the black petit- bourgeoisie and significant strata of the emergent black bourgeoisie. This reality provides the foundation for a struggle which aims to mobilise to its side all the oppressed classes and strata as participants in the national liberation alliance.

We believe that the working class is both an indispensable part and the leading force of such a liberation alliance. But its relations with other classes and strata cannot be conditional on the acceptance by them of socialist aims. The historic programme which has evolved to express the common immediate aspirations of all the classes of the oppressed people is the Freedom Charter. This document is not, in itself, a programme for socialism, even though (as we argue later) it can provide a basis for uninterrupted advance to a socialist future.

The recent surge in workers' organisation and socialist thinking has highlighted some important questions.

- Does the immediate emphasis on the national democratic revolution imply that the working class should abandon class struggle in favour of national struggle?
- Which class must play the vanguard role in our democratic revolution?
- Above all, how can the independent class role of the working class be safeguarded in a period demanding inter-class alliances? The answer to these questions and the key to a correct determination of strategy and tactics in our present situation requires a correct grasp of the relationship between class and national struggle.

If we pose the question by asking only whether our struggle is a national struggle or a class struggle, we will inevitably get a wrong answer. The right question is: what is the relationship between these two categories. A failure to understand the class content of the national struggle and the national content of the class struggle in existing conditions can hold back the advance of both the democratic and socialist transformations which we seek.

The immediate primacy of the struggle against race tyranny flows from the concrete realities of our existing situation. The concept of national domination is not a mystification to divert us from class approaches; it infects every level of class exploitation. Indeed, it divides our working class into colour compartments. Therefore, unusual categories such as 'white working class' and 'black working class' are not 'unscientific' but simply describe the facts.

National domination is maintained by a ruling class whose state apparatus protects the economic interests and social privileges of all classes among the white minority. It denies the aspiration of the African people towards a single nationhood and, in its place, attempts to perpetuate tribalism and ethnicity. These, and a host of related practices, are the visible daily manifestations of national domination. These practices affect the status and life of every black in every class. It is, however, the black working class which, in practice, suffers the most intense form of national domination.

And those who dismiss the fight against national domination as the key immediate mobilising factor of our working class are living in an unreal world of their own.

Socialist ideas take root not just through book knowledge but through struggle around day-to-day issues. And, for those who have to live the hourly realities and humiliations of race tyranny (at the point of production, in the townships, in the street, etc.) there is no issue more immediate and relevant than the experience of national oppression. This is certainly the starting point of political consciousness for every black worker.



It is mainly in the actual struggle against national oppression that its class roots can be grasped most effectively. It is that struggle which illuminates most brightly the underlying relationship in our country between capitalism and national domination.

Those who would like to restrict the meaning of class struggle to a trade union struggle against the bosses, and who see political struggle only through narrow economic spectacles, would do well to heed Lenin's words on these questions: 'Is it true that, in general, the economic struggle is 'the most widely applicable means' of drawing the masses in to political struggle? It is entirely untrue. Any and every manifestation of police tyranny and autocratic outrage, not only in connection with the economic struggle, is not one whit less 'widely applicable' as a means of drawing in the masses... Of the sum total of cases in which the workers suffer (either on their own account or on account of those closely connected with them) from tyranny, violence and lack of rights, undoubtedly only a small minority represent cases of police tyranny in the trade union struggle as such' (Selected Works, Volume 1, p.136).

Class struggle in a period of capitalist hegemony is, in the long run, a political struggle for the ultimate winning of power by the working people.

But the content of this class struggle does not remain fixed for all time; it is dictated by the concrete situation at a given historical moment. We cannot confine the meaning of class struggle to those rare moments when the immediate winning of socialist power is on the agenda. When workers engage in the national struggle to destroy race domination they are surely, at the same time, engaging in class struggle.

Class struggle does not fade into the background when workers forge alliances with other class forces on commonly agreed minimum programmes. The history of all struggles consists mainly of such interim phases. What is the essence of conflict during such phases if not class struggle? There is no such thing as 'pure' class struggle and those who seek it can only do so from the isolating comfort of a library arm-chair. The idea that social revolutions involve two neatly-labelled armies was dealt with by Lenin with bitter irony: 'So one army lines up in one place and says 'we are for socialism' and another, somewhere else and says, 'we are for imperialism', and that will be a social revolution! ... Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is'. (Collected Works, Volume 22, pp.355-6).

The workers in Vietnam were not abandoning the class struggle when they concentrated their main energies, in alliance with other class forces, on defeating Japanese militarist occupation, French colonialism, and finally US imperialism and its puppet forces. When Hitler unleashed world war, the main content of the workers' class struggle correctly became the defeat of fascism. This task necessitated the most 'popular' of Fronts which brought together both pro- and anti-socialist forces. It is a matter of historical record that the anti-fascist victory made possible, among other things, the greatest extension of the socialist world since the October Revolution and opened the road to successful anti-imperialist, anti-colonial revolutions.

When we exhort our working class to devote its main energies (in alliance with the other nationally oppressed classes) to the immediate task of winning national liberation, we are certainly not diluting the class struggle or retreating from it. On the contrary, we are advancing and reinforcing it in the only manner which is practicable at the present time.

Nor are we putting off the socialist revolution by an emphasis on the National Democratic objectives of the immediate phase of struggle. In the words of Lenin, answering critics of Bolshevik policy on the primacy of the democratic revolution, 'we are not putting (the socialist revolution) off but are taking the first steps towards it in the only possible way, along with the correct path, namely the path of a democratic republic' (Selected Works, Volume 1, p.435). Our immediate emphasis on the struggle for democracy and 'People's Power' is an essential prerequisite for the longer-term advance towards a socialist transformation.

But national liberation is, at the same time, a short-term class imperative for the working people. Because the tyranny of national oppression weighs more heavily on South Africa's doubly- exploited



working class than on any other working class, its destruction by the shortest route possible is, in itself, in the deepest class interests of our proletariat. Both immediately and in the long-term, our working class stands to gain more from the ending of national domination than any other class among the oppressed.

These realities help define the main form and content of the workers' class struggle at the present historical moment and the kind of alliances necessary to advance working class objectives. A 'class struggle' which ignores these truths can only be fought out in the lecture-room and not in the actual arena of struggle.

But the need to concentrate on the present does not imply an abandonment or disregard for the future. We shall argue more fully in a later section that participation by the working class in the democratic revolution (involving alliances, minimum programmes, etc.) does not imply a dilution of its independent class positions.

There is, moreover, no need for the spread of socialist awareness among the working people to be postponed during the phase emphasising the democratic transformation a belief falsely attributed to our Party by some of its left-wing critics. During this period it is vital to maintain and deepen working class understanding of the interdependence between national liberation and social emancipation. This task cannot be postponed until the ANC flag flies over Pretoria.

It follows from the above that the participation of our working class and its political vanguard in the liberation alliance is both a long-term and short-term class necessity. The SACP's involvement in such an alliance is not, as our left-wing critics allege, a form of 'tailism' or 'populism'.

Nor, as our right-wing detractors would have it, is it an opportunistic ploy to camouflage our so-called 'hidden agenda' and to use the ANC merely as a stepping stone to socialism.

We have never made a secret of our belief that the shortest route to socialism is via a democratic state. But, as already mentioned, the SACP takes part in the alliance for yet another extremely cogent reason; our belief that the elimination of national domination (which is the prime objective of the Alliance) is, at the same time, the most immediate class concern of our proletariat.

Joe Slovo was General Secretary of the South African Communist Party from 1984 to 1991, and served as its Chairperson from 1991 to his death in 1995.

'I am an Africa'

By Thabo Mbeki Speech on the occasion of the adoption by the Constitutional Assembly of the new South African Constitution, 8 May 1996

On an occasion such as this, we should, perhaps, start from the beginning.

So, let me begin. I am an African. I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land.

My body has frozen in our frosts and in our latter day snows. It has thawed in the warmth of our sunshine and melted in the heat of the midday sun. The crack and the rumble of the summer thunders, lashed by startling lightening, have been a cause both of trembling and of hope. The fragrances of nature have been as pleasant to us as the sight of the wild blooms of the citizens of the veld.



The dramatic shapes of the Drakensberg, the soil-coloured waters of the Lekoa, iGqili noThukela, and the sands of the Kgalagadi, have all been panels of the set on the natural stage on which we act out the foolish deeds of the theatre of our day. At times, and in fear, I have wondered whether I should concede equal citizenship of our country to the leopard and the lion, the elephant and the springbok, the hyena, the black mamba and the pestilential mosquito.

A human presence among all these, a feature on the face of our native land thus defined, I know that none dare challenge me when I say - I am an African! I owe my being to the Khoi and the San whose desolate souls haunt the great expanses of the beautiful Cape - they who fell victim to the most merciless genocide our native land has ever seen, they who were the first to lose their lives in the struggle to defend our freedom and dependence and they who, as a people, perished in the result. Today, as a country, we keep an audible silence about these ancestors of the generations that live, fearful to admit the horror of a former deed, seeking to obliterate from our memories a cruel occurrence which, in its remembering, should teach us not and never to be inhuman again.

I am formed of the migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land. Whatever their own actions, they remain still, part of me. In my veins courses the blood of the Malay slaves who came from the East. Their proud dignity informs my bearing, their culture a part of my essence. The stripes they bore on their bodies from the lash of the slave master are a reminder embossed on my consciousness of what should not be done.

I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hintsá and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphephu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom.

My mind and my knowledge of myself is formed by the victories that are the jewels in our African crown, the victories we earned from Isandhlwana to Khartoum, as Ethiopians and as the Ashanti of Ghana, as the Berbers of the desert.

I am the grandchild who lays fresh flowers on the Boer graves at St Helena and the Bahamas, who sees in the mind's eye and suffers the suffering of a simple peasant folk, death, concentration camps, destroyed homesteads, a dream in ruins. I am the child of Nongqause. I am he who made it possible to trade in the world markets in diamonds, in gold, in the same food for which my stomach yearns.

I come of those who were transported from India and China, whose being resided in the fact, solely, that they were able to provide physical labour, who taught me that we could both be at home and be foreign, who taught me that human existence itself demanded that freedom was a necessary condition for that human existence. Being part of all these people, and in the knowledge that none dare contest that assertion, I shall claim that - I am an African.

I have seen our country torn asunder as these, all of whom are my people, engaged one another in a titanic battle, the one redress a wrong that had been caused by one to another and the other, to defend the indefensible. I have seen what happens when one person has superiority of force over another, when the stronger appropriate to themselves the prerogative even to annul the injunction that God created all men and women in His image. I know what it signifies when race and colour are used to determine who is human and who, sub-human.

I have seen the destruction of all sense of self-esteem, the consequent striving to be what one is not, simply to acquire some of the benefits which those who had improved themselves as masters had ensured that they enjoy. I have experience of the situation in which race and colour is used to enrich some and impoverish the rest. I have seen the corruption of minds and souls as a result of the pursuit of an ignoble effort to perpetrate a veritable crime against humanity.

I have seen concrete expression of the denial of the dignity of a human being emanating from the conscious, systemic and systematic oppressive and repressive activities of other human beings. There the victims parade with no mask to hide the brutish reality - the beggars, the prostitutes, the street children, those who seek solace in substance abuse, those who have to steal to assuage hunger, those who have to lose their sanity because to be sane is to invite pain. Perhaps the worst



among these, who are my people, are those who have learnt to kill for a wage. To these the extent of death is directly proportional to their personal welfare. And so, like pawns in the service of demented souls, they kill in furtherance of the political violence in KwaZulu-Natal. They murder the innocent in the taxi wars.

They kill slowly or quickly in order to make profits from the illegal trade in narcotics. They are available for hire when husband wants to murder wife and wife, husband. Among us prowl the products of our immoral and amoral past - killers who have no sense of the worth of human life, rapists who have absolute disdain for the women of our country, animals who would seek to benefit from the vulnerability of the children, the disabled and the old, the rapacious who brook no obstacle in their quest for self-enrichment. All this I know and know to be true because I am an African! Because of that, I am also able to state this fundamental truth that I am born of a people who are heroes and heroines. I am born of a people who would not tolerate oppression. I am of a nation that would not allow that fear of death, torture, imprisonment, exile or persecution should result in the perpetuation of injustice. The great masses who are our mother and father will not permit that the behaviour of the few results in the description of our country and people as barbaric.

Patient because history is on their side, these masses do not despair because today the weather is bad. Nor do they turn triumphalist when, tomorrow, the sun shines. Whatever the circumstances they have lived through and because of that experience, they are determined to define for themselves who they are and who they should be. We are assembled here today to mark their victory in acquiring and exercising their right to formulate their own definition of what it means to be African.

The constitution whose adoption we celebrate constitutes an unequivocal statement that we refuse to accept that our Africanness shall be defined by our race, colour, gender or historical origins. It is a firm assertion made by ourselves that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white. It gives concrete expression to the sentiment we share as Africans, and will defend to the death, that the people shall govern.

It recognises the fact that the dignity of the individual is both an objective which society must pursue, and is a goal which cannot be separated from the material well-being of that individual. It seeks to create the situation in which all our people shall be free from fear, including the fear of the oppression of one national group by another, the fear of the disempowerment of one social echelon by another, the fear of the use of state power to deny anybody their fundamental human rights and the fear of tyranny.

It aims to open the doors so that those who were disadvantaged can assume their place in society as equals with their fellow human beings without regard to colour, race, gender, age or geographic dispersal. It provides the opportunity to enable each one and all to state their views, promote them, strive for their implementation in the process of governance without fear that a contrary view will be met with repression. It creates a law-governed society which shall be inimical to arbitrary rule. It enables the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means rather than resort to force. It rejoices in the diversity of our people and creates the space for all of us voluntarily to define ourselves as one people.

As an African, this is an achievement of which I am proud, proud without reservation and proud without any feeling of conceit. Our sense of elevation at this moment also derives from the fact that this magnificent product is the unique creation of African hands and African minds. But it is also constitutes a tribute to our loss of vanity that we could, despite the temptation to treat ourselves as an exceptional fragment of humanity, draw on the accumulated experience and wisdom of all humankind, to define for ourselves what we want to be.

Together with the best in the world, we too are prone to pettiness, petulance, selfishness and short-sightedness. But it seems to have happened that we looked at ourselves and said the time had come that we make a super-human effort to be other than human, to respond to the call to create for ourselves a glorious future, to remind ourselves of the Latin saying: Gloria est consequenda - Glory must be sought after! Today it feels good to be an African.



It feels good that I can stand here as a South African and as a foot soldier of a titanic African army, the African National Congress, to say to all the parties represented here, to the millions who made an input into the processes we are concluding, to our outstanding compatriots who have presided over the birth of our founding document, to the negotiators who pitted their wits one against the other, to the unseen stars who shone unseen as the management and administration of the Constitutional Assembly, the advisers, experts and publicists, to the mass communication media, to our friends across the globe - congratulations and well done! I am an African. I am born of the peoples of the continent of Africa. The pain of the violent conflict that the peoples of Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan, Burundi and Algeria is a pain I also bear. The dismal shame of poverty, suffering and human degradation of my continent is a blight that we share. The blight on our happiness that derives from this and from our drift to the periphery of the ordering of human affairs leaves us in a persistent shadow of despair.

This is a savage road to which nobody should be condemned. This thing that we have done today, in this small corner of a great continent that has contributed so decisively to the evolution of humanity says that Africa reaffirms that she is continuing her rise from the ashes.

Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now! Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace! However improbable it may sound to the sceptics, Africa will prosper! Whoever we may be, whatever our immediate interest, however much we carry baggage from our past, however much we have been caught by the fashion of cynicism and loss of faith in the capacity of the people, let us err today and say - nothing can stop us now!

Background Documents

Nation-forming and nation-building The National Question in South Africa

Discussion document prepared for the ANC 50th National Conference, 1997

INTRODUCTION

The national question has been an area of intense debate within the ranks of the ANC. This arises from the character of the freedom struggle for national emancipation - to sharpen our understanding of the tasks that the National Democratic Revolution is meant to accomplish.

In the current phase of transition and transformation, it is critical that we revisit this discussion, to ensure that we share a common understanding of this complex question. This applies both to our challenge of transforming South African society, as well as the challenge of how we order the internal life of our organisation.

BACKGROUND

Colonial conquest in South Africa had two contradictory consequences. On the one hand, it brought together various different communities into one nation-state. On the other hand, this very conquest was used by the colonisers to try and prevent the unity of these communities into one nation.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in the late 19th Century (1800's) signified the beginning of capitalism and, at the same time, a new era in the history of the country. Thousands of people who were previously separated in self-subsistence economies, were either forced or attracted to the emerging industries to provide labour.

Transport networks were laid to connect the industrial hubs with the harbours. New towns emerged, further bringing together, into a single economy, communities which were previously separated. Peasant Afrikaner farmers began producing for the broader market, while Africans -dispossessed of their land - did not only become providers of labour, but also consumers of commercial products.



One natural result of this was the emergence of the colonisers' language(s) as a medium of communication through which economic activity was conducted.

In the process, aspects of the colonisers' culture - material and otherwise - gained currency among all communities.

The importation of slaves and indentured labour by the Dutch East India Company from Indonesia, Malaysia and India also helped to shape the make-up of South Africa's population. These people had been oppressed in the countries they originate from, and were subjected to the same colonial treatment in South Africa. Along with this, was the emergence of the indigenous 'Coloured' community.

It is the irony of our history, that this whole process, which crowned South Africa's revolution into one nation-state, was also the seed of later decades of struggles and bloody conflict. This arose because the state was colonial in character, whether it was in the form of the Union in 1910, or the Republic in 1960. Power was handed over by the British conquerors to the settler colonial community to continue the exploitation of indigenous Africans, in particular, and the black majority in general.

THE ESSENCE OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The national question plays itself out in different ways which are specific to the concrete conditions in various parts of the world. Nevertheless, it is fundamentally a continuous search for equality by various communities which have historically merged into a single nation-state, or the struggle for self-determination and even secession by communities within such states.

In the global context, the national question is fundamentally an ongoing search for national sovereignty or self-rule.

A number of basic principles should be taken into account in addressing the national question in our country. These are summarised below in the form of ten theses:

THESIS 1

The liberation movement in South Africa characterised our society as Colonialism of a Special Type to describe the unique situation where both the colonisers and the colonised shared one country.

The basic conclusion arising from this, is that the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is an act of addressing the national question: to create a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. The 'national character' of the NDR is therefore the resolution of the antagonistic contradictions between the oppressed majority and their oppressors; as well as the resolution of the national grievance arising from the colonial relations.

THESIS 2

National oppression and its legacy are linked closely to class exploitation.

Part of the debates on the characterisation of South Africa under apartheid was the question of whether national oppression was a necessary condition for South African capitalism, or whether, in fact, South African capitalism was a necessary condition for national oppression.

What this debate highlights is that national oppression can only be successfully addressed in the context of socio-economic transformation.

This entails much more than competition among the 'multi-racial' middle strata and classes for material benefits that can be gained out of the achievement of democracy, a phenomenon to which concepts like 'black empowerment' popularly tend to be reduced. Rather, it means improving the quality of life of the poor, the overwhelming majority of whom are defined by South African capitalism



as blacks in general, and Africans in particular. In other words, the implementation of the RDP is an essential part of addressing the national question.

THESIS 3

A nation is not equivalent to a classless society. This would be a contradiction in terms, because the concept of class is by definition an international phenomenon, requiring the 'withering away' of nations as such.

A nation is a multi-class entity. Under a system of capitalism, it will have its bourgeoisie, middle strata, rural communities - rich and poor. The objective of the NDR is not the creation of a socialist or communist society, though its progression, for those who adhere to these aims, does not exclude these long-term consequences.

Among the central tasks of the NDR is the improvement of the quality of life of especially the poor, and also to ensure that in the medium-to long-term, the place that individuals occupy in society is not defined by race. The opposite is the case in present day South Africa, where the poor are by definition mostly black, whilst the majority of the rich are by definition white.

An important part of this is that the NDR also entails the building of a black bourgeoisie. The tendering conditions that government has introduced, and its encouragement of the private sector to promote all kinds of 'empowerment', aptly illustrate this. The reality is that the bigger and more successful this black bourgeoisie becomes, the more diminished its race consciousness will become, for example in its attitude to workers, and dealing with unions.

At the same time, the unfolding NDR has also meant the fast growth of a black middle strata. This process will speed up even more as opportunities open up in various areas of life.

The democratic movement must seek to influence these classes and strata -both black and white - to take an active part in the realisation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. This would then enable them to act/ behave in a way that promotes South Africa's true interests.

THESIS 4

Apartheid was successful in crippling working class unity, and that legacy is still felt today.

The ANC enjoys the support of the majority of the Coloured and Indian middle strata. What we usually refer to as the Coloured and Indian question has to do with the expression of fears of the working class (including the unemployed) among these communities. These fears relate to the perception that the rise of the African worker and the African poor, directly impacts on the comparative privilege that apartheid gave them in relation to African people. Similarly, this applies to white workers, which is partly why many of them became the mass base of the ultra-right. There are, of course, other important elements that come into play such as language, religion, racism and the geographic separation of communities.

This unique situation underlines the centrality of building working class unity as key to creating the South African nation.

THESIS 5

It is important to realise that the national question is also a superstructural phenomenon at the level of consciousness, 'feelings' and perceptions. Thus, it has an important and dynamic momentum of its own, underpinned by factors such as language, culture and religion. The social psychological element of the national question can therefore be used effectively to promote the process of forming a nation, or indeed, to undermine it.



One of our greatest successes in the transition has been to promote the 'feeling' of pride in being South African, including through activities like sport, which may seem trivial. Capturing the national imagination through the campaign for a 'New Patriotism' is critical to nation-building.

However, the social psychological phenomenon on its own is not sustainable without socio-economic transformation. Neither can it be accepted as universally credible in a situation in which the beneficiaries of apartheid do not accept that they have to forego some of these privileges. The rumblings on issues such as education, welfare grants, labour matters, and so on, are a reflection of this problem.

THESIS 6

Individuals are social beings with different social experiences, class backgrounds, political histories, religious affiliations as well as sport and music preferences. With regard to the national question; race, ethnic origins, language and sometimes even religion, have an important role to play in defining a person's identity. Above all, the fact of belonging to this country and this state, is itself an important definer of identity.

Therefore, individuals will have multiple identities: for instance being a South African with a specific mother tongue, class position, political and religious affiliation and so on. These identities do not necessarily disappear in the melting pot of broad South Africanism. Rather, they can all co-exist in healthy combination. The fundamental question that has to be asked is which identity assumes prominence, and under what conditions.

To deny the reality of these identities by the democratic movement is to create a vacuum which can easily be exploited by counter-revolution.

However, the main thrust of the NDR is not to promote fractured identities, but to encourage the emergence of a common South African identity. At the same time, it should be noted that some of the identities associated with 'culture' or 'ethnicity' or 'religion' can in fact be contradictory to the building of a new nation that is based on principles of equity. For example, these attributes are used as an excuse to perpetuate gender oppression, or to campaign for racial or ethnic divisions among citizens.

THESIS 7

From its characterisation of apartheid colonialism, the ANC was correct in asserting, in the documents on Strategy and Tactics from the Morogoro and Kabwe Consultative Conferences, that the main content of the NDR is the liberation of Black people in general, and Africans in particular. They are in the majority, and they constitute even an overwhelmingly larger majority of the poor.

Related to this is the identity of the South African nation in the making: whether it should truly be an African nation on the African continent, or a clone, for example, of the US and UK in outlook; in the style and content of its media, in its cultural expression, in its food, in the language accents of its children, and so forth. Hence, what is required is a continuing battle to assert African hegemony in the context of a multi-cultural and non-racial society.

It is debatable whether the popular imagery of a 'rainbow nation' is useful in this respect. There is an important role that it does play as popular imagery. But if used to express the character of South African society as one made up of black Africans who pay allegiance to Africa, whites who pay allegiance to Europe, Indians who pay allegiance to India and Coloureds somewhere in the undefined middle of the rainbow, then it can be problematic. For it would fail to recognise the healthy osmosis among the various cultures and other attributes in the process towards the emergence of a new African nation.



THESIS 8

Futhermore, Morogoro was correct to assert that this main content of the NDR should find expression in the leadership structures of the ANC, and indeed in the country as a whole. This is usually referred to as 'African leadership'.

However, this principle does not imply mechanical proportional representation in leadership structures. In other words, that we should do 'ethnic, racial, language, gender and class arithmetic' in composing leadership structures.

The principle of African leadership and balanced representation in racial, gender, ethnic and class terms is a broad one, which should find broad expression in actual practice. Yet, attention should always be paid to these broad groupings because a critical mass can be reached where perceptions of dominance can take root.

The principle of African leadership does not mean moving away from merit: One cannot proceed from the premise that it is people, other than African people, who have merit. However, apartheid deliberately denied opportunities to Blacks in general, and Africans in particular. Therefore, it is critical that deliberate steps are taken to empower them to play their role.

Affirmative action is meant to address this, and naturally, it is those who have been most disadvantaged who ought to be the foremost beneficiaries of such a programme.

THESIS 9

The national question can never be fully resolved. This is because it is not merely a material question, or one that is related solely to various forms of power. This derives from the fact that emotional and psychological factors are attached to it. In addition, people will continue to have multiple identities.

Instead, the challenge is to maintain a healthy equilibrium between centrifugal ('disintegrative') and centripetal ('integrative') tendencies.

Indeed, as we seek to integrate South African society across racial, language, ethnic and other barriers, we are also engaged in the process of developing those individual elements that distinguish these various communities from one another.

It will not be possible to achieve the kind of balance that will satisfy everyone for all time, even if the broad principle is attained in practice.

This is aggravated by the fact that individuals compete for positions in politics, the academic terrain, the economy and elsewhere. The more dishonest and underhanded ones among them might seek to use criteria which exclude those who have historically been disadvantaged, or to use the racial, ethnic and /or language card to advance their personal ambitions.

Even within the ANC, tensions will flare up from time to time, especially in periods such as preparations for National Conference and other allocations of positions of power and influence.

THESIS 10

The process of nation formation depends on objective conditions such as the fact of an integrated national economy, the historical evolution of a nation-state, national identity and so on. This objective environment is itself a product of human activity; in our case represented broadly in the act of colonisation and the struggle against it .

This struggle was itself an important and conscious act of nation-building.



To this extent, the ANC (and other political movements), the new government and organs of civil society, have a critical role to play in facilitating the emergence of a new nation: in nation-building.

This includes striving for consistent and thorough-going democracy, effecting socio-economic transformation, and encouraging a New Patriotism.

It must also include the elimination of the geographical separation along racial and ethnic lines, in the programmes to provide housing and other services.

CONCLUSION

These are not necessarily all the critical matters relating to the national question. Within the ANC we should ensure open, rigorous and dignified debate on an issue that will be with us for a long time to come. This is even more critical for an organisation for whom it is historically necessary, to be theoretically and practically, a microcosm of the non-racial society we seek to build.

Arising from such discussion, we also need to determine how, in practical terms, to put in place a programme aimed at speeding up the de-racialisation of South African society in all respects. This could be backed up by concrete targets to measure progress in this regard.

'A nation in dialogue'

By Professor Jakes Gerwel

Keynote address to the National Conference on Racism, 30 August 2000

The debates, public discussions and general societal discourse - at times overt, often subterranean and sometimes merely suspected or deduced - about racism in our society, should not surprise anyone even faintly acquainted with our history.

We are after all the historical products of a social and political dispensation that was very widely regarded as the most structured form of racial rule and social organization in the last half of the twentieth century. When most of the world, even if at times more in rhetoric and intention than in actual practice, was moving towards conscious anti-racism in the wake of the Second World War and the decolonialisation thrust, the political rulers of South Africa sought to cast in law, regulation and enforced conventions the racially based attitudes and practices that had been at the basis of so much of our history.

The Union of South Africa, the national political arrangement in which and out of whose premises apartheid grew, was a straight-forward racial arrangement of the history of colonial dispossession of which the Union was the turn of the century culmination, was nothing less than the systemic disempowerment and subjugation of black people by those of European origin.

For South Africa not to be in such debate and discussion now would have represented the surprising phenomena. It would have indicated either the impossibly miraculous overcoming in the course of five years, of the effects of three centuries of living together in a particular way; or a dangerous denial of key negative aspects of our social reality.

It would also, and importantly, have been an abdication of a wider responsibility that South Africans have, viz to utilize the platform of their remarkable and exemplary political transition from racial rule to a non-racial democratic order for exploring the possibilities of an enduring and profound transformation to non-racialism and an anti-racist way of living.

We often lose sight of how much an inspiration we still represent to people across the world because of the manner in which we solved our political conflict; to confront with that same forthrightness the



social legacy of racism with a common commitment to overcome it, will be the more lasting contribution to a world that seeks the political-moral enthusiasms that the success of South Africa provided at the close of a tired century. Of course, most importantly, we owe it to ourselves and our children.

The manner in which we conduct those debates, the approaches we adopted and the emphases we place on the public conversation, the measure to which we entrench division rather than enhancing cross communal cooperation; these could, and should, be critiqued and dissected. That the conversation takes place, and with robust frankness, is the unquestionable benefit to our society. It is the product and dividend of our non-racial democracy that we can now confront ourselves in this fashion, and hold together as a nation.

The overall title of the conference, Combating racism: a nation in dialogue contains clues to the approach to this national conversation. The former part, 'combating racism,' points to an action-related approach, a theme to which we shall return in the course of this address. The second part, referring to ourselves as a nation in dialogue, emphasizes the unity of a nation that acknowledges its diversity, differences, divisions, tensions and conflict potential and recognizes dialogue as the key manner in which to deal with the destructive potential of those social characteristics.

We cannot empirically and may not morally place racism as merely another form of expression of difference in our diverse society, ethically indistinct from other markers of difference. Its role in our history has been too crucial to the shaping of the details of the lives of the majority of people who have lived here. Often it has been linked to other crucial basis of difference, discrimination and inequality yet, almost without exception, it was the ultimately deciding factor in South African society.

To recognize and state this, is however not to seek to detract from that unity from which this debate, this dialogue amongst compatriots, departs.

'Our people' said Nelson Mandela in one of his last speeches as President, ' have reached out to one another across ... divisions ... to live out together the consequences of the profound but simple fact that, complex as history may have made our society, we are one people, with one destiny.' And one knows that it is in that spirit, and from that point of departure, that the government of his successor has initiated this important national dialogue: that we are all who live here as citizens, in equal measure South Africans, with equal responsibility to give content and expression to the founding concepts of nationhood as contained in our Constitution and right to share in the fruits of nationhood.

This conference is itself part of the 'history of race' in our country. It comes at a specific and critical period in that process of transition to a non-racial democratic society. The cessation of hostilities between the principal antagonists in the political struggle, the negotiation of a peaceful transition to democracy on the basis of a founding consensus and the enactment of a new constitutional order heralded in the first period.

The constitution embodied the vision of a united non-racial society, which would in all its parts strive to work together to overcome the divisions of the past and to eradicate the inequalities and imbalances derived from that past.

There was always the recognition that the effects and consequences of centuries of division and injustice would not be eradicated immediately. As a country and nation we departed from that constitutional platform in the belief that through the rapid advancement to a better life, particularly for the poor, had become possible. Where poverty was so much a function of racial allocation of station, the achievement of the better life envisaged, meant a concrete addressing of the legacy of racism and the creation of circumstances where racism as felt practice would increasingly recede.

In the first five years of our democracy the framework of policy, legislation and constitution was established for the achievement of the goals of that founding consensus, and the ethos of partnership and the values of non-racialism, non-sexism and equity began to take root. Such was the advance made in this regard that the President was able to say in his first address to Parliament last year that we have never been so well placed to make rapid and substantial progress towards those goals. It is



not as pathologically torn society, on the verge of racial conflagration and disintegration, that we gather at and conduct this national debate.

We must also recognize that though we have made progress, the legacy of our past continues to play itself out in the material division of our people largely along the historical fault-lines of colour and in discriminatory and too often violent and oppressive ways. The deracialisation of our society therefore requires us to understand the persistence of racism in our institutions, structures and social practices, and to engage in overcoming it.

It is at this point in the 'history of race' in South Africa that this debate occurs: now as a means of advancing us towards the eradication of the remnants of our racial past, and as a nation joined in the search for a non-racist future.

The thematic title, History, nature and sources of racism reminds us, even perhaps inadvertently, that racism is an historical phenomenon, rooted and located in the specific and concrete history of a particular society. It is not, as we are often tempted to reflect upon in popular discourse, a timeless disease against which people need to be inoculated in a general manner.

The approach to racism as historically specific rather than a trans-historical phenomenon helps focus our minds on the specific institutions, structures and practices within which racism occurs and manifests itself. This balances a primary emphasis on the attitude that tends to render the phenomenon as a pervasive disease rather than identifiable sets of actions that can be dealt with.

I will not dwell on the myriad paths that racial practice and racism has followed throughout human history, nor reflect upon the many theories on the origins of racism.

Mention has already been made of the colonial past that has been so crucial in shaping our society and the patterns of relations with which we are still so much burdened.

The history of colonial dispossession and the material and cultural alienation and subjugation of the indigenous people - in the case of the Khoisan, it amounted to virtual decimation - was one consistent project and systematic practice of racism. It lies at the historic root of racial attitudes and the institutions and practice of racism in this country.

It is interesting, also in view of our attempts to give content to the African Renaissance, to recall that colonialism was one outflow of the European Renaissance. The birth of humanism with its self-confident belief in the ability of Man to see the daring exploration of the unknown world and the expansion of European influence over the entire planet, mostly with cruel disregard for the non-European other encountered. In many respects Apartheid represented the last remnant of racial colonialism; in an ironic way, therefore, a key expression of the European Renaissance was finally ended with the demise of formal racial rule in South Africa.

Most instructive for an understanding of the decisively formative origins of South African racism would be the identification of what can be called 'fateful moments' in our history. The fate of independent African polities at the conclusion of the wars of colonial dispossession; the racial structuring of the great economic shifts through the discovery of minerals in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century; the real story of the South Africa (Anglo-Boer) War and the formation of the Union; the various Land Acts; the post World War I labour turmoil and its political outcomes; the post World War II turn towards apartheid; the intensification of state repression in the last decades of apartheid rule - these would be some such key moments in shaping race relations and racism in this country.

Generic to most of these 'fateful moments' - of which smaller scale equivalents would most certainly be identified - will be that they each time served to lend greater structural and institutional support to the white population's sense of superiority and right to rule and dominate. The cruelty and the disregard for the value of black life run like a thread through these events in our history.

There are some other 'fateful moments' that shaped race relations in a different way and direction such as the formation of the African National Congress or the commencement of CODESA. The



response of the liberation movement to repression, racial injustice and the shaping of South African society represent in many respects a more relevant part of the 'history of race' for the current purposes of transforming our society.

I have argued elsewhere that a public discovery and affirmation of that history could assist in addressing national reconciliation - and as part of that, the eradication of the remnants of racism - in a more constructive way. There is an implicit temptation in current discussions of national reconciliation to assume a kind of two-stage approach to reconciliation as a project that is subsequent to the attainment of national democracy, as something that only starts now in national life and is therefore still far from being realized. The approach tends to pathologise a society that on the scale of world affairs serves as a singularly successful example of a country with racial and ethnic diversity, histories of strife and competing interests that had resolved its potentially destructive conflicts consensually and had demonstrated within itself the political will and institutional means to cohere.

This 'two stage' approach ignores the fact that national reconciliation was in effect concurrently imbedded in the liberation and democratic struggle.

What the attainment of democratic government achieved was to free up institutional and other forms of social energy for the advancement and consolidation rather than initiation of national reconciliation.

The anti apartheid struggle (used here as a collective to describe the variety of political and social forces internally, in exile and in prison, combined to oppose and seek the overthrow of the white minority-rule polity and social order) often characterized itself as being an exercise in nation-building at the same time as it represented an oppositional act against a racially based system. Its nation-building character, it would claim, was not only derived from its end goal of a united South African nation, but also resided as much in the form, processes and informing ideologies of its conduct.

The concept of non-racialism, as espoused by the dominant strand of the liberation and democratic movement, emphasized the analytical and strategic value of uniting in struggle, ideally under African leadership, participants from different communities or national groups - thereby advocating the sought after objective as well as anticipating it and laying its foundations in and through the process of struggle.

At one time a very influential conceptual tool emanating from a section of the anti-apartheid movement was the typification of the South African social formation as colonialism of a special type. At the heart of this conceptualization was the theoretical and strategic assumption of the (latent) unity of the post-1910 South African nation. South Africa was approached in struggle as a late colonial society in which colonizer and colonized lived and belonged to a shared political and geographical space without assuming that the colonizer had a home elsewhere.

The nature of the resistance and liberation struggle as well as the societal goals it posed were fundamentally influenced by the above concepts, which were derived from the particular analytical reading of the nature of the contested social and political space. National reconciliation was a tool or means of struggle as much as a 'reconciled nation' was the goal to be achieved by that struggle.

This sense of 'positive future trends' already being manifest in the perverted present (though not yet fully realized) always seemed to motivate key aspects of the South African political struggle. This partly explains why even in the fiercest periods of clashes between forces of resistance and suppression the conflict was not typified or ideologically presented as purely or totally racial. The integrated and racially interdependent (though fundamentally unequal) nature of the economy, the history of urbanization, the political processes following the last wars of colonial dispossession, and the social impact of the fundamental shifts in the economy in the decades immediately prior to the establishment of the Union of South Africa, represent some of the material factors which underlie this accentuated (and in many ways typically South African) awareness of a latent national unity.

The often referred to 'miracle' of the eventual peaceful transition from racial minority rule to non-racial democracy is significantly demystified by such acknowledgement of this political history which also places in a somewhat different perspective some of the current renderings of the demand for national



reconciliation. Such reading would emphasize that national reconciliation is not a new process to be initiated in a situation of threatening large-scale disintegration; and that current more spiritual notions of reconciliation as being primarily acts amongst individuals or sets of individuals can be usefully complemented by an institutional and material approach.

The achievement in South Africa of a constitutional state of its nature and through that particular process is the single most telling statement of national reconciliation. It is of note that while the Union of South Africa, which defined the territorial and judicial arena within and over which the modern struggle around the politics of racial domination and subjugation was conducted, came out of series of highly destructive wars of colonial dispossession and imperial conflict, modern day South Africans averted a widely predicted civil war and racial conflagration and as alternative produced one of the most acclaimed democratic and diversity-accommodating constitutions of the world.

A historical perspective that thus recognizes that the major liberation struggle had from inception consistently been a defense of the ideal of the non-racial unity of the South African nation could serve to fortify the confidence in continuous nationhood.

The political basis to a united South African nationhood tangibly exists.

Divisions, differences and conflicting interests of various kinds, levels and intensity occur throughout this society and some of these are remnants, even uninterrupted continuations, of defining features of the contradictions of apartheid and colonial South Africa. None of these, however, can be said to threaten the legal, political or constitutional order. South Africans act out their differences within the framework of their constitution. That is the defining historically conditioned context for combating racism in South Africa today.

A few concluding remarks on the theme strategies for combating racism may be in order at this point.

Poverty and its historic and continuing overlap with racial distinctions represent the major manifestation of racism as felt in practice in South Africa. Our major challenge therefore is to harness and mobilize national resources and energy towards the alleviation and eradication of poverty.

Dominant economic power continues to be in the hands of the white sector of the population; while the shift of that power to be more reflecting of the demographics of our society will be a gradual process, the immediate building of a patriotic partnership between government and also that traditional part of the private sector is crucial to the national project of poverty alleviation. The challenge to traditional white business is to demonstrate a commitment to adding social value to the new societal dispensation. The social compact between business, labour and government envisaged in NEDLAC needs now more than ever to be pursued and implemented as a national project, with the alleviation of poverty as central focus.

The combating of the occurrence of racist practice across the various sectors of society is an institutional matter. Where it occurs it should be dealt with as it represents the antithesis of what South Africa is moving towards. The various organs and agencies for citizens to seek redress and protection should be made accessible, especially to those most exposed and vulnerable to racist practices and abuses.

The issue of skewed or unrepresentative participation will for long be regarded as an index of racism as felt in practice. The legislative and regulatory mechanisms for addressing these issues should be systematically promoted and implemented, while at the same time the public discourse should seek to find ways of ensuring that no section of South African society ever again feels intrinsically rejected or redundant.

Where reconciliation was often understood in the first period after the democratic elections to primarily mean a polite avoidance of an accusatory approach, it now definitely demands more active measures to create opportunities for joint activity, co-operation and understanding.



The development and entrenchment of conventions of civility, the society-wide institutionalization of consensus seeking, and the inculcation of tolerance for difference and diversity are key social measures for dealing with the racial diversity.

While the remnants of racism reflect mostly as continuing practices of discrimination against black people, we should remain to the dangers of inter-black antagonisms and conduct as well as to those of pervasive anti-whiteism.

The leadership of the liberation movement as government is crucial to the manner in which we address racism and the promotion of non-racialism and anti-racism in our society. Its history equips it with the moral wherewithal to eradicate racist practices without re-racialising society.

South African society would truly be miraculous if there were not remnants of its racist past. We do now have the institutional mechanisms to deal with occurrences of racism. Where it asserts itself, it should be firmly dealt with. More importantly and enduringly, we should build on the positive foundations of transition and constitutional order to develop the non-racial reality that is already emerging.

'Beyond the bounds of humanity'

By Professor Patricia J. Williams

Keynote address to the National Conference on Racism, 31 August 2000

I have been asked to reflect upon the consequences, impact and contemporary forms of racism. My observations will touch on the following categories: first the relation of race to economic concerns and class; second, questions of pseudo-science and neo-Darwinian eugenic arguments as they touch on questions of merit, affirmative action, and education; and third, questions of taboo, untouchability, aesthetics (including the question of perceived beauty) and quarantine (including questions of illness, stress, depression and drug use, and of course criminalization and imprisonment).

Let me start by telling you how I began my last semester of teaching at Columbia Law School in New York City. It was the first day of class; one of my students raised her hand and said: 'Excuse me, Professor Williams, but I am looking forward to this seminar, but I wanted to tell you that I will have to miss next week because I am putting myself through law school by selling my eggs, and that is when the procedure will be done.' She said this very calmly, and no one in the class seemed terribly upset, and I divined that somehow the world was changing faster than I knew. It turns out that my student was being paid \$50,000/USD per harvest (as it is called), because there is a market for the eggs of tall blue-eyed women with good family health histories and high test scores.

But let me come back to this story. In my career as a law professor, I teach contracts, commercial law and consumer protection. I teach the law of exchange and efficiency, of promises and structured expectation. I teach the law of how to put objects into the stream of commerce, the bloodstream of society's supply and demand, of discard and desire.

Contract law is about alienation, about making strange, putting at a distance, transforming into something else, fixing a price, making interchangeable with the currency of the realm. Contract law is thus in tension with that which American constitutional theory considered 'unalienable', or what can't be sold: that is, the notion of corporeal integrity, mental and physical inviolability, the pricelessness of our bodies, the embodiment of our dignity - all that we enshrine in the notion of civil rights and human rights.

This tension between what can be sold and what ought not to be sold is also an overlap, or an intersection of course. It is the place where we consider questions such as slavery, indentured servitude, prostitution and trafficking in women and children. Classically, the law of efficient exchange ruled fungible goods, inanimate objects with no special cultural, sentimental or emotional value. So it



is also the place where we look at transactions that appear to be about will-less, soul-less objects but that somehow pertain to life, dignity, will, soul - what we love and therefore do not wish to be treated as fungible or inanimate. Thus, examples that might deserve special scrutiny include the marketing of blood, body parts, human sperm and eggs, adoptions of children where they begin to look less like altruism and more like sales, health care, reproductive medical technology, and biotechnological and genetic engineering.

So here I am, the descendant of slaves who were bought and sold for undetermined amounts and not so very long ago. Here I am, teaching the law of the land, to a young white woman who sells what are marketed as Ivy League eggs - elite, intelligent, top university-type eggs for fifty thousand eggs per harvest.

An interesting aside: this young woman's best friend is apparently a young black woman who is also trying to sell her Ivy League eggs to the highest bidder, but alas, she's had no takers. So she remains busy filling out financial aid forms.

Life is filled with strange and ironic twists. Anyway, it costs anywhere from about \$25000 to \$50000 USD to house a prisoner for a year in the United States. With over two million in jails or prison or otherwise tied up in the criminal justice system - most of those black or brown Latino. This incarceration rate - the highest in the world or close to it - has spawned its own economy. The union of prison guards is among the most powerful lobbying organizations in America. The building of prisons is the fastest growing area of the public sector economy.

But let me tie all this back to my concerns about the intergenerational injury of slavery which was, after all, not just a system of commerce, but the story of suppressed and disordered family connections, molestation, legalized violence and great trauma to both blacks and whites. Recently, Americans and perhaps the world have seen the saga that has unfolded around the pretty dispositive DNA proof that Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, fathered at least one and probably all six of his slave Sally Hemings' children.

By most estimates at least four-fifths of African-Americans have some slavemaster mixed up in them, a long-standing statistic that has nothing at all to do with the recent, growing, but still miniscule rates of intermarriage. The pervasiveness of this history is as plain as the faces all around us. Yet most commentators scurried back and forth between revisionist explanations that exceptionalized it, as though it were a tragic romance on the order of Romeo and Juliet.

What I find most disturbing is that so many commentators seem not to understand the actual and historical meaning of slavery as a system of human 'ownership'. Television anchors repeatedly referred to the relationship as 'illicit'. Illicit means unlawful, not permitted. But a master's breeding his slaves was not only permissible but widespread. After all, the system of chattel slavery meant precisely that: you got to treat your slaves like livestock. Yes, some slaves were treated better than others, some dearly 'loved' by their masters, some put out to pasture to make their way freely on their own - but then so were a lot of horses, cows and sheep. In his book, Notes on the State of Virginia, Jefferson's clinical delineations of how to improve the 'stock' of one's slaves are a subset of his views on animal husbandry. Far from being an aberration, his musings evidence a gentlemanly familiarity with the dominant theories of race science at the time: 'Are not the fine mixtures of red and white, the expressions of every passion by greater or less suffusions of colour in the one, preferable to that eternal monotony which reigns in the countenances that immovable veil of black which covers all the emotions of the other race. Add to these, flowing hair, a more elegant symmetry of form, their own judgment in favour of the whites, declared by their preference of them, as uniformly as is the preference of the Orangutan for the black women over those of his own species.' But if the admixture of white blood into black was deemed an improvement to erstwhile dusky-hued unfortunates, the mixing of black blood into white was a calamity to be avoided at all costs. Jefferson warned emphatically of the sullied sensibilities and lowered faculties thus engendered, concluding that among the Romans, emancipation required but one effort. The slave, when made free, might mix with, without staining the blood of his master. But with us, a second is necessary, unknown to history. When freed, he is to be removed beyond the reach of mixture.



Some historians have found Jefferson's stance on this contradictory. But Jefferson's bias against race-mixing was not really aimed at preventing male slave owners from bedding their slaves in the pursuit of more progeny-as-property (and let us not forget that a lighter-skinned slave, in this unfortunate economy, was often higher-priced). Rather, Jefferson, in line with the general anti-miscegenationist sentiments of the day, was more concerned with ensuring a system of primogeniture based on a presumed purity of bloodlines.

Such a system of privilege required not only an obsessive monitoring of the socially constructed boundaries of blood and race, it actively disabled white women and people of color from assuming agency in the creation of families of their own. Indeed, one of the most powerful ways that the logic-box of slavery operated was by suspending the vocabulary of familial or affilial relation, and supplanting it with the discourse of commerce.

Substituting words like 'master' and 'owner' for other words like 'father' and 'brother' made invisible both the ties of family and the taboos, including incest. We struggle to this day with the gaps engendered by those institutionalized denials. Consider, for example, William Safire's observation that Jefferson's wife's father was also the father of the slave Sally; or The Washington Post's description of Hemings as 'Jefferson's wife's illegitimate half-sister'. Such tortured designations hide the fact that in today's world we would simply call such a person a sister-in-law -and a fourteen year old sister-in-law at that. But there was little 'in-law' that recognized Hemings humanity - to say nothing of a sisterly bond.

Moreover, since slaves did not have the legal capacity to contract, they could not be formally married. Thus, the concepts of adultery, illegitimacy or 'bastardy' were legally inapplicable to slaves; and in a system where paternity functioned chiefly to regulate the passage of property rights and citizenship, the notion of slaves as progenitors of their own families was judicially beside the point.

The implications of this economy are many. In my work, I explore the eugenic impulses surrounding the investments and allocation of resources that have begun to hover at the edges of the genetic engineering industry. But for now, I hope you will allow me a rather complex meditation about the way in which this system of valuation has affected the assignment of character and the valuing of status along race and gender lines, at least in the United States and perhaps beyond.

In 1835, Kate, a slave, who having run away repeatedly, was eventually brought by her purchaser into court in order to have her returned to her vendor. The claim that the purchaser made of the vendor was based on the assertion of a so-called redhibitory vice - an old type of civil claim. The 'claim' was for the return of the price paid, and the 'vice' alleged was that Kate was 'crazy,' to use the precise language of the court. The vendor's defense was that she was 'not crazy but only stupid.' The amount of money at issue, legally speaking, would have been based on the market valuations of the buyer and the seller, on their agreement, on their expectations, on their speculation. Kate's value would have been fixed by their mutually negotiated imagination of her worth as measured against the fair-average (or reasonably-stupid-but-not-crazy) fertile female slave. This they encapsulated in the price, which in the law of contract is aptly enough called 'the consideration.' Kate's worth was measured, in other words, by the consideration of her owners, past present and future. Her alienation and acquisition depended on their shared regard, the marriage of expectations whose vector fixed her worth; their will be done, amen.

Kate was deemed 'useless' by judicial decree, and her purchaser was allowed to return her. What I find interesting is the tension imposed by the structure of alternatives: on the one hand, a finding of craziness amounted to a holding that she was uncontrollable, unpredictable, worthless; as a subcategory of property, few expectations could ever have been formed about her; she would perpetually subvert their best desire. Such a finding presupposed that she was never what she seemed, so it would be hard, even impossible, to speculate about her. Like a mad dog or a wild horse, she wouldn't make good property in a system that envisions property as the extension of the will of the owner. Stupidity, on the other hand, didn't interfere with her as good property because stupidity in slaves was foreseeable, part of the assumed risk of purchasing slaves, a built-in expectation of reasonable slave-traders.



Now another way to look at Kate is that she was neither stupid nor crazy, but very very smart. The facts showed that she had burned up her master's bed; then she ran away. It doesn't take too much, I think, to read between those lines. Thus, she seemed quite rational to me.

Kate's 'crazy' behavior may seem rational to many of us from today's historical perspective, standing as we are, somewhat beyond the particular social arrangements of that time. Yet perhaps it requires assuming the perspective of the owner of human property to understand how lack of control of the owner could be deemed the 'stupidity' of the slave, an intrinsic defect in the property, an inherent biological difference; or how the exercise of slave will, the wilfulness of property, could be defined as crazy, as vice. For all of what I deem to be her abundantly apparent sanity and good sense, there is a certain symmetry of thought - dare I say logic - that at that time and in that place, and in the paradigm of that contract for her sale, Kate could not have been seen as smart and sane. It would have risked throwing the whole slave property and contract system into disorder, it would have risked leaving her vendor and purchaser 'out of control.' I retell the story of Kate because I think that many aspects of dynamic live on subtly but very powerfully today. The degree to which certain passionate social proclamations of 'rational order' might disguise more sinister investments in pure, self-serving rationalization is a phenomenon for which we as a society ought to be very vigilant.

Is there, I wonder, a way in which the traces of a social logic rooted in white supremacy survive in the shiftiness of labels like crazy, stupid, willful. What I am suggesting is that in the context of racial politics, rationality reserves for itself, not merely the right of choice, but the protective cloak of infinite will, of an expressive willfulness for which there is no perceived necessity for sanction, and no apparent limit.

What does it mean in today's world, for example, when whole communities are effectively dismissed as 'crazy' with the employ of such terms as 'culture of pathology?' as minority communities are labelled and dismissed in the U.S.; as hysterical, as women are too often dismissed; as 'criminally disposed' as young black men are profiled and made suspect in many places around the world.

In any event, I am convinced that most of the things that make you stupid are also the things that drive you crazy; and that sometimes the craziest people only survive because they are very very smart. But I am interested in how the conjunctives or disjunctives, the and's and the or's, placed between words like crazy, stupid, smart, sane, vary with time and the vestments of power - as with Kate the crazy slave and Sally Hemings, 'the attractive helpmeet', as one columnist praised her. These categorizations are dressed, moreover, with all the full power and violence of legal sanction, of life and of death.

Taboos that amount to death. Taboos about ardor, possession, license, equivocation, equanimity, indifference, intolerance, rancor, dispossession, innocence, exile and candor.

In effect, these taboos describe boundaries of valuation. Whether something is inside or outside the marketplace of rights is one way of valuing it.

Where a valued object is located outside the market, it is generally understood to be too 'priceless' to be accommodated by ordinary exchange relationships.

If the prize is located within the marketplace, then all objects outside become 'valueless'. Traditionally, what we value most - whether one of a kind objects like the Shroud of Turin or the Mona Lisa, or life itself - most especially human life - this is the sort of subject traditionally removed from the fungibility of commodification - because deemed priceless.

Thus when black people were bought and sold as slaves, they were placed beyond the bounds of humanity. And thus in the twistedness of our brave new world, when blacks have been thrust out of that market and it is white eggs and children who are bought and sold, black life risks being devalued by the presumption of non-market status - e.g., 'underclass' as being that which is beneath all economic classification; or 'surplus' as one American judge referred to homeless black babies; or 'overpopulation' for purposes of welfare, schools, labor, prisons, or death row.



I think this is the broad shape of the contemporary challenge of race in a global market. And as a child of the American civil rights movement, I greet it with energy and patience and a pragmatic sense of optimism.

Class. Gender. Race.

Some have said that the civil rights movement gave rise to so called piggy-backed movements - women's rights, old people's rights, ethnic and immigrant rights, children's rights and a host of their human concerns. But I sometimes think that the image of piggy-backing is the wrong one; it implies one set of concerns piled on top of another growing heavier and heavier, while all sink further under the weight. It implies limitation rather than expansiveness, and the civil rights movement was nothing if not expansive in its thought. Its message was one that suffused, changed, and again, inspired all those who heard it. And that is how it has come to be invoked in social contexts as diverse as the women's movement, Tiananmen Square and South Africa.

Sometimes I do wonder what Dr. Martin Luther King would be saying today; times have changed in so many ways. But in its most direct sense, the civil rights movement set into motion a generational wave of legal and social challenges. Every step has been met with resistance, been countered with struggle.

Now that struggle is at the point where we, the first beneficiaries of the American civil rights babies are in our forties and fifties; where people get tenure or rise to managerial positions, or establish themselves and their ideas as part of the system of things.

It is no wonder that this next level of resistance has been called the culture wars. It is about the ideas, the culture, the thought of those whose bodies have pushed open the door; it is about whether we who have gained such recent admission will be able to leave our mark. It is about who may contribute to the canon, may speak in the boardroom, may participate in the artworld, may inscribe themselves on the pages of history. It is about whether we will inspire the hearts of the world with our vision too... It is no wonder that we have culture wars just now.

We should not be discouraged by this resistance. We were naive if we expected less. It is part of the ongoing digestive process of human rights; simple but very complicated social medicine.

It is easy to give in to the feeling sometimes that ours is an era of Tough Love, little faith, and no charity. But I suspect that Dr. King would be a proponent not of tough love but of the notion that love is tough. It takes work to sustain, thought to convey, time to commit. Civil rights work, human rights work is never a finished product. Human and civil rights have a shape something like fire. Like Prometheus we are charged with a gift that must be tended, and fed, guarded and wisely employed.

In an era of bad faith, it takes resilience. In times of no hope, it takes tenacious optimism.

And in moments of precious little charity it takes the most determined generosity.

Dr. King said, 'Civil rights is an eternal moral issue.' The revolution of love of which he spoke did not envision a world in which we all smile and hug and sing. Again, it was not that romantic, and it was not that easy.

The love of which he spoke requires not so much singing as acting with determined respect for one another.

It requires not so much smiling, but that we respond with tenacity and resilience even when there is little to smile about in the immediate moment.

It requires not literal hugging but that we maintain a resolute sense of purpose about the large goals, the long-range ends - for I do not need to tell you, we have so much yet to accomplish.



And so today let us remember the life of Dr. King, not to bury him in the past, but to keep his spirit alive, to fuel our optimism about how much we have achieved. Let us celebrate his life to fuel not just our hope but also our certainty that we can accomplish much, much more, in this our new millennium. For what remains to be done is no less of a moral challenge that what we faced in the past, but also not worse. To many of us, the world feels more fragmented than it once did, the problems of prejudice at once more subtle and more entrenched. But we would be naive if we had expected the demons of prejudice to stand still. It is in the nature of things to change, and that is why Dr. King spoke of the eternity of this as a moral issue.

So if racism reinvents itself, if class bias finds ways to divide - if all the -isms of the past and lots of brand-new -isms are busy realigning and disguising themselves creatively; well then, we must be all the more creative. We must realign ourselves into new and flexible coalitions. We must apply and re-apply all our talent and best imagination to bringing into being what Dr. King described as the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice. We must make real that 'daring to dream' of which we speak so frequently and perhaps too casually.

We must be grittily, steadfastly, tenaciously, determined to dream, and to act - to bring our best visions into the realm of reality.